

Stakeholder response from Mathry Community Council.

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SOLVA SURGERY CONSULTATION - MATHRY COMMUNITY COUNCIL RESPONSE

I am writing on behalf of **Mathry Community Council** - and of our community's patients registered with Solva Surgery - but please note that our comments and concerns are also applicable to Solva Surgery patients living in Llanrhian Community Council area and to those in the adjoining inland communities.

I am myself a Solva patient and so I am fully aware of - and grateful for – the excellent health care service provided by Solva Surgery. And I, and a great many others, are extremely appreciative of the commitment of all the staff - Receptionists, Nurses, Doctors and Dispensary - who are friendly, helpful, efficient and effective.

Please note, also, that we totally endorse the points made in Llanrhian Community Council's response. (We are adjoining communities within the Llanrhian Ward.) Many of these I would have made myself. I'll not repeat them, but I would ask that you refer to their response in conjunction with this one.

It is vital that **Solva Surgery** remains **open**. There is **no reasonable alternative** for many patients -and especially for the **elderly, infirm** and those with **mobility** and **respiratory** problems. The proportion of elderly people in the population is increasing nationally and especially in rural areas such as ours, with easy access to a surgery being of major importance.

Solva Surgery - with its immediately adjoining car park - was **purpose-built** and it shows admirable forethought on the part of [REDACTED] who commissioned it, as it **serves its purpose** superbly.

● **Parking/Access**

The parking and access issue is very important, particularly for ill, elderly and disabled patients who have to be driven to the surgery, and it is also important for single elderly patients who have to drive there on their own. **Solva Surgery's dedicated, adjoining, spacious car park** is ideal and it has flat, level access to the building. This is especially important for those with mobility problems.

St David's by contrast only has limited parking in front and the public car parks are a considerable distance away, necessitating a long walk to the surgery. Also, St David's becomes extremely busy and congested in the holiday months - and finding parking anywhere is very difficult.

Fishguard Health Centre access is also difficult. There are only 6/7 parking spaces at the front. They are **not reserved** for the Health Centre - and are also used by people going to the nearby pharmacy as well as by the general public. There are only one or two disabled parking spaces in the staff car park at the rear. The public car park is quite a distance away involving a fair walk up and around to the front of the building and there can be problems with the payment machine.

Bus Services are infrequent and inconvenient; there are many people who do not live anywhere near the route; travelling by bus is not really an option if someone is unwell/elderly/disabled.

● **Facilities/Services**

Solva has superb facilities - a pleasant, spacious Waiting Room; 3 Consulting Rooms; a Minor Ops/Treatment Room; another Treatment Room; a Counselling Room. In addition to providing Primary Care as a general surgery, Solva has various clinics (eg. Asthma) and also provides outreach clinics/services from Withybush - a Heart Failure Nurse and Mental Health Care. Community care is provided by 'Solva Care' who also use the

surgery. Physiotherapy treatment is provided and this is also accessed here by St Davids Surgery patients. (St Davids does not have the space for this.)

- **Dispensary/Pharmacies**

We were shocked to hear in the online meeting for councillors that in an LHB run option there would be **no** Dispensary. The alternatives for our area all pose parking problems. St Davids: Well Pharmacy - has similar serious parking problems to St Davids Surgery (and is located some distance away from it). It already has an excessive workload and is 'at capacity'. Fishguard: Lloyds Pharmacy - the same parking problems as the Health Centre; Boots Pharmacy - no parking and located on a busy, 'through road'. Goodwick: Myrtle Pharmacy - double yellow lines in front, limited parking nearby, a steep flight of steps up from the public car park below. These difficulties of access and parking are of particular relevance to those patients needing to collect **repeat prescriptions**. However, we have just become aware that the Solva Practice is in contact with the Dispensing Doctors Association with regard to continuing a **Dispensary** in the future. This would be **invaluable**.

- **Dispersal**

The dispersal of 2,500 patients to other local practices is unimaginable - and that of some 1,700 to St Davids even more so. In December 2022, St Davids Surgery posted online that *'we are unable to automatically accept registration from people living within our practice boundary at the present time. The increasing number of patients wishing to register with us is making it more and more difficult to provide a sustainable service to our patients'*. Also, St Davids has very limited surgery space in comparison with Solva.

Dispersal would be an **upheaval** for patients. **Continuity of care** is important for people who are ill and vulnerable, as is being treated in familiar surroundings by staff they know. In a practice the size of **Fishguard's** (10,000 plus patients and 7 or 8 doctors) this could be a problem.

- **Questionnaire**

We are very concerned that - should the **number/percentage of responses** be a factor in the assessment/consideration of those responses - then the results may be adversely affected, since we have been told that all patients of Solva Surgery have been sent questionnaires, including babies and toddlers. As the 'age boxes' in the questionnaire start at '18-24' - this means there will be a considerable number of 'unreturned' responses since parents may not have responded on their family's behalf.

- **Conclusion**

As was pointed out in the online meeting for councillors, only two options remain regarding the future of Solva Surgery, given the time factor involved. It is felt that **Dispersal** is **not** a real option, given the numbers involved, and the upheaval and inherent difficulties that would be faced by so many patients – and **we oppose** this option.

The only **reasonable** and **acceptable** option is for the Health Board to take over the running of the Surgery - at least for a period of time (until perhaps another GP Practice might take over the contract) - especially as we understand that Dr Dhadvai is in agreement with, and fully supportive of, this option.

The **closure** of Solva Surgery would be a **great disservice** to the community.

We strongly urge the Health Board to take over the running of Solva Surgery as a managed practice.


Chair - Mathry Community Council