

P-06-1350 reopen Dyfi Ward at Tywyn Hospital now

This will be the sixth reply the group have made to the petitions committee. The inpatients ward at Tywyn Hospital has been closed for eighteen months. BCUHB have made no progress in opening it.

The latest reply from Carol Shillabeer is poor. She does not even admit that overseas nurses that had been recruited to fill vacancies in Tywyn or Dolgellau have now left, having bought out of their contracts to work elsewhere. The health board has serious problems not only in its ability to recruit staff, but in retaining staff; and has made little attempt to train the staff it already has to fill the roles required. The health board has also redeployed staff it already had to other roles. All our previous replies have provided many factual examples which show that the health board have not been honest about their recruitment activities.

The final paragraph of Carol Shillabeer's letter ...'for the very *small* numbers of patients needing more intensive care' is wrong. The numbers are not *small*. She either has no idea of the numbers of people that are being denied the care that they need in their local hospital or is being dishonest. The latest statistics published by the Welsh Government for NHS hospitals show that the beds in Tywyn Hospital were heavily utilised until the ward was closed. The issue is that patients are having to remain in Bronglais or the other main hospitals, because they cannot go home. This of course creates a shortage of beds at those hospitals. We know people that have been sent home without the necessary 'home care' that Carol Shillabeer states' has been very well received by the patient and families in receipt of the care and the local population now very much appreciate the range of services the hospital is able to provide'. She has no evidence upon which to substantiate this assertion. The replacement of inpatients wards with peripheral services, such as 'wellbeing hubs', has no credibility in the present situation.

There are many concerns that have been raised by us about the hospital over the last eighteen months, which have not been answered, here is a reminder of a few:

Blocking the public's right to ask questions of the health board at their general meetings, replies which are accessible and open in the public domain, is a breach of trust. The questions and answers would have been a public record of the continuing narrative regarding Tywyn Hospital.

On 28/04/23 BCUHB notes from a meeting '*Enhanced Services Action Plan*' show that '*End of life and hospice care to be considered as an option for beds at Tywyn Hospital, and - to discuss Hospice Dewi Sant and Marie Curie Service in the area to follow up on previous conversations, status in progress*'. Ulterior plans for our hospital have not been made public.

Donations - the misappropriation of donations is a serious concern. In March 2023, only a few weeks before its closure, over £10,000 from the Tywyn Hospital donations fund was authorised to pay for an updated patient kitchen for the inpatients ward, when in February 2023, the health board had covertly begun planning its closure. Donations helped to build and refurbish the hospital in the first place.

We would like clarity on the role of the petitions committee in holding the health board to account in meeting their obligations and responsibilities. As it stands the committee appears unable to instruct BCUHB to open Tywyn Hospital; so which element in the Welsh Government is able to, and is responsible for doing so? Opening the hospital is necessary to provide the residents of the Tywyn and district area with the health care they deserve, and via taxation, are paying for. Simply continuing to ask BCUHB for a date for the opening of Tywyn Hospital, with no deadline for doing so is completely ineffectual. The situation at Tywyn Hospital is another example of the Welsh Government letting slip the high standards required for serving the health needs of the Welsh people.

The group continues to endeavour to demonstrate in our replies to the Petitions Committee how BCUHB have mismanaged our facilities and health service. There is no reinforcement of the standards and attitudes required and the continued obfuscation is a serious matter of concern. Eighteen months on, the Health Board do not want to reopen the inpatients ward.

The 5,528 people who signed this petition have been let down.

Yours sincerely

Jane Barraclough

Tywyn Hospital Action Group