

Ein cyf/Our ref: CHA.9577
Gofynnwch am/Please ask for: Katie Jenner
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Dyddiad/Date: 1 September 2022

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Karen Roden

Dear Karen

Re: Question submitted to Hywel Dda University Health Board's Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Thank you for your email of 21 July 2022 in which you submitted a question for consideration at the Health Board's AGM regarding the change of services being considered as part of the Programme Business Case (PBC).

I would like to ask where the logic and true concern for the health of the people of Pembrokeshire is when the Board is intent on moving key medical services many miles further away?

The Health Board undertook a significant engagement and consultation exercise in 2017-18 as part of developing our strategy "A Healthier Mid and West Wales". The central ethos of the strategy is to shift the model of health care to one that is focused on prevention, promotion of health and wellbeing and re-balancing towards primary and community services. As part of this vision, our proposals include the development of a network of community facilities across West Wales, including in Pembrokeshire, which will support services closer to home and improvements in the health of the population.

In developing the strategy, it was also clear that the current configuration of hospital services is unsustainable, with clinical teams spread over too many sites and a lack of scale resulting in fragility and limiting service developments. In addition, we have aging buildings, with over 40% of our estate built 50 years ago or more. These deficiencies directly impact on patient care and make it harder to recruit and retain specialist staff. To address this, the strategy, which was clinically-led, proposes a new Urgent and Planned Care hospital in the south of Hywel Dda to serve the populations of Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire.

Withybush and Glangwili Hospitals will continue to provide an important role, with the majority of outpatient appointments and diagnostics provided from these sites. They will also include step down beds and rehabilitation, ensuring patients can transfer out of the acute hospital location and back into their locality at the earliest opportunity.

The geographical zone identified for the new hospital was based on travel analysis, to ensure we provide an emergency service that is as close as possible to being within an hour for most populations in our area. Any pathway we put in place, which

includes the transfer of patients to an appropriate hospital, will need to be safe for our population.

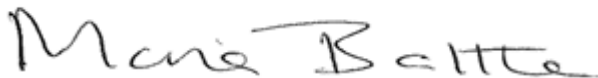
In the case of emergencies requiring an ambulance, response starts at the point of the call to the ambulance service's clinical contact centre and subsequently the arrival of the emergency crew. Paramedics are highly trained and can often provide the immediate care required to allow the extra journey time for patients to be treated at the most appropriate hospital. We are working with the Welsh Ambulance Service to secure additional ambulance provision to adequately meet the needs of a rural setting. Some emergencies would also see the response of clinicians, including consultants at the scene, which is facilitated by the Emergency Medical Retrieval and Transfer Service (EMRTS Cymru). Additionally, we continue to see advances in provision from emergency services in Wales, such as the extension of the Wales Air Ambulance to a 24/7 service since July 2020.

By making improvements to our staffing challenges and the safety of our specialist services, through the new Urgent and Planned Care Hospital, we will have more senior, specialist doctors available at the front door allowing for quicker access to clinical decision-makers and definitive treatment. In addition, separating planned and emergency care, as we intend to at the new hospital, will avoid the risk of emergency activity negatively impacting upon planned care, through cancelled operations.

Every year it is getting harder to provide safe, sustainable, accessible and kind care at Withybush and Glangwili General Hospitals because of the workforce spread and aging buildings. The new hospital allows us to aspire to provide excellence across all services, which will allow doctors to develop a broader expertise reinforced by peer support and offer educational experience and opportunities to engage in research. We believe this will improve patient care and encourage doctors, nurses and therapists to move here to work, strengthening our recruitment.

I trust this response provides the information you were seeking.

Yours sincerely



Maria Battle
Chair