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Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: SF-MD-0282-14

Darren Millar AM
Chair, Public Accounts Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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3 April 2014

Dear Darren,

National Framework for Continuing NHS Healthcare

Thank you for your letter of 11 March requesting further clarity on the Welsh Government's response to Recommendations 1, 4, 6 and 7 in relation to the Public Accounts Committee report on the National Framework for Continuing NHS Healthcare. Further information is provided below.

Recommendation 1

It is not the intention for the new Decision Support Tool (DST) to be applied retrospectively. The DST is designed to support multi-disciplinary teams to make decisions on an individual's eligibility for CHC, it does not however replace rounded and comprehensive assessment or professional judgement.

The testing undertaken by Local Health Boards indicates that whilst the updated DST was easier to use and provided clearer presentation of the evidence of need, it did not necessarily or usually change the outcome of the decisions made regarding the eligibility for CHC. This finding concurs with feedback from colleagues in England, who have used this version of the DST since November 2012.

Whilst it is difficult to assess the potential level of new retrospective claims arising from individuals who may feel they have been disadvantaged in the past, our view is that claims should be considered in relation to the guidance in place at that time and that the outcome is unlikely to differ as a result of the new DST.

Recommendation 4

Claimants are currently made aware of the opportunity to have their claims expedited, should their circumstances be extenuating, in standard correspondence from the National Project Team (managed by Powys teaching Health Board). We are currently revising the Information Leaflet that will be provided to claimants in readiness for the publication of the new cut off date of 31 July 2014 (for claims relating to the period 1 April 2003 to 31 July 2013). The ability to request that a claim be expedited in extenuating circumstances will be included in this revised leaflet. The leaflet will be provided to all claimants.

Recommendations 6 & 7

I confirm that the Committee's recommendations have been fully accepted.

The terms of reference for the National (Powys) Project required that all claimants would be informed of the outcome of their claim (i.e. whether they have been found to be eligible, for what period and the reimbursement they will receive) by 30 June 2014.

Based on current progress, all claims are expected to have been reviewed by the end of April. The negotiation period (regarding the period of eligibility and the amount to be reimbursed) for the final tranche of cases is anticipated to take until the end of June. They will then be regarded as completed.

Cases are not considered to be fully resolved until the claimant has received their reimbursement from the relevant Local Health Board. My previous response acknowledges that this 'settlement period' may take until September 2014 for some of the later cases considered by the National (Powys) Project. Updates will be provided to the Public Accounts Committee in June and September 2014 reflecting these milestones and the proportion of cases fully resolved, as defined above.

The consultation period on the revised Framework for Continuing NHS Healthcare closed on 13 March. Officials are currently reviewing the responses and the intention is for the revised Framework to be published in June 2014.

Best wishes
Mark.

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