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Rhaglen Gwasanaeth Ymosodiada  
Rhywiol Cymru (RGYRC)  
Welsh Sexual Assault Service  
Programme (WSASP)

Llawr 1af / 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Tŷ Afon / River House  
Llys Ynys Bridge / Ynys Bridge Court  
Gwaelod-y-Garth / Gwaelod-y-Garth  
CAERDYDD / CARDIFF  
CF15 9SS / CF15 9SS

Ffôn \* Tel: 07825 863132  
Email \* Ebo: [joanna.williams@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:joanna.williams@wales.nhs.uk)

Lee Davies  
Executive Director of Planning  
Hywel Dda University Health Board

25 May 2023

Dear Lee,

**Re: Future Demand – Aberystwyth Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)**

I write this letter to provide an overview of the anticipated demand for inclusion in the business justification case proposed by Hywel Dda UHB that seeks to develop a purpose-built sexual assault referral centre on the Aberystwyth Integrated Care Centre site.

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) reported in March 2023 that volume of sexual offences recorded by the police has been increasing over the last decade although the numbers remain well below the number of victims estimated by the survey; the latest figures for the year ending March 2022 show an increase of 31%, compared with the previous year. In relation to the 50 predicted attendances to the new Aberystwyth site if there was an increase of 31% this would equate to an extra **15.5** acute attendances in a year.

In addition to this it is estimated by the CSEW that 1.1 million adults aged 16 years and over experienced sexual assault in the year ending March 2022 (798,000 women and 275,000 men). This equates to a prevalence rate of approximately 2.3% of adults (3.3% women and 1.2% men). It also estimates that approximately 16.6% of adults aged 16 years and over (7.9 million) had experienced sexual assault (including attempts) since the age of 16 years; 1.9 million were a victim of rape (7.7% women and 0.2% men).

It has been estimated that the incidence of sexual assault for the population that the new centre will cover is approximately 2700 per year, and for the current Aberystwyth site the estimate is 950 per year. However, when you combine acute and non-acute cases for Aberystwyth in 2021/22 there were only 83 attendances, so there is a significant gap between the anticipated prevalence and the actual attendances at the SARC which makes it difficult to predict demand going forward.

In addition to this the demand can also be affected by the impact of high-profile incidents, media coverage, and campaigns on people's willingness to report both recent and historical incidents to the police are likely to result in annual variations in the number of offences recorded by the police.

Yours sincerely

Joanna Williams

Welsh Sexual Assault Services Programme Director