

Written Responses

New Hospital Site Consultation



During the consultation the Health Board received 24 emails and 3 letter submissions. Any typing errors within the submitted emails have not been corrected.

Emails received from members of the public:

- Oh my goodness, is it April 1st already , what happened to March ?
What is the point of wasting everyone's time by having a public consultation when you don't want to listen to the wishes of the people of Pembrokeshire and have no doubt made your minds up already. We don't want or need a new hospital . We need you to fund Witybush , which has always been an excellent hospital, and encourage doctors to come to the area not deter them . I am not going to waste my time going over all the arguments as now it is probably too late and you never listened to them anyway . All I can say is that you should be ashamed of yourselves and I hope you will all be self satisfied when you have blood on your hands .
- No, Dont move to an inaccessible site out of Pembs, no. No public transport and abandoning my county!
- I have just seen that there will be open consultations regarding sites for the new hospital . I can see there is no venue for the Llandovery/ Llandeilo area . I wonder why ? I tell you why because we that live in this area are the furthest from the so call super hospital and you don't want any objections from this area as it's the furthest for us to travel .All the consultations are in the area where you are going to build , you know that we here in Llandovery and even further would be most at risk if there is an emergency . I live 5 miles from Llandovery and Glangwili Carmarthen is far enough for people in this area even to travel . No matter what objections that people in this area have you are going to build this so called super hospital . Why don't you improve Glangwili hospital it already has a fairly new A& E department ? Also have you thought where you are going to have staff for this hospital ? IYou can't even fill places in Carmarthen which is more central . They can't get staff in the new Grange hospital in Cwmbran . So you build and spend billions on this hospital and then you don't have the staff to run it where is the common sense in this . As a retired nurse I am absolutely disgusted that you are even thinking of building this hospital in Whitland /St Clears . Just think of the population living in Llandeilo/Llandovery area and see how far they have to travel even to Carmarthen . I have heard that there will be Air Ambulances for areas like us to provide emergency care . This service is great but relaying on donations etc to run it which is outrageous to be honest . The nhs should pay for this service and not relay on donations. With the cuts to NHS I can not understand the amount of money you are going to spend on this new hospital. Absolutely scandalous . Have you considered how far mothers in labour have to travel from here to even Carmarthen . I had to travel to Carmarthen when in labour over35 miles luckily I got there in time and there were no complications . So expectant mothers will now have to travel even further .I don't believe that you will keep the other hospitals open Glangwili /Llanelli you will gradually close them down as you will not have the staff and the money to run them . So trying to say that these hospitals will still be running is untrue . Shame on you big planners and executives who think you know the lot and have so much power you do not listen to the people and you will just go ahead and do what you want to anyway . As long as the population in that area are catered for that's fine by you never mind about rural areas . I just hope that I and my family and friends have good health I would hate to have to travel to Whitland /St Clears in an emergency and to visit sick relatives so far from here . I suggest you look at the map and see how far we have to travel even to Carmarthen hospital. As for consultations on where to build this hospital don't get me started again . The chiefs and the powers have decided anyway any consultations will be ignored but you have got to show that people have been consulted it's a joke

- I note yet another 'public consultation' is to happen, about the precise siting of the grand new hospital, whether it shall be in Whitland, or maybe St Clears, or just possibly somewhere in between.....I would go for Star or maybe Meidrim, myself, but there's no accounting for personal taste. WHAT IS VERY OBVIOUS IS THAT NONE OF THESE PLACES IS APPROPRIATE, BUT I NOTE IN THE INVITATION THAT THIS DECISION "HAS ALREADY BEEN MADE ".

Any large hospital development will rely on its ancillary staff to get it running, not just the clever doctors which Hywel Dda has shown itself incapable of attracting, and proximity to a largish town is essential to be able to recruit and keep these essential workers. The public does not need to be asked if they would like a new, better hospital service.....of course they would! What they want is a quality hospital which is easy to access from all parts of Hywel Dda territory.

The present exercise is a Hywel Dda whitewash. The survey that Hywel Dda needs to do is a nationwide survey of physicians and surgeons in training, to find out their needs and aspirations, and what might tempt them to come to work, permanently, in this part of the world.

As a start a change of name from Hywel Dda to a place which can be found on a map, like Carmarthen or Llanelli or Haverfordwest might be considered. An education allowance for children to have a non-Welsh education would be another. (I can hear the Nationalists heavy breathing at this!)

And then the roads. What about a moratorium on any hospital new build before its new access roads have been completed, not just 'promised', so that all the community and other existing hospitals--promised to be developed--are no more than 30 minutes apart, by road? Consultants come to work, not sit in cars, no matter how scenic the journey. And ambulance personnel have been known to go on strike!

And what of the green future, when we shall all have to travel by bus or train? Just think of a hospital which doesn't need a carpark.....perhaps the new hospital should be next to a train station (which brings us back to Whitland!).Aberystwyth to Whitland via Shrewsbury and Cardiff would make a nice preface to having ones haemorrhoids or cataracts seen to!

In the past week we have seen that the Welsh government may not have got all its hospital /health planning right. Hywel Dda is taking short cuts which may prove dangerous (e.g. physiotherapists substituting for orthopaedic surgeons and neurologists, as in CMATS). It is to be hoped that Hywel Dda does not go the same way as Betsi Cadwallader. The proposed consultation suggests it doesn't know how best to spend its money. Consultations don't come as cheap as consultants, and the edge of Carmarthen is the obvious place for a major hospital development. The public needs to know what facilities will still be available in the existing hospitals when it all comes about.

PS. Reading this it seems a bit Consultant biased.....no mention of managers.....but isn't this what specialised hospitals are all about?

- May I respectfully ask that you please give time to read the following: -

Pembrokeshire is home to some 125,000 residents; 17% are under 16 years of age and 25% are aged 65 years and over so it will be nigh impossible for very many to participate in the consultation due to the strictly limited number (9) "drop-in" events to be held at such

inconvenient venues around the county. The consultation will merely be a public relation exercise yet again to no doubt. "tick all of the necessary boxes" in order to obtain the £1.3 billion investment necessary for the plan to become reality.

All Pembrokeshire residents are entitled to view such important plans and documents and engage in public discussions at locally convenient venues: i.e. most communities are able to facilitate a meeting in a community hall or can share. Any decision relevant to future health services will affect residents in the county so surely ALL have an interest in the proposed long-term plans and be able to discuss "the wider strategy" aimed at improving health and care in this region - without the narrow time limit as suggested by the drop in events to complete the survey.

IF the UHB seriously wishes to understand the views of the people who will be affected, will the Board members please consent to distribute copies of the plans to each Town and Community Council in Pembrokeshire during the consultation period advertised rather than accept the half-hearted public relations results that the "consultation" will inevitably produce from the events.

Maria Battle, Hywel Dda UHB, suggests the Board wish to provide more care in the community by removing vital services away from Withybush General Hospital to a new facility 20 miles further on from the county town. Will someone be kind enough to explain how travelling 20 miles further for treatment, with increased time and costs for patients to so do, is an improved service?

Should (or when) the planned hospital eventually come to fruition at either Whitland or St. Clears (or why not consider Cardigan as a much more practical site on a regular bus route) will there be a dedicated bus service available from Haverfordwest for people including disabled, elderly etc, who have no car or do not drive; for people who may be required to travel by rail will there be financial assistance available to cover expensive train - or dare I say taxi - fares? Further travel by patients and staff will also inevitably increase the carbon footprint.

I understand that in order to manage life-threatening accident injuries, a centre of excellence is available at University Hospital in Cardiff. As a vital part of this network, both Withybush and Bronglais General hospitals A&E departments are dedicated trauma facilities providing emergency treatment prior to patients being transferred to Cardiff? I believe the Minister of Health and Wellbeing instigated the trauma network thus proving the necessity to retain an A&E department at Withybush.

Ambulance resources for Pembrokeshire are sparse so will this be addressed and sufficient qualified staff recruited? Will medical personnel be available to adequately staff a new and vast complex?

Pembrokeshire is a popular tourist destination and very recently a fire occurred on the Fishguard ferry that could have been a more serious incident, the oil refinery is another potential hazard, lifeboat emergencies inevitably occur as well as the myriad daily emergencies within the county.

A new hospital at either planned site will increase the mileage by some 20 miles thus using up the 'golden hour' so utterly vital in an emergency situation.

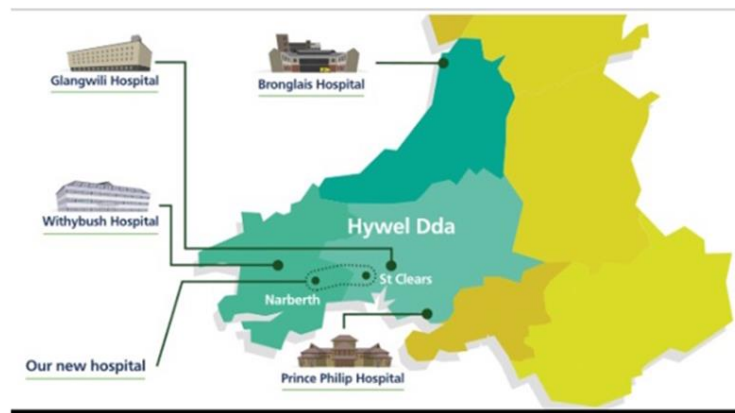
Residents in their hundreds have gathered on numerous occasions to seek the retention of all resources in an efficient and well-maintained Wthybush General Hospital - people's views and wishes were subsequently ignored by UHB on each occasion so I hope you will please excuse my cynicism for harbouring serious doubts that no matter whatever heartfelt and practical views the public express during the 'consultation' plans will go ahead with a decision no doubt already agreed.

As a courtesy, I can inform you that I intend to circulate this correspondence to whom it may concern.

- First of all where are you going to get the staff to work in this super Hospital? You are going to spend millions on this new hospital and I really can't see you getting the staff . Nursing staff Doctors are leaving the NH S many to do private work . Living in Llandoverly the furthest point from where your proposed hospital you obviously not thinking about us more rural areas . It's far enough to travel to Glangwilli hospital from here and now your taking it even further . Absolutely terrible news for us living in this area . Why don't you spend the money to improve Glangwilli . The A&E unit is fairly new but you are trying to say that this unit is outdated and needs money spent on it ,funny that this is coming out in the media now an excuse to get rid of it to make the excuse to build a new one in this so called state of the art hospital . I do not think that a new hospital will encourage new staff to apply to work there . A complete waste of money but worse than that the distance to travel in a emergency . The distance to travel for treatment ,to see family members that are hospitalised in this new hospital is just ridiculous . So I have no interest in where you are building this hospital as it's very inconsiderate of you planners and NH S bosses to build it so far from us in Llandoverly and surrounding areas .But I'm sure you are going to go ahead with this multimillion hospital the powers have decided no matter what objections you will get . I have worked in the NH S as a trained nurse and feel really let down with your decision to build this hospital so far from this area .

- Asked if they had a name for the new hospital and was told they did not - he has requested to pass on his choice of name which is Queen Elizabeth as there is already a Prince Philip in Llanelli - thank you

- "I submit the following regarding the proposed super-hospital in SWWales.



With two sites under consideration, the name Whitland has been omitted from the map.

Why is Bronglais shown?

This rural area does not have the required infrastructure* in place. Downgrade it to a cottage hospital

*Road, air ambulance, hotels, churches, restaurants, schools, housing, shops, railway water supply, sewers, internet, broadband etc

The close proximity of 'St. Clears' to Glangwili Hospital on the above map appears that it is located there, not in Carmarthen.

- On March 10th I attended an open meeting in Cardigan held by Hywel Dda NHS Trust as part of their consultation about the new acute hospital site.

I am writing to you because I believe all sites in consideration are unsuitable due to 2 main reasons:-

1) The location of all sites are too far east which may have an impact on the sustainability of the service.

The Narberth site was previously eliminated based on this reason - a fact clearly stated within the consultation document (see bottom of page 17). The clinical appraisal group were concerned that being too far east may lead to a reduction in the number of people having their babies in Hywel Dda which could also affect neonatal and paediatric care and could pose a risk to the critical amount of activity needed to keep services safe and sustainable. It states that this in turn could have a negative impact on the number of beds kept and of keeping trainee status and their ability to train doctors, nurses and midwives.

I worked as a senior midwife in Ceredigion/Hywel Dda for over 20 years prior to my retirement in 2012. Historically prior to the inception of Hywel Dda, a very large percentage of people from the Llanelli, Gwendraeth and lower Amman Valley area would choose to have their obstetric care in West Glamorgan. They were historically resistant to coming to Carmarthen for their care. I can see the additional distance for people to travel to the new proposed Hywel Dda sites at St Clears or Whitland becoming an issue again if the acute hospital is moved further away from them. After all why travel the extra distance to the new acute hospital in Hywel Dda if there is another acute hospital able to provide the same level of service that is more accessible and closer to your home at Singleton Hospital.

Maternity care in low risk cases is provided by midwives in community locations but well over 50% of cases (if I remember correctly) require obstetric input which involves regular attendances at obstetric antenatal clinics as well as acute hospital inpatient care while giving birth and for any complications that can arise before, during and after this event. And if I was involved in an obstetric emergency in a midwife led unit at Prince Philip Hospital, I would choose to take my patient to the closest emergency facility which is Singleton Hospital.

These kinds of decisions may impact emergency transfers in other areas of service such as medical or surgical emergencies although I have no knowledge of these matters.

2) The location is poorly served by public transport links if you are travelling from Ceredigion and North and West Powys.

This is important because although Hywel Dda state that they are aiming to deliver services in more community centres there are a number of specialist services which they are only able to provide in the acute hospital - again a maternity service issue.

Bronglais hospital does not have a neonatal baby unit and only operates as a transitional care unit. What this means for the service is that women who are in premature Labour with a gestation of less than 34 weeks gestation are transferred to the hospital which is able to provide the level of care that might be needed should the baby be born.

Additionally women who have diabetes or diabetes of pregnancy (an ever increasing number in view of the obesity epidemic) are monitored in specialist dual obstetric and diabetic clinics during their pregnancy - presently at Glangwili General Hospital. This would mean several journeys during pregnancy for each person for their antenatal care and the delivery is also planned for the specialist obstetric unit - not Bronglais Hospital. (The other planned units within the trust are midwifery units - not obstetric units.)

There may be other conditions which require specialist monitoring in pregnancy which are currently done at Glangwili hospital rather than elsewhere which would then need to take place in the new acute hospital.

Also historically when the units were extremely busy and there was inadequate staff to care for patients in labour in one unit the patients were transferred to other neighbouring obstetric units. I do not know if this practice is ongoing but it used to be a major cause of distress for the people of North Ceredigion and Powys who were affected because of the distances involved. Patients who historically deliver at Bronglais Hospital live as far north as Tywyn in Gwynedd and as far east as Newtown and Rhyadr in Powys if they are unsuitable for the midwifery led units in Powys as there are no obstetric units in Powys.

The public transport network in Ceredigion is poor and has reduced considerably since the Covid pandemic and definitely does not link directly to either St Clears or Whitland. It requires numerous changes and considerable cost and time. There is no Sunday service and the rail network between Aberystwyth and anywhere to its south is non-existent.

However I have zero confidence that this will be a consideration for Hywel Dda health board. After all, the new integrated care centre at Cardigan while no doubt providing an excellent range of services for the community is very poorly served by a bus service with elderly people in my community - which is only 2 miles north of Cardigan and on the T5 bus route (one of the best bus routes in Ceredigion) - telling me that they are unable to go there to see a doctor by public transport "because it doesn't work" and are unable to afford a taxi - I'm told it costs £22 for a round trip. The people of Cardigan were very vocal about their opposition to the particular location of this facility. But it went ahead anyway.

My decision to write to you all concerning the above issues is that I believe that your public consultation is inadequately framed to address the pertinent issues stated. As well as being unsustainable for Hywel dda health board it has the potential to put additional pressures on services in West Glamorgan and other health board.

I have attempted to send this email to both Maria Battle and Steve Moore, chair and CEO of Hywel Dda health board via their advertised email address but the server rejected both.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>I have expressed any concerns at the meetings but it seems you have already decided the hospital will be built further West. I'm afraid we in the llanelli area will find it easier to travel to Morryston which is a shame. It is difficult to get to Glangwili let alone further West. It'll be alright for people at the Carmarthen end. Local hospitals should have had the opportunity to be totally upgraded instead where communities could be looked after.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>To whom it concerns, We have had our say , and as usual you have NOT listened, you never have , you will do what you want as you have always done ! We do not want our urgent care or downgrading of Withybush hospital, and you will have people's deaths on your hands ,but you don't care ,you never have</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>my late husband 53 missed his golden hr, waited almost 2hrs for ambulance then to get to GGH then wait for a team. !!! Absolutely no hope said this to the Chief Exec years ago in a private meeting. God help us trying to get down line may as well stay at home and die , sorry yes I cannot even think of it , trying to get there in a emergency, I truly hope llanelli people can go to Morryston !!!! , wish my husband had ,</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Thank you for that information although it does puzzle me because however many meetings you have, you do not listen to what the people are saying to you.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>"This appears to be a fait accompli rather than an opportunity to express an opinion on maintaining a service in Withybush. Recruit and fulfil the potential of the existing hospital , surely this is the main message constantly being presented to the committee.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>I have read the Summary Consultation document and attended one of the Consultation forums and would appreciate clarification of a number of points.</p> <p>There would appear to be considerable duplication and overlap between the proposed new “urgent and planned care” hospital, the existing hospitals of Glangwili, Withybush, Bronglas and Prince Philip and the new “community facilities” sited at 18 points around the LHB area. It is unclear to which facility a patient with a medical need would go for testing, care or treatment and what medical expertise would be available at each site. Will this be the responsibility of GP’s in local surgeries to determine the appropriate point to which to refer?</p> <p>How is this multi site structure compatible with the suggested benefits of the new single site hospital centralising facilities and expertise to replace the existing 4 site hospital structure. The role and operational scope of the newly named Community Hospitals of Glangwili and Withybush is very unclear.</p> <p>Whilst there is much concentration on the new hospital, there is less detail on the provisions of all the other sites. For example what are the plans for transport of patients to each centre and what parking facilities are proposed, particularly for the multitude of community facility sites.</p> <p>Are the costs for all the new facilities included in the £1.3bn proposed budget?</p>

	<p>One of the most major problems with the current system is the inadequacy of social care and the lack of integration of this with the health service. What are the plans to rectify this and is any of the proposed funding set aside to improve social care in the community and if not why not.</p> <p>I would be grateful for clarification of these points.</p> <p>My interests embrace the operation of a community stroke support group and I wonder if you are able to provide a speaker to give a presentation to this group outlining the thoughts on the development of health care in the community at some future date.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>New hospital should be built in carmarthen near the show ground.we at llandovery have to travel almost 1 hr now to get to glangwilli alone moving it further afield.also that st Clears Rd Is dangerous allready accidents all the time,we hate driving on it.people of Llandovery are against the move needs to be carmarthen catchment area, people be dead before getting to St Clears or whitland. Build a multi storey car pk at glangwilli to help .</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>"Objection to proposed downgrading of services at Glangwili Hospital (Carmarthen)</p> <p>This submission is made in a family capacity in response to public consultation by Hywel Dda Health Board on fundamental change to planned and urgent care facilities affecting residents in Carmarthenshire. We strongly object to the downgrading of services at Glangwili Hospital (Carmarthen) that will see removal of the Emergency Department and withdrawal of overnight beds. The proposal to relocate and centralise services in a new Planned and Urgent Care Hospital to be located at either St Clears or Whitland will have significant detrimental effects on the accessibility and quality of emergency care for residents in Carmarthenshire. Increased distances from home will cause additional distress to patients and family members and disproportionately adversely affect those most vulnerable within the community. Further, we are concerned that the proposed concentration of services will exacerbate existing challenges in recruitment and retention of medical professionals, particularly specialists.</p> <p>In covering the three counties of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire, we fear that the Health Board is seeking to 'rationalise' service provision over too wide a geographical area with too poor infrastructure and availability of public transport: rather than 'optimising', this risks 'deterioration' of service provision and poorer patient outcomes.</p> <p>Current proposals will see the downgrading of not only Glangwili Hospital (Carmarthen) but also Withybush Hospital (Haverford West): both to become 'community hospitals' with transfer of planned and urgent care to the new hospital at St Clears or Whitland. Intending to cater to residents of both Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire, this covers too vast a catchment area. Extending from St. David's and Fishguard in the west to Llandovery in the east, this will substantially increase travel distances and times, leading to delays to receipt of urgent medical attention. This risks severe consequences in life-threatening situations where every minute counts. This will also serve to cause additional distress and difficulty to family members visiting loved-ones at times of health emergency.</p> <p>In proposing sites for the new hospital, the Health Board has provided options based on the determining factor of being 'within an hour car journey for most populations in our area'. This is a poor metric for decision making. First because it serves to significantly increase journey</p>

times for the majority of residents. Second, and most troubling, it lacks evidence to provide assurance that it is an acceptable standard for individuals requiring immediate and life-saving medical attention. Emergencies largely require rapid response and treatment, and any delay in accessing the necessary facilities could have severe consequences. Moreover, the assessment appears to overlook the realities of the local road network, particularly the limitations of the A40, which primarily consists of a single carriageway between Llandovery and Whitland. Congestion during peak times is a common occurrence and the summer tourist season places additional strain on the road network, with higher volumes of traffic leading to disruptions and increased travel time. Failing to consider these factors does not provide confidence to service users that the 'within an hour car journey for most' criterion is medically appropriate or a realistic measure of accessibility to emergency care.

In light of this, it is also disingenuous of the Health Board to suggest that the new hospital will lead to a reduced carbon footprint when the increased journey times will result in higher emissions by service users.

Further, the 'within an hour car journey for most' rule of thumb fails to take into account the poor provision of local public transport and the impact on those reliant upon its use. By primarily focusing on car drivers and car owners, the Health Board's proposed approach is likely to disproportionately adversely affect individuals on lower incomes, the elderly, and those living with existing medical conditions who may not have access to private vehicles or find it challenging to navigate public transport. All residents, regardless of their mode of transport or means, should have equitable access to emergency services; however, we fear that the Health Board's proposed changes will exacerbate existing health inequalities.

The Health Board puts forward the argument that the centralisation of planned and urgent care will make services less fragile; we worry that this will in fact have the opposite result. The proposition is flawed as it does not address the fundamental challenge faced in West Wales in terms of attracting and retaining the necessary numbers of medical professionals, and particularly those most specialist, who can be deterred by our rural location, relative lack of amenities and poor infrastructure. In which regard, the location of the new hospital in Whitland or St Clears is, sadly, no more attractive than Carmarthen. By concentrating emergency services at a single location, we fear that this risks overburdening the new hospital with a higher patient volume, resulting in increased pressure on medical staff, potential burnout and decreased retention rates – serving to impair the effectiveness and sustainability of emergency services in the region. We therefore implore the Health Board to maintain essential emergency services and the provision of overnight care at Glangwili Hospital."

- Travelling to the meeting earlier this evening I was inclined not to support the possibility of downgrading West Wales General Hospital and to build a new Hospital at, either, St Clears or Narberth area.

Possibly the main reasons being,

- a. I felt that the "write off" of current, specialist, equipment at the West Wales General Hospital site could not be justified in the event of the new site development
- b. Access – West Wales General Hospital has excellent access from all parts of the county and surrounding areas, whereas the new site does not ?

However, following tonight's – excellent – presentation I am pleased to add that, in principal, I support the "New Hospital Site" ambition as matters are, at present, and I look forward to the publication of more detailed proposals.

I do have continuing concerns with regard to access to the proposed new sites, being the very high volume of traffic on the St Clears to Carmarthen dual carriageway and the Carmarthen to Cross Hands and, indeed to Pont Abraham roundabouts, especially during Bank holidays.

The dual carriageway can be, nearly, "grid locked", with traffic stationary for a mile or two, being holiday traffic – this is a very regular occurrence at every Bank holiday. My concern would be the difficulty experienced by ambulances in these situations to access accidents and to return to the hospital with patients ?

However, on balance, I am pleased to confirm my support for this part of the consultation and I wish you every success as you, hopefully, develop this exciting initiative."

- Yesterday, I attended a consultation meeting organised by the management committee at Tregroes School (now community centre) about the new hospital site for Hywel Dda University Health Board. The event was well-attended, especially considering that there was no more than one week's notice; and that unfortunately it took place on the last day of the consultation. Many of us, including myself, completed questionnaires at the time, but I hope that these further comments will also be taken into consideration, as there was insufficient time to bring them fully to the Board's attention yesterday. I am also addressing this to Elin Jones AM, Health Minister Eluned Morgan, and Steve Moore the Chief Executive.

The consultation took place in a cordial atmosphere and the Board's representatives were approachable and sympathetic. However, I must draw to your attention that this was the first time I had become aware that plans for a new hospital were at this stage. (I had heard some rumours from local conversations.) I appreciate that the consultation exercise may not be of sufficient importance to merit the national news (and I am not a follower of social media), but there are numerous community notice boards which surely could have been used to draw attention to the project. My husband and I have also visited our local doctors' surgery, Glangwili Hospital and Covid vaccination centres over the past year, without being made aware of it. (No leaflets or posters, for example.) These would seem very easy targets for publicity, which were sadly overlooked.

No-one could doubt the overdue need for a new hospital in the Health Board's area, and the associated proposals to improve community healthcare are to be welcomed. (We can only hope they come to fruition!) But the main issue raised at yesterday's meeting was the difficulty in accessing any of the proposed new sites from this part of Ceredigion. In particular, I was astonished to see that all 3 sites under consideration are within only minutes' drive of each other, and all are in the Whitland/St Clears area. The consultation document indicates that in fact the last 5 shortlisted sites were all in this same area, and I am not aware of any other locations given serious consideration. It is, frankly, irrelevant to people in this area which site is chosen: they are all at least an hour's drive away, with no direct public transport (which would take even longer), and even less from the many villages (rather than towns) in which the scattered population lives.

	<p>It is obvious from even a cursory glance at the map that this concentrates acute and serious emergency hospital care in the southern part of the region, with the other acute hospital way up in the north, in Aberystwyth. The point was made several times yesterday that Carmarthen is far superior to the chosen sites in terms of population size (making the provision viable), housing potential for staff, public transport access (such as it is!) and drive time from here. This is borne out by your own maps in the technical documents indicating journey time, ambulance access and accident hotspots. When questioned in detail about the discussions that were being held with Transport for Wales, County Councils and the Transport Minister, it became clear that the Health Board has no power to require improved public transport links, and can rely only on hope and lobbying.</p> <p>My personal experience of healthcare in this part of Wales, whilst fortunately limited, has on the whole been good - given the financial and workforce constraints which are no fault of the Hywel Da authority. But I am sad to say that the decisions made about the site of the new hospital seem extremely unsatisfactory, and the opportunities for local people to feed in serious alternative proposals has been (almost if not entirely) non-existent.</p> <p>I wish you all well in your endeavours to improve health and wellbeing in this part of Wales, and I hope that feedback from the consultation will be taken in the constructive spirit in which it is meant."</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>I just wish to state that I personally and my family do not support any of the sites being considered as the distance from our home would be much further and not only further that Carmarthen we would be required to travel cross country on very rural often narrow and windy which would add extra travelling time which would be very stressful in an emergency. Added to this fact there would be no public transport that we would be able to use as it is rural. We would be required to get a bus to Carmarthen and then try and get a link to the new site of hospital, at present we get a link bus to the nearest main route for pick up by public service bus [which is only every 2 hours] and that then takes us straight to the Hospital in Carmarthen. There are a multitude of reasons where none of the recommended sites would be suitable for us.</p>

Emails received from organisations	
Ceredigion Public Service Board respondent	Further to the Ceredigion Public Service Board held and communication/material issued denoting the three possible future sites, I can confirm that Policing within our region is impacted by the presence of Urgent Care Facilities and Mental Health related facilities. To that end it would be welcomed that use of and the provision of facilities to house policing is considered in the new development at any of the three possible sites, and opportunities to provide input into the preferred site is considered.
Ceredigion Public Service Board respondent	Following on from the new hospital presentation at the recent Ceredigion PSB meeting, there were discussions and suggestion made around involvement of partner agencies. The theme was primarily my blue light colleagues and I seeking to work with you in relation to the project.

<p>Aberystwyth Town Council</p>	<p>Consultation: Hywel Dda – New Hospital Site. Deadline 19 May 2023.</p> <p>Councillors were of the unanimous view that the focus should be on upgrading Glangwili and Withybush because of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility: in terms of both distance and the nature of the road network eg a councillor had recently been unable to travel beyond South Ceredigion due to flooding yet the locations proposed would encourage people to use cars. Many service users in the Bronglais catchment area visit Glangwili for specialist services. The proposed locations would make it even more difficult for patients from places such as Tywyn and Llanidloes. • Loss of services: Services will be moved down to the new hospitals without warning – many patients are sent to Glangwili currently. • Equalities: the cost of transport and availability. There are good bus links with Carmarthen but not to the new hospital locations. There are many who physically cannot travel long distances and ambulance services are already stretched • Staffing: the attraction of a brand new hospital for staff and the impact on staffing levels at the other hospitals • The financial implications: it represents a waste of money <p>An open afternoon (2pm-7pm) is being held at the Morlan on 21 April</p>
<p>Llanelli Town Council</p>	<p>Many thanks for your consultation on the above mentioned proposals. The matter has been considered by the members of Llanelli Town Council at their meeting last evening, where the following motion was approved as a consultation response for submission to the Health Board and elected members.</p> <p>Llanelli Town Council expresses its concern at the proposals by Hywel Dda University Health Board to relocate its new Urgent Care hospital in a new location in either Whitland or St. Clears.</p> <p>Llanelli Town Council is concerned that the interests and needs of the health services of the people of Llanelli are not being met by the Hywel Dda University Health Board and that serious consideration should be given to exploring the possibility of Llanelli district being removed from the Hywel Dda University Health Board’s area and instead forming part of the neighbouring Swansea Bay Health Board. The Town Council also reiterates the support it has previously expressed for the SOSPPAN Campaign and the option B+ suggested for hospital services in the area.</p> <p>Llanelli Town Council calls upon our constituency and regional Members of the Senedd to support this proposal and formally requests that the Welsh Government Health Minister explores and considers this proposal.</p>

Paul Davies
Assembly Member
Preseli
Pembrokeshire

"I'm writing to submit my views to Hywel Dda University Health Board in response to the consultation on choosing a site for a new Urgent and Planned Care Hospital in west Wales. I stand by the view that the creation of a new hospital site would severely undermine services at Withybush General Hospital and as such, I do not support the Health Board's proposals.

The Health Board is acutely aware of the concerns of many people living in Pembrokeshire that there has been a constant erosion of services from their local hospital for several years and that the Health Board's latest plans will once again, remove services. Those concerns are not unfounded and many remain deeply concerned that plans to create a new hospital in west Wales will not only centralise services away from Withybush but also undermine the very future of the hospital.

Secondly, the Welsh Government has created large hospital sites in other parts of Wales, where services have been taken from some hospitals and centralised on one site. In my view, that has not led to improved outcomes for patients and I'm concerned that this might become the case in west Wales too. There is nothing in the consultation literature that reflects on the impact of changes in other parts of Wales to learn lessons from them.

The Health Board consultation states that the plans come ""at a time of austerity for our communities as every person is having to consider how they can maintain their health, wellbeing, and lifestyles in these challenging times."" Therefore, it stands to reason that the Health Board should be investing in its current assets and ensuring that they can continue to serve their communities, rather than urging the Welsh Government to spend over a billion pounds on a new site.

The creation of a new hospital would result in longer transport times for patients, as outlined in the Health Board's consultation document. Nevertheless, the average times provided do not recognise the substandard transport infrastructure in west Wales, or the high levels of traffic on major roads in Pembrokeshire, particularly during the summer months.

Indeed, there also seems to be no reference to the fact that the Welsh Government has announced a freeze on new road building projects in Wales. As a result, it's unlikely that the Health Board would be able to facilitate any changes to the road network to accommodate a new hospital site. Furthermore, there has not been enough thought behind how the Health Board will be supporting people to make sustainable travel choices and there is little information in the consultation on how the Health Board intends to do this.

I also have concerns that the Health Board will struggle to attract health care service workers, as the new hospital is not suitably supported by a robust public transport network and does not have a large population surrounding it. Indeed, as so many people are struggling with the increased cost of living, there aren't any plans that detail how the Health Board will ensure the site is fully staffed.

For these reasons, I ask you to reconsider centralising services away from Pembrokeshire on a new site and instead invest in the Health Board's existing hospital infrastructure. I trust that this consultation process will be open and transparent and that the views and points made by so many people who have responded, will be fully considered."

Llais	<p>We are writing to set out our recommendations following public consultation related to hospital site selection and to provide a balanced commentary on the issues and themes that were identified. It will also remind HDUHB of the recommendations made by HDCHC on Transforming Clinical Services which were adopted by HDUHB on 26th September 2018.</p> <p>We will continue to represent the views of the public through the next stages of this programme and continue to welcome comments and views from the public as we do so.</p> <p>Llais attended each of the public consultation drop-in events and online events. We have also monitored social media comments where possible. We felt that the Health Board's approach was generally very good with welcoming events and helpful senior staff present to discuss the options and wider clinical model. Some of the travel time information was confusing for the public and meant that some conversations started on the wrong foot. Otherwise we felt that the consultation period was well-run and appropriate given the site selection focus.</p> <p>Llais does not have a favoured option as we must represent the views of all and there were natural differences in terms of outlook.</p> <p>Themes coming through the events</p> <p>Transport</p> <p>In a number of discussions we took part in, the public were concerned about the impact that a new hospital in St Clears or Whitland zones would have on ambulance response times.</p> <p>An issue that was raised regularly during the consultation centred around transport and being able to access NHS services. For some it was an overriding issue, with one saying; "I don't care where the hospitals are, if I can't get there it doesn't matter"</p> <p>For Llais it is certainly a fundamental issue that is critical to the success of the proposals being made by the Health Board. It was clear during the consultation that HDUHB would require more transport capacity in the future. Many people felt that the current provision does not meet their needs now.</p> <p>People were also worried that transport infrastructure was not currently sufficient to support the logistical challenges of many people accessing a new hospital.</p> <p>Llais feels that whilst there has been much discussion around the financial investment needed to build a new hospital, Health Board must look at patient transport strategically and innovatively with a commitment to invest appropriately. It will be important that looking to the future, this model is based on a sound understanding of transport needs as service changes develop and that providers of transport services are put on a sound footing to meet those needs as stated in the 2018 HDCHC response (recommendation 5) to Transforming Clinical Services</p>
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Recommendation 1

We expect the Health Board to make a clear commitment to placing transport at the heart of its strategic plans with a willingness to innovate, a clear understanding of need, and appropriate funding to meet those needs. Transport providers including third sector providers need to be closely involved with planning

Access, urgent care and emergencies

Concerns about the limitations of local road infrastructure and the related impact for ambulances were raised by members of the public from the three counties, an issue that many felt was important especially when the A40 gets many road accidents and sometimes gridlocked within the summer months.

Recommendation 2

The Health Board will need to take an active role with stakeholders such as the County Councils in Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, the Highways Agency regarding road infrastructure.

Along with concerns around longer travel times, people highlighted worries that they may find it difficult to access services that could be more distant due to low income, and the cost of travel.

Parking was another area of concern given the difficult challenges people currently experience on some Health Board sites and there was a clear expectation that parking capacity should be generous in the planning process.

It was clear from many events that the public were worried about current emergency departments in Witybush and Glangwili becoming minor injuries services when the new hospital is built. The Health Board must commit to engaging further with the public around their urgent care needs so that they feel equipped to make the right choices. This may need to be a standalone process or form key part of future continuous engagement plans. From recently updated Guidance for Engagement and Consultation on Changes to Health Services (2023);

“The NHS must establish and sustain continuing engagement with citizens, staff, staff representative and professional bodies, stakeholders, third sector and partner organisations not only when changes are at issue, but also on a routine basis. It should give people the opportunity to understand its aspirations and achievements, and the challenges it faces, and to influence decisions about changes in direction and specific services developments”

Recommendation 3

The Health Board should engage with the public on planned changes to urgent care services at Glangwili and Witybush.

Staffing

	<p>The public were clearly aware of workforce issues being at the heart of current challenges and also the future solutions to those problems. They were also concerned that the proposals were assuming that clinicians would be attracted to work in the new system.</p> <p>“How are you going to staff the new hospital? The Health Board can’t get staff now “</p> <p>We feel that the Health Board must do more to demonstrate how it will develop and build the workforce necessary to make its proposals work. This would be an important foundation in developing public trust. Again, continuous engagement would be a helpful vehicle for in sharing workforce plans.</p> <p>Recommendation 4</p> <p>Continuous engagement with stakeholders and the public should highlight the progress that workforce plans are making</p> <p>Finally, you will recall that in 2018 Hywel Dda CHC made 18 recommendations after the Transforming Clinical Services consultation and we want to highlight the following which we feel still remain directly relevant to the overall transformation process:</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>For all services we expect the Health Board to ensure that no service change can take place which would lead to care that was less safe or of a lesser quality than existing services.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>We expect the Health Board to assure the public that no final decisions on removing specific services will be made until a fuller case is developed.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>We expect the Health Board to engage and where necessary consult further with the public on specific changes as a clearer picture of how new services would run emerges.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>It is apparent from attending the engagement events that people are passionate about their NHS. After attending all the engagement events, the main themes and worries of the public are transport, access, staffing, what services were going to be in the new hospitals and what was going to happen to Glangwili and Withybush hospitals. To bring the public along and to help shape NHS services early continuous engagement is need with the public of the three counties."</p>
<p>Letter from member of the public sent to the Chief Executive of Hywel Dda</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This letter shared personal information relating to the correspondent and therefore the content has not been reproduced in this document. The letter is available on request to Board Members.

