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University Health Board

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By email: SeneddHealth@Assembly.Wales

Dear Committee

Thank you for your email dated 20 February 2019 regarding the Health, Social Care and Sports Committee inquiry into the provision of health and social care in the adult prison service.

Hywel Dda University Health Board does not have a prison within its area but it does have a Forensic Mental Health Service and Substance Misuse Services in addition to Public Health Services that interface with the Her Majesty's Prison Service. The Health Board would therefore like to offer comments, the service responses have been separated for clarity.

Forensic Mental Health Service response:

Due to the lack of prison estate within the Health Board's area, it is only appropriate for the Mental Health Service to provide a response to the first point listed within the terms of reference on your original correspondence. All patients under the care of Mental Health Secondary Care Services that are remanded to prison should be referred to the relevant prison's Mental Health In-reach Service. NHS mental health services should be made aware of a person's remand to prison prior to their transfer in order for all relevant mental health information to be transferred to the healthcare service responsible for assessing individuals on their entry into prison.

The Health Board's Forensic Mental Health Service has a referral pathway in place to ensure that individuals who are, or would be the responsibility of the Health Board, are assessed or transferred to hospital under Part 111 of the

Mental Health Act if required.

Public Health response:

As Hywel Dda University Health Board has no prison estate within its area, a number of the terms of reference set out are not relevant and therefore are unable to be commented on. However, the Health Board's Public Health Service would like to offer the following comments for consideration by the committee:

- Prison health is public health, prisons can play a significant role in addressing inequalities. Further thought should be given to how prison estates can better link with Public Health Services in addressing the health needs of their populations.
- The challenges to delivering health within a prison settings in Wales include:
 - Frequent movement of men across the estate, often with little or no notice.
 - Reliance on custodial services to support clinics and other health services within the prison.
 - Welsh women held outside of Wales – which impacts on their continuity of care and ability to maintain relationships with family.
 - The prison environment (beyond the control of Health Boards) will have a significant impact on the health of those in prison – challenges include overcrowding, access to fresh air, mental wellbeing and exercise, diet and nutrition. There are opportunities for prisons to link in with Health Boards and Public Health in addressing these issues.
 - Several of the Welsh prisons are old Victorian buildings (HMP Cardiff, HMP Swansea, HMP Usk) that present limitations to the design of clinic rooms, ability to create disabled access and challenges for IT infrastructure.
- The lack of disaggregated Welsh level prison data from the Ministry of Justice, along with limited communication with Prisons impacts on the ability of Health organisations to understand the prison population and their needs.
- For those individuals within prison who have substance misuse (drug or alcohol) issues, one of the key objectives is to ensure minimal delay with issuing of opioid substitute prescriptions in order to prevent the

likelihood of illicit use on release and potential increase in drug related deaths.

- Locally, there are two substance misuse agencies that link into prisons – Dyfed Drug and Alcohol Service (DDAS) which provides the Health Board's single point of access service for generic and criminal justice clients and also provides a prison in reach for those about to be discharged. The Health Board Community Drug and Alcohol Team (CDAT) would also link directly with prisons and arrange assessment for prescriptions on release from prison.
- There are opportunities for increased collaboration and joint working between Prisons, Health Boards and Area Planning Boards for Substance Misuse in tackling issues caused by drug and alcohol misuse. In particular, there are opportunities for prisons to collaborate on the prevention agenda, particularly in terms of impact on families and children of prisoners, as these children are at higher risk of risk taking behaviour themselves and preventative interventions could be designed to help protect against this.

Yours sincerely

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