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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Aneurin Bevan  
University Health Board

Our Ref: NP/IW/RB

8 October 2020

Janet Finch-Saunders, AS/MS  
Chair  
Welsh Parliament  
Petitions Committee  
[Petitions@Senedd.wales](mailto:Petitions@Senedd.wales)

Dear Ms Finch-Saunders

**Petitions:**

- **P-05-1001 Hold an independent inquiry into the choice of site for the proposed new Velindre Cancer Centre**
- **P-05-1018 Support for the current proposed plans to build a new Velindre Cancer Centre, Cardiff, in any future inquiry**

Thank you for inviting Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) to comment on the above petitions received by the Senedd concerning the planned development of a new Cancer Centre in Cardiff.

Firstly, we would like to emphasise that Aneurin Bevan University Health Board remains supportive of the Transforming Cancer Services SE Wales Programme and we would not necessarily wish to challenge the model of care for planned, low intensity chemotherapy, the delivery of radiotherapy or outpatient care within a new cancer centre in Cardiff and we have no specific objection to the choice of site.

The primary clinical concern regarding the proposed medical model is that of the significant risk to patient safety that may result from a stand-alone facility for acute oncology care. There is also concern that there is the potential for the delivery of state-of-the-art cancer care in Wales to fall behind that of the rest of the UK, as it will be challenging to deliver certain new cancer therapies without immediate access to high dependence or intensive care facilities, or to attract trainees and future generations of oncologists to a centre where such care cannot be delivered.

Cont/d.....

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The recent focus on clinical pathways in Acute Oncology (highlighted through joint workshops with multidisciplinary teams from the SE Wales Health Boards and Velindre Cancer Centre), together with the rapid changes in the delivery of ambulatory care, have highlighted the need for a safe model of care for those cancer patients who require urgent or emergency care.

The clinical feedback is that the new transforming cancer services model and development of a new cancer centre need to consider where and how the provision of urgent and emergency care could be delivered in the context of a new cancer centre using the following examples to illustrate the issues:

- Ambulatory acute oncology assessment unit, with facilities for treatment escalation, if required.
- Immunotherapy – these patients can require critical care support both during the administration of therapy and as a result of its side effects. These patients are likely to have a good response to the treatment with improved long term survival.
- CAR-T therapy. It is imperative this is delivered where there is an ICU on site.
- Access to Interventional radiology – the increased ability to place vascular, biliary, renal and GI tract stents to prolong life and quality of life is one of the most common reasons for transfer of patients to acute sites at present and this is likely to increase.
- On-site specialist advice, including (but not exclusively) cardiology, respiratory, immunology, gastroenterology and surgical specialties.
- A comprehensive research program of new systemic anti-cancer therapies, including those requiring immediate access to level 2 and 3 care.

At the time of the development of the Transforming Cancer Services (TCS) Programme in 2015, it was necessary to make a number of clinical assumptions in designing the model of care for patients. Given the rapid transformation in cancer care seen in the past 4 years and the increasing need to care for patients experiencing new and complex complications of their therapy, we are pleased to note that the proposed clinical model will be subject to an external review by the Nuffield Trust, before the decision regarding the final scope, design and sign off of the cancer facility in Cardiff is confirmed.

The Terms of Reference for this review were jointly agreed between the Health Boards in SE Wales and Velindre Cancer Centre and will address the concern about the model for the delivery of acute oncology to which we look forward to contributing to both constructively and collaboratively.

Yours sincerely



**Judith Paget**  
**Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive**