

Chief Executive and Chair
Hywel Dda University Health Board
Via Email

15 December 2021

Dear Steve and Maria

HIW Activity Update

As you know, HIW has been keeping its activity under close review, risk assessing every piece of work to ensure it is appropriate and proportionate given the ongoing pandemic situation. As winter pressures have continued, rates of COVID 19 transmission have also been increasing, including the emergence of the Omicron variant. In light of the latest scientific evidence on this variant, which shows a possible higher transmissibility, the latest modelling for the coming months and the need to focus on the booster vaccination programme, it is right that we take a cautious approach to reduce burden on those services most affected. I have, therefore, taken the decision to act early to ensure HIW's work programme remains proportionate.

In the first instance, we will be cancelling all routine NHS onsite inspection work for the rest of December and January. We will, however, still undertake onsite inspection work where we consider there to be a high risk to patient safety as a result of specific issues that we are aware of and where it is not possible to gain assurance remotely. All other inspection work for this period will be conducted remotely and, as per the early phases of the pandemic, I want to take the opportunity to share with you the provisional planned programme of Quality Checks for your organisation so that you can:

- Prepare and plan any contributions that we ask you to make to support this work
- Engage with us on any challenges that you face as a result of the schedule.

The planned programme of activity for Hywel Dda University Health Board is as follows:

Setting	Commission	Date	Activity
Old Oak Dental Practice Unit 8 Parc Pensarn Carmarthen SA31 2NF	13-Jan-22	27-Jan-22	Quality Check

For general practices, recognising their likely role in the vaccination programme as well as broader pressures, and also for dentists, we will ensure that any remote work is announced as early as possible so that settings have an opportunity to prepare for our work and engage with on any challenges that they are facing.

We will continue to deliver work which underpins our reviews programme, but will do so in a way which does not introduce unnecessary burden on services over the coming months.

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Merthyr Tudful / Merthyr Tydfil
CF48 1UZ
Tel / Ffôn 0300 062 8163
Fax / Ffacs 0300 062 8387
www.hiw.org.uk

I hope that this 'no surprises' approach provides transparency around our work given the context within which services are currently operating. We will continue to deliver our role in a supportive and pragmatic way, making use of our Relationship Managers as a means of understanding the challenges you face and ensuring this information is fed into our risk assessments and planning process. I have asked Relationship Managers to make contact with your team so that they are sighted on the work programme and can have any discussions as necessary.

Should you wish to discuss anything contained in this letter then please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Yours sincerely

Alun Jones
Interim Chief Executive
Healthcare Inspectorate Wales
Cc. HIW Relationship Managers

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