

# P-05-930 Petition for Ferryside surgery

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 4 Chwefror 2020  
Petitions Committee | 4 February 2020

Reference: RS19/11218-2

## Introduction

**Petition number:** P-05-930

**Petition title:** Petition for Ferryside surgery

**Text of petition:** We feel very strongly that it is essential to maintain a surgery in Ferryside.

We need a doctor, a nurse and a dispensary to provide the vital services required by a village where most residents are over the age of 50.

It is an integral part of Calon y Fferi Community centre which is very accessible. Visiting the centre is an opportunity to meet people and mitigates against loneliness and isolation. It helps to maintain physical and mental health at a local level. Public transport is very infrequent which makes using other medical centres very difficult for people with mobility problems.



Most people want to stay in their own homes as they age and this is possible and more sustainable and economical when services and companionship are nearby. It would be a backward step to oblige all residents to leave the village for treatment.

## Background

The Mariners surgery is part of the Meddygfa Minafon practice, located in Ferryside

In October 2019 Hywel Dda University Health Board consulted on proposals to close the Mariners surgery and relocate services to other practices. The Mariners surgery has only had nurse sessions since 2016, because there were no GPs available to operate from it. Some concerns have been expressed (and reported in the media) that less mobile patients will struggle to get to the next nearest surgeries in the Meddygfa Minafon practice – in Kidwelly or Trimsaran.

On 16 December 2019, Hywel Dda University Health Board released a statement confirming that Meddygfa Minafon is to close Mariners Surgery from 31 December 2019, 'owing to the need to bring together services for the whole practice population in Meddygfa Minafon and Trimsaran Surgery'.

The Health Board says it has done extensive consultation on the matter, and has written to all affected patients this to explain the decision and to keep them updated on further developments.

Jill Paterson, Director of Primary Care for Hywel Dda University Health Board said: "As a Health Board we recognise that the decision to close Mariners Surgery will be very disappointing for many patients. Unfortunately this branch surgery has been without a GP service since 2016 with patients travelling to nearby Meddygfa Minafon in Kidwelly for GP appointments and nurse-led chronic disease clinics.

"Following a review of how services are used by patients at the surgery, services at Mariners Surgery are being relocated to Minafon and Trimsaran Surgeries to sit within the multi-disciplinary teams led by the GPs to ensure that patients see the most appropriate professional for their needs, such as a Pharmacist or Physiotherapist. We have listened to patients' concerns about the services at Ferryside and are **working with Ferryside Social Enterprise Group to continue the weekly phlebotomy**

clinics at Calon-y-Fferi and a Social Prescriber will be holding regular clinics, also in Calon-y-Fferi”.

## Welsh Government response

The Minister for Health and Social Services states that the provision of adequate GP services within Ferryside is the responsibility of Hywel Dda University Health Board. He says:

I am aware that Mariners Surgery in Ferryside has taken the decision to submit a request to Hywel Dda University Health Board to close the Carmarthen Road premises and consolidate their services in to the Minafon Surgery in Kidwelly. **This is a contractual issue between the Health Board and the GP practice and I am unable to intervene in this matter.**

I appreciate that this is an unsettling time for patients. Hywel Dda University Health Board is engaging with patients and stakeholders as part of a consultation process on the practice application. A practice review panel will be convened to consider the application in accordance with a protocol agreed with the Community Health Council. In considering the application, the review panel will look at the reasons for the application, current patient usage, and impact on patients, public transport links and the views of patients.

We recognise that the GP system is under pressure and are working to ensure that every patient is able to access the right care at the right time.

The Minister goes on to highlight the Welsh Government’s new Access Standards for General Medical Services, which it expects GP practices to meet by March 2021. To assist practices to meet the standards £3.76million is being invested this year in digital telephony services. He sets out details of the work the Welsh Government is undertaking to deal with GP recruitment issues and make the profession more attractive, such as the *Train Work Live* campaign. The Minister states that since the launch in 2016, there has been a significant increase in the fill rate for GP training. This year, a total of 186 places have been filled, surpassing the newly agreed higher target of 160 posts. This represents the highest number of recruits into GP speciality training in recent times.