

Ms Maria Battle
Chair,
HDUHB Headquarters,
Hafan Derwen
Carmarthen
SA31 3BB

6th February 2023

Dear Ms Battle

RE: Solva Care's contribution to the deliberations regarding the imminent retirement of the single-handed General Practitioner providing services from the Solva practice.

At a recent HDUHB community event, the potential impact that closure of the practice would have on residents and Solva care was requested from our co-ordinator. This summary is enclosed. The purpose of this communication, however, is to offer constructive ways in which Solva care as a successful third sector organisation could enhance and maximise the opportunities that this situation presents.

As you are aware, Solva Care provides social support for older people, with volunteers providing day to day support for individuals in their homes and through running social events. This approach has been shown to reduce hospital admissions. Furthermore, the activities run by Solva Care keeps older adults active and socially connected in the community and has been shown to delay dependence and the need for more intensive support from statutory services. The social support aspect of Solva Care is a preventative care programme that can increase the number of quality life years in this post retirement community. The charity offers social support, within a village wide holistic model of wellbeing. Lunch clubs and clubs offering exercise, falls prevention and stimulation to slow the progress of the Dementia's - if present, and advice and guidance for independent living. These activities are reducing dependency on statutory care services and easing the corresponding pressure on primary, secondary and tertiary care.

The opportunity exists for the Solva practice premises to become a Health, social care and wellbeing hub. Solva care's recent plans and intentions to be able to offer domiciliary care in collaboration with Community Interest Care – Neyland, would provide a model of place based care which would keep the appropriate care needs in the community thus diverting the

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emphasis of delivering social care away from the statutory sector and onto Social Enterprises (CICs) that in turn can support community volunteers and support groups. A joint facility could also be utilised by a wider primary care team, reducing the demand on GPs, and providing residents with additional preventative and early intervention services.

An external evaluation of Solva care by Swansea University concluded that it is feasible to collect information which can be used to research what difference Solva care makes. They also found that Solva Care was needed and valued by the community and has the potential to keep people living longer in their homes despite poorer health. Evidence also exists to demonstrate that unplanned use of health services in Solva and the length of time people stay in hospital in lessened because there is support when patients go home.

Solva care is well known and has a reputation for its work to date. Regular surveys of the community indicate general support with residents asked to contribute any additional services that we could offer. Our hosting of *Together for Change* and associated activities related to a number of successful grants, demonstrates that our governance structures are robust and data collection ongoing to provide evidence of improvements. We have a strong media presence.

The establishment of a health, social care and wellbeing hub could provide a pilot example to implement one seamless system in one part of West Wales. Five years ago, the Parliamentary Review of Health and Social Care in Wales, recommended that,

“We need a cultural shift, valuing and empowering people and staff, community and volunteers as well as a resource shift, putting money and people into making the vision a reality” (2018:10).

On behalf of the Trustees of Solva Care I would like to propose that Solva Care would want to and are able to be part of such a vision and I would be happy to work with you to achieve such a model.

Yours sincerely



Dr Barbara Bale

Chair, Solva Care

cc. Prof P Kloer

Encl.

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