

17 January 2019

Dear Colleague

Primary Care Out-of-Hours Service

As I am sure you are aware, the Auditor General for Wales published his [Report](#) on Primary care out-of-hours services in July 2018.

The report shows that, out-of-hours services are under significant strain. Although patients seem generally happy with the services they get, poor staff morale and difficulties in filling shifts are threatening the resilience of services in many parts of Wales, and a more sustainable approach is needed to address these challenges.

The report found that national standards on the timeliness of appointments are not being met and that patients need to be given better information about how to access services. There is also a lack of information on service quality and performance which is hampering effective management of services at the national and local level. The planning of out of hours services typically happens in isolation from other services despite it being part of a wider urgent care system.

The Public Accounts Committee is undertaking an inquiry into the findings of this Report and specifically will be considering:

- Performance and patient experience
- Financial and clinical sustainability
- Information and performance management
- Integration of out-of-hours with other services

The inquiry will also consider:

- The scope of out of hours services



- National standards
- Workforce planning
- Staff engagement
- Quality assessments
- Spreading innovative practice
- National Leadership arrangements
- The 111 Service

I am writing to invite your comments on the Auditor General's findings together with the areas the Committee will be focussing on. May I ask that you reply by 15 February.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick Ramsay". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Nick Ramsay AM
Chair

