

Cardiology Equipment, Paediatrics, Withybush General Hospital – Evaluation Report.



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University Health Board

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Introduction and aim

March 2022, Paediatric Services made an application to the Charitable Funds Committee to support the purchase of new cardiology equipment- namely an Echocardiograph (Echo) and Electrocardiogram (ECG) for use in Withybush Hospital.

Following the successful application, the new Echo and ECG were introduced into the paediatric setting in Withybush in October 2022, following the completion of the procurement processes.

The aim of this presentation is to update the Committee in terms of the benefits afforded to children who require cardiological investigations within Pembrokeshire.



Current Service Position

Within Pembrokeshire, a paediatrician with expertise in cardiology (PEC) attends on a monthly basis to undertake cardiology clinics in WGH. As part of the specialist role, they undertake Echo and ECG examinations.

A second consultant, visiting from the University Hospital of Wales (UHW) and operating in a tertiary capacity, provides additional activity.

Both consultants require regular access to Echo and ECG machines to function and ensure patients are able to be diagnosed and/or referred / monitored correctly.



Activity

Between October 2022 and June 2023, 161 children and young people have been reviewed at WGH, 103 by the PEC and 58 by the tertiary team. This equates to 17.9 patients per month. Each clinic has the capacity for up to 6 patients to be seen, though this is sometimes influenced by complexity of the condition.

Of these:

- 26% (42 children) have been found to have an abnormal finding.
- 8.7% (9 children) were found to have severe congenital heart disease or an acute presentation and were referred to tertiary care (University Hospital for Wales, Cardiff) for management.
- 13% (20 children) have been identified with anomalies requiring ongoing surveillance- or have confirmed congenital conditions which will/may need future intervention.

Congenital Heart Disease Network (CHDN) Peer review 2023

- In 2021, the CHDN made recommendations to improve service provision for the congenital heart disease patients. The network has undertaken a further review in 2023, and has noted improvement in most areas but especially:
- A focus on reducing any delays in accessing specialist review, including echocardiography.
- Access to modern echocardiographic equipment, maintained to British Society of Echocardiography (BSE) standards, with a selection of probes suitable for all age groups, including suitable foetal echo probes.
- There must be the facility to store and transfer digital recordings of radiological and echocardiographic images.

These actions are now all **closed** with the investment in the new equipment being integral to these improvements in terms of the Pembs cardiology centre.

Feedback

The consultant teams and the outpatient staff supporting the clinics have given very positive feedback to the service management team following the investment of the machines at WGH. The technical ability to scan more effectively has been welcomed and it is clear to see how the investment has made a positive impact on the patient group in terms of the follow up reduction.

Dr Faumy Hassan, Consultant Paediatrician:

“The new machine has already helped three children with serious cardiac conditions since it was received by the department in October 2022, and performed echocardiogram in over 160 children ranging from new cardiac referrals to more complex and post-surgical cardiac follow-up patients.”

Parents of pt X

“It’s great to have this fantastic facility in our county. We will travel anywhere to access care for our daughter and we have been to Bristol and Cardiff- but to be able to have appointments locally is just brilliant”.



Conclusion

Provision of cardiology services for the Pembrokeshire paediatric population has been clearly enhanced following the purchase of the Echocardiograph and Echocardiogram machines as supported by the Pembrokeshire Cardiology Equipment Fund Account (T460). The ability to provide diagnostic imaging at the appropriate level (paediatric standards) has now been met, and actions assigned by the Congenital Heart Disease Network have now been closed as a direct result.

The main purpose of the initial application was to maintain cardiology screening provision within Pembrokeshire. It is hoped that members will recognise that the investment has not only maintained the provision (subject to the most recent workforce constraint)- but has enhanced the provision of cardiology diagnostic procedures for children within the county.





Diolch yn fawr | Thank you
