

Vaughan Gething AM
Deputy Minister for Health

9 March 2016

Dear Vaughan,

Health and Social Care Committee: follow-up inquiry into the performance of ambulance services

Thank you for your response of 18 February to the Committee's letter on its [follow-up inquiry into the performance of ambulance services in Wales](#).

The Committee welcomes your reply and the constructive way in which you have addressed the seven key areas identified during the inquiry. Furthermore it welcome your acceptance or partial acceptance of five of the six conclusions identified as requiring more work.

The Committee would welcome further clarification on some areas, details of which are set out in the Annex. Please could your response be provided before the Assembly dissolves on 5 April 2016.

Yours sincerely,



David Rees AM

Chair, Health and Social Care Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg | We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English



Annex

Conclusion 1: Data and performance indicators

The Committee is pleased that the Deputy Minister has accepted elements of its conclusion relating to data and performance indicators, and to see the progress made on developing quality indicators

Whilst noting the argument that quarterly release of data is intended to highlight statistical trends over a longer period, the Committee is disappointed that monthly release of AQI data will not be possible. It reiterates its concerns regarding the implications that this may have in terms of transparency and accountability.

During the inquiry, evidence presented by the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (“WAST”) indicated that performance against response time targets, broken down by local authority, was being collected and was available during the first month of the trial. The Committee requests that the Deputy Minister set out why publication of response times data broken down by local authority area, on a monthly basis, will not be possible.

Conclusion 3: Leadership, organisational change and staffing

The Committee is disappointed that the Deputy Minister has not accepted its conclusion. Whilst the Committee fully accepts that training and staff roster arrangements are the operational responsibility of WAST, the Committee would welcome greater clarity from the Deputy Minister on the detail of the assurances he will seek in relation to staffing, training and rostering. The Committee would also welcome clarification on how the Deputy Minister expects WAST to address the gaps in staffing identified during the inquiry, including anticipated timescales.

Conclusion 5: Patient handover and pathways

The Committee notes the Deputy Minister’s acceptance of its conclusion but reiterates its view that data of this nature should be available routinely, ideally on a monthly basis. The Committee is aware that data on performance against the handover target is collected locally and included in the routine performance reports received by Heath Boards at their Board meetings but is not published in a single, accessible place.



Conclusion 6: Models of deployment

The Committee recognises that publication of the assessment report on the Cwm Taf Explorer project is the responsibility of the Emergency Ambulance Services Committee (“EASC”) and WAST. However, given the degree of good practice exemplified by the project, the Committee urges the Deputy Minister to ensure that the report is published and disseminated widely.

