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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Hywel Dda  
University Health Board

Ein cyf/Our ref: CEO

Gofynnwch am/Please ask for: Alex Harries

Rhif Ffôn /Telephone: 01267 239588

Dyddiad/Date: 24<sup>th</sup> March 2022

Swyddfeydd Corfforaethol, Adeilad Ystwyth  
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Judith Paget  
Director General Health & Social Services /  
NHS Wales Chief Executive  
Health and Social Services Group  
Welsh Government  
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CF10 3NQ

By email to [judith.paget001@gov.wales](mailto:judith.paget001@gov.wales)

Dear Judith

## RE: Joint Escalation and Intervention Arrangements

I write in response to your letter of 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022 confirming the escalation status for Hywel Dda Health Board. Our ambition is to return to routine monitoring status, recognising that this will depend on delivering an approvable Integrated Medium Term Plan. It is, however, encouraging to see that despite the unprecedented challenges we have faced in the last 2 years – exacerbated by our hospital configuration and relatively poor infrastructure – we have been able to consolidate our de-escalation from targeted intervention status.

I note the issues you have raised that require resolution if we are to realise our ambition to return to routine monitoring. In relation to our financial position and financial strategy, we are working closely with colleagues in the Finance Delivery Unit as well as with our operational and corporate teams to finalise our financial route map to recovery. This will set out our trajectory to achieve financial balance, linked ultimately to the hospital reconfiguration and wider aims of *A Healthier Mid & West Wales (AHMWW)* and, with Welsh Government support will enable us to deliver an approvable 3 year plan setting out the detailed steps we will be taking in the short to medium term. Securing this support and delivering our strategy will put West Wales on a stable and sustainable financial footing for the first time in Hywel Dda health Boards history.

In relation to urgent and emergency care, we share your concerns and have been actively addressing the wide range of challenging issues that underlie this. Prior to the pandemic, Hywel Dda achieved levels of performance in both Planned and Unplanned Care that were

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Cadeirydd /Chair  
**Miss Maria Battle**  
Prif Weithredwr/Chief Executive  
**Mr Steve Moore**

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Hywel Dda yw enw gweithredol Bwrdd Iechyd Lleol Prifysgol Hywel Dda  
Hywel Dda University Health Board is the operational name of Hywel Dda University Local Health Board

Mae Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Hywel Dda yn amgylchedd di-fwg Hywel Dda University Health Board operates a smoke free environment

amongst the best in Wales (although, I acknowledge in the case of emergency care, this still fell short of Welsh Government targets for waiting times). The pandemic has left us with a difficult legacy relating to the impact of lockdowns, staff exhaustion and demand backlogs which will take us time to address but this Health Board has had a strong track record in sustained waiting time performance and I am confident that we will return to this as we work through the consequences of the last two, unprecedented years.

On your final point, I recognise that as a Health Board we have some of the biggest challenges regarding workforce vacancies and rota gaps. Indeed, a recent analysis by the Workforce and OD Directors Peer Group showed that Hywel Dda Health Board has the highest overall vacancy rate of any health organisation running acute hospitals in Wales. There are a range of factors contributing to this and we are taking innovative, often ground breaking action to address them. We have one of the largest, most successful apprenticeship schemes (which continues to grow), are quickly developing our “team around the patient” model (learning from the very positive experiences of patients and staff in our Field Hospitals) and have the most developed workforce modelling tool in NHS Wales. This tool is now being adopted nationally and we are working closely with both the peer group and HEIW to offer our expertise in this area. Whilst our workforce challenges are largely not of our making, I am confident that these efforts, plus developments such as the Aberystwyth School of Nursing opening this year, will provide a clear workforce route map, linked to finances and our AHMWW Strategy to create a sustainable and stable NHS workforce for West Wales.

We continue to work closely with our regulators who, I am aware, form part of the decision making process that determines Health Board escalation levels in Wales. I believe their confidence in us continues to grow, with the last 2 Structured Assessments for Hywel Dda from Audit Wales of particular note as they complemented our approach and achievements, making no recommendations for improvement. We also regularly discuss our escalation levels with our Audit and Risk Assurance Committee as well as including details in my report to our public Board meetings. This provides assurance to Board on the actions we are taking and transparency for the public we serve.

I hope the above provides reassurance that we are clear about the challenges we face and have been actively addressing them over the last year, despite the on-going challenges of managing the pandemic. We will continue to work closely with Welsh Government colleagues to share our work and build confidence that we can be sustainably returned to routine monitoring status and would welcome a discussion on the criteria you require us to achieve in order to meet this aim.

Yours Sincerely



Steve Moore  
Chief Executive

Cc

Maria Battle, Chair, Hywel Dda University Health Board  
Dr Phil Kloer, Deputy Chief Executive, Hywel Dda University Health Board  
Andrew Carruthers, Director of Operations, Hywel Dda University Health Board  
Huw Thomas, Director of Finance, Hywel Dda University Health Board  
Mandy Rayani, Director of Nursing, Quality and Patient Experience, Hywel Dda University Health Board

Lisa Gostling, Director of Workforce & Organisational Development, Hywel Dda University Health Board

Alison Shakeshaft, Director of Therapies & Health Science, Hywel Dda University Health Board

Jill Paterson, Director of Primary Care, Community and Long-Term Care, Hywel Dda University Health Board

Joanne Wilson, Board Secretary, Hywel Dda University Health Board

Lee Davies, Director of Strategic Development and Operational Planning, Hywel Dda University Health Board