



Ein cyf/Our ref VG/07954/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

21 October 2019

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 27 September on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding petition P-05-910 – ‘Making Thrombectomy Available on 24-7 Basis for Welsh Patients’.

Thrombectomy is a highly specialised and still relatively new procedure for treating acute ischaemic strokes. There is a UK-wide shortage of trained clinicians who are able to deliver this procedure and the Welsh Government is working with the Welsh Health Specialised Services Commission (WHSSC) to develop a Wales-wide thrombectomy service. WHSSC has drafted a service specification for thrombectomy which is due out for consultation imminently. The specification outlines the pathway for accessing thrombectomy and the expectations of local services for prompt repatriation following treatment.

In the meantime, the WHSSC team continues to work with Health Boards in Wales to put in place interim arrangements for the commissioning of thrombectomy procedures from NHS England providers, where capacity allows. However, English providers face the same challenges to recruit or train clinicians in this specialism. As a result only small numbers of patients have accessed thrombectomy services in north Bristol, north Midlands and Liverpool to date.

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board has recently recruited an additional clinician and is out to advert for a further consultant which is key to being able to offer a thrombectomy service for south Wales. Once the additional consultant is recruited we anticipate thrombectomy services to be available at the University Hospital Wales, Cardiff.

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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.

Work will also continue with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and NHS English providers to secure additional capacity for north Wales residents.

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'.

Vaughan Gething AC/AM

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