



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Cwm Taf Morgannwg
University Health Board

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ALFMG
23rd October 2019
Executive

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

Dear Janet,

Re: Petition P-05-896 Prevent the closure of Ward 35 at Prince Charles Hospital

Thank you for writing to me on 2nd October 2019 after the petitions Committee gave consideration to the above which was submitted by Beverly Gillespie. Firstly I would like to acknowledge the impact any change in service has on our population, particularly as in this instance where the changes may impact on some of the most vulnerable people we service.

People were not directly admitted to Ward 35, the beds for assessment and initial treatment for people living with dementia are in the Royal Glamorgan Hospital in Llantrisant and the Princess of Wales Hospital in Bridgend. After assessment some people require a longer period of stabilisation to enable discharge, ward 35 was used in such instances.

There has been a longstanding and comprehensive change in Cwm Taf Morgannwg in how people living with dementia and their families are supported. Decisions and early stages of the transformation date back to 2014 where there was full support for the change in how services would be delivered. The change proposed was part of a wider recovery model consultation that was undertaken in line all the approaches such work should follow in conjunction with the Community Health Council. Following the initial decision to endorse the service transformation, the Board has reviewed progress on the agreed plan many times including twice in 2019. The strategic direction agreed by the Board involved was implicit in first increasing community resources, joint working across a range of settings and as these impacted to then to reduce longer stay assessment beds as demand for admission changed.

Phase 1 completed in late 2014 involved the closure of Ward 1 in Dewi Sant Hospital (18 beds), commissioning of a single site assessment & Enhanced Care Unit at Royal Glamorgan Hospital (RGH) and also an investment in 7 day Crisis Mental Health Team working. This was successfully implemented with no adverse impact on occupancy in other similar wards. Phase 2 completed in 2016 with the closure of Dinas Ward in Ysbyty George Thomas (YGT) (19 beds). The bed reduction was enabled through further investment to increase the Psychiatric Liaison Service from 5 to 7 days per week and change to the function of older adult mental health wards in RGH.

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Cadeirydd/Chair: Professor Marcus Longley

Prif Weithredydd/Chief Executive: Dr Sharon Hopkins

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Phase 3 took the approach of reducing demand on beds in YGT through investment in community services and providing a focal point for these through the development of a new Health and Wellbeing Centre there. This phase completed in May 2018. Fernhill Ward (19 beds) closed in December 2017 and Cambrian Ward (19 beds) closed May 2018.

The last phase of work related to ward 35 which closed in August this year. The 10 bed ward had cared for five patients for most of the year and had not been taking new admissions for some time. To further support the model of supporting more people at home further investment had been made in supporting people with dementia and behaviours that challenge as well as enhancing the more traditional community services with significant investment. A small number of people still need longer than is typical in hospital to stabilise and prepare them for discharge. For the Rhondda, Taf Ely, Merthyr Tydfil and Cynon population a ward in Ysbyty Cwm Cynon in Mountain Ash is available for people.

Ward 35 also provided a respite service for the population of Merthyr Tydfil and Cynon Valley. This bed was retained and moved to Ward 7 YCC on 27 May. All the people accessing the bed on Ward 7 were engaged as were their families and carers and the transition has gone smoothly.

Although difficult for families and staff the closure went smoothly and as planned. Concerns were raised during the process and the team worked hard to meet with as many people and groups as possible both at the time the board made the initial decision, and in the months where the change was more imminent.

Myself or the team would be happy to discuss this change further if it would help.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Lawrie', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Mr Alan Lawrie
Director of Primary, Community Care & Mental Health Services
Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

c.c Ms Julie Denley, Assistant Director for Mental Health Services