



Ein cyf/Our ref VG/07230/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
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2 August 2019

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 17 July on behalf of the Petitions Committee in relation to Petition P-05-896 concerning ward 35 at Prince Charles Hospital (PCH).

I note and appreciate the concerns about the possible transfer of patients to Ysbyty Cwm Cynon and the practical issues this might raise for some families.

Ward 35 at PCH and Ward 7 in Ysbyty Cwm Cynon were both set up around seven years ago as part of the Health Board's strategic and modernisation programme on mental health services for older people. Their purpose was to provide care for patients requiring hospital admission and a longer period of treatment prior to discharge. However, the Health Board has advised that the number of people requiring this hospital based longer term care has since significantly reduced, with contributing factors including investment made to strengthen community services closer to home and also advances in treatment. For Merthyr Tydfil residents the number of patients requiring this care in a hospital is likely to be less than 10 people per year.

The Health Board is responsible for the provisions and delivery of safe and sustainable health care services on behalf its local population, within the resources available. To achieve this they have identified a more holistic model of care based at Cwm Cynon, which also includes an extended day care service to support patients out of hospital. Further work is ongoing to explore an option of an extra care housing facility and extending services for patients.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

In recognition of the increased travel distance for families visiting Cwm Cynon, the Health Board has put in place a transport service, provided by the charity Hafal to help them when visiting Cwm Cynon as part of the plans for Ward 35. The Health Board is now exploring the opportunity to extend this service for families.

I have been assured that the Health Board appreciates the impact the transfer of care has on not only the patient, but also family members, and is committed to continuing their engagement with patients moving forward.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'V' and a long, sweeping tail.

Vaughan Gething AC/AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services