

Dr Andrew Goodall
Chief Executive NHS Wales/Director General Health
and Social Services
Welsh Government

15 February 2019

Dear Dr Goodall

Medicines Management

Thank you for your update of 17 January which the Committee considered at the meeting on 4 February.

I note that your letter suggested that this is a final update on the implementation of the Committee's Recommendations but as a number are still outstanding, I would appreciate a further update in October 2019 on the discharge of actions in response to Recommendations 1, 3, 6, 8, 12 & 13, 14, 16 & 17.

I also noted that your recent update referred to additional information at Annex A on take up of independent prescribing courses – but Annex A is the overall update to the recommendations. For completeness therefore, I would be grateful if the details about take up of the courses could be included in your October update.

In addition, there are some issues that I raised in my letter of 19 July 2018 about the response to the recommendations contained in the Auditor General's Report that do not appear to have been set out explicitly in your latest update on the PAC Report Recommendations (see the extract from my July 2018 letter below). For example, while the update on PAC recommendation 1 notes that medicines management indicators are part of the NHS delivery framework against which NHS bodies are held to account, it does not provide any specific evidence of how this is driving improvement. Similarly, although action is ongoing to collate evidence of outcomes, the Committee was expecting to receive more detail at this point about



health boards' initiatives to improve repeat prescribing. I would be grateful if you could reflect again on any additional matters arising from my July 2018 letter when you provide a further update on the PAC Recommendations in October.

Extract from my letter of 19 July 2018:

Update on progress with the implementation of Auditor General for Wales recommendations in: Managing Medicines in Primary and Secondary Care

I appreciate that some activities are taking a little longer to implement than envisaged in the Welsh Government's original response to the Auditor General's report, but am pleased to note that the latest update demonstrates that some important actions have been taken forward, most notably:

- The identification of a suite of indicators to better assess the quality and safety of prescribing;
- Work by national groups to identify where scope exists for efficiency savings from better prescribing;
- Enhancing the format of the annual report from the All Wales Medicines Management Strategy Group to support better scrutiny at the local health board level;
- National and local work to improve safety and effectiveness of homecare services;
- Work to ensure pharmacists get better access to the Welsh GP record

However, there would be an expectation of more progress in some specific areas (in addition to the electronic prescribing system already mentioned):

- Initiatives to improve repeat prescribing and reducing waste;
- Improving medicines storage, noting that the updated guidance that was promised has not yet been issued;
- Evidence that positive work to identify indicators of cost and quality improvements is driving actual improvements on the ground.

In the response to the PAC recommendations, the Welsh Government indicated that a further update will be forthcoming on some specific issues (eg repeat prescribing) in January 2019. In that update, I would like to request that the January update is broadened out to include the issues I have raised in this letter.



I look forward to hearing from you later in the year and at that point the Committee will consider whether any further updates on progress are going to be required.

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 of the name.

Nick Ramsay AM
Chair

