

Y Pwyllgor Cyfrifon Cyhoeddus / Public Accounts Committee  
PAC(5)-03-16 P10  
Cyfarwyddwr Cyffredinol Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol/  
Prif Weithredwr GIG Cymru  
Grŵp Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol

Director General Health and Social Services/  
NHS Wales Chief Executive  
Health and Social Services Group



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Huw Vaughan Thomas  
Auditor General for Wales  
24 Cathedral Road  
Cardiff  
CF11 9LJ

Our Ref: AG/JW/SB

13 September 2016

Dear Huw

### **Hospital Catering and Patient Nutrition**

Thank you for your letter dated 25 August 2016 inviting comments on the memorandum for the Public Accounts Committee on hospital catering and patient nutrition.

It is satisfying to observe the progress made with respect to the nutritional care pathway, especially the mealtime experience, catering costs, food waste and planning and reporting issues related to hospital nutrition. While good progress has been made against the seven recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee I acknowledge that more action is needed by both the Welsh Government and individual NHS bodies to fully address all of your own recommendations.

The two key areas that are being addressed are the development of an all Wales IT catering system and the development of all Wales nursing documentation.

In 2011 a target of 10% food wastage was introduced along with the recommendation to develop a new all Wales IT Catering System. I am pleased to say that the food waste target has been exceeded and now sits at around 6%. Some organisations are using local IT catering systems but there is continued reliance on paper based systems in other organisations. I believe the cost of waste could be reduced further through the use of appropriate technology and this would enable a clearer understanding of the cost of food production and cost control. It is also possible that in future the Cabinet Secretary may set an even more stretching target. Set in this context, I can confirm that the business case for an all Wales IT catering system will be on the NHS Wales National Informatics Management Board (NIMB) agenda in November this year. NIMB will consider the business case based on its value for money and the priority of this work alongside other initiatives in NHS Wales.

The NIMB will of course need to determine if the approach recommended some years ago is still the right option to pursue in terms of value for money as reasonably effective local systems have been developed in the interim.

In respect of the second area, while there are of course opportunities to rationalise and adopt 'once for Wales' approaches for documentation, it remains the responsibility of NHS providers to ensure they have systems to securely and appropriately record patient care and treatments. In order to develop a national approach in future, I am pleased to report that NWIS has appointed a new nurse informaticist who will take up her post at the end of October 2016. It is proposed that she lead the all Wales nursing documentation work programme which has been on hold since her predecessor vacated her post.

There is work under way to create closer links between the All Wales Hospital Menu Framework (AWMF) group and the Nutrition Coordinators group to ensure closer links between nursing and catering. I see this as an important mechanism to ensure that the oversight of respective strands of policy in relation to catering and patient nutrition is joined up and coordinated. In addition, work is underway to develop a measure of patient nutrition and hydration that will be reported via the NHS Outcomes and Delivery Framework in future.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Goodall', written in a cursive style.

**Dr Andrew Goodall**