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University Health Board

**Compliance with
Welsh Health Circular (WHC) (2018) 033
Circulated July 2019
“Airborne Isolation Room Requirement”**

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Quality, Safety and Experience Committee

8 August 2023

Situation

- In July 2019, Welsh Government (WG) circulated WHC 2018 (033) which outlines minimum requirements for the provision of negative pressure isolation suites (NPS) in which to care for patients with infection transmitted via the airborne route
- In summary there should be a NPS in each 24 hr A&E; a minimum of 1 per Health Board (HB) in a medical (ideally respiratory) ward; and 1 in every Level 3 general Critical Care Unit (CCU) or at least one in a Level 3 general CCU and robust plans (agreed with all relevant partner agencies) for transfer and transport of critically ill cases requiring respiratory isolation between the CCUs within the HB.
- As previously reported, the HB has 2 NPS: one situated in Bronglais Hospital (BGH) A&E and the other in Glangwili Hospital (GGH) ITU
- Development of such facilities will require considerable capital investment

Risks and Mitigation

- Existing facilities fall short of the requirements of WHC 2018 (033)
- During the pandemic the HB purchased:
 - Semi-permanent isolation 'Bioquell' pods for all 4 ICU, increasing their single room capacity to 50%
 - Six 'pop up' temporary isolation rooms with HEPA filters (Rediroom) for use across HB
 - Upgraded Padarn/Ceri Ward ventilation (increasing the number of air changes per hour), and
- 60 portable HEPA filtration air purifiers for ward/departmental usage

Whilst these have proved useful in mitigating risks of airborne transmission from certain respiratory viruses, they do not equate to a fully compliant NPS and would be inadequate to isolate certain infections including multi-drug resistant infection including Tuberculosis (TB)



- Creating a NPS pathway within GGH and BGH has been identified as a priority
- A potential location has been identified in GGH within the Clinical Decisions Unit (CDU) and agreed in principle by senior clinicians, the Infection Prevention Control team and the Estates Department. Whilst not located in A&E, the area identified is close in proximity to A&E, has direct external access and is single storey (for location of air handling plant) and could effectively serve as an emergency location and/or medical location.
- The Ventilation Safety Group (VSG) will consider at their next meeting on 5 September 2023 the proposed location in more detail and discuss how to progress to a feasibility survey and business case.
- An area in BGH outside of ITU will be agreed before the VSG meets in September 2023.

Recommendation:



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- For the Quality, Safety and Experience Committee to receive assurance from the actions underway to mitigate the risks relating to WHC (2018) 033