

Public Questions pre-submitted to Health Board 25 May 2023

Question	Raised by	Answer
<p>How successful do the Health Board members consider their provision of health care for Tywyn residents has been in recent years with regard to the reduction and closure of services, e.g., inpatients ward, minor injuries and maternity services?</p>	<p>Tywyn Hospital Action Group</p>	<p>The Minor Injury Unit (MIU) service in Tywyn was closed on a temporary basis, as were other MIUs across the region, to support the increase in in-patient beds as part of the Covid pandemic response. Minor Injury departments were temporarily closed to release staff to work within the ward setting were Tywyn, Dolgellau and Bryn Beryl. To support managing patient demand away from the acute Emergency Department site it was agreed to retain 2 MIU facilities either side of Ysbyty Gwynedd, one in Alltwen and one in Ysbyty Penrhos Stanley.</p> <p>Since the Covid pandemic the NHS has seen many staff retire from the service and recruitment to replace staff has been difficult, despite several and ongoing attempts to recruit. As a consequence, staffing levels at both Tywyn and Dolgellau have not recovered to pre pandemic levels to achieve the numbers required to enable safe ward staffing, as well as staff to support the Minor Injury service. Due to the 24/7 nature of the in-patient wards, staffing the wards always takes priority over other services such as MIU. The Minor Injury service provision at alternate locations including Alltwen and Bronglais have been available in the interim, however we fully acknowledge that there is an increased need for patients to travel to access the service whilst the Tywyn MIU remains closed.</p>



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		<p>Progress in recruitment has been made over recent weeks and we are on track to be able to recommence the MIU service in Tywyn within a few weeks once the appointed staff are fully in place. We will be providing more information around the re-opening of the service once we have a confirmed start date.</p> <p>To note MIU Dolgellau remains closed due to similar workforce shortages with ward staffing taking priority. Recruitment attempts continue at Dolgellau also to be able reopen the MIU.</p> <p>Maternity: The recent closure of the inpatient capacity at Tywyn Hospital has not affected our services.</p> <p>BCUHB Women's Services continue to operate a weekly Maternity outpatient clinic in Tywyn Hospital.</p> <p>Our home birth service currently remains suspended due to ongoing system pressures. Our primary concern is the safety of our mothers and babies and in the event of a home birth needing an emergency transfer to hospital, we must be confident of a timely response. All women who request a home birth are advised of the situation and a comprehensive risk assessment completed to support their informed decision making. If they wish to continue with the plan to home birth, they will be fully supported by our community midwives.</p>

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<p>Tywyn community have lost faith in BCUHB, because of the board's mishandling of the closure of the inpatient provision at Tywyn Hospital; so, what steps are the Board members going to take to restore the public's confidence in its managing of the town's health care provision in the near future?</p>	<p>Tywyn Hospital Action Group</p>	<p>We are committed to ensuring that we work with the local population to understand the health service needs for Tywyn and the surrounding area and will continue to look at innovative recruitment and retention offers to attract skilled staff to the area. Regular communication and mutual support from partners including the public will be required moving forwards to ensure the right services and service models are provided. Regular meetings are being held with the local MP, MS and local councillors currently on a fortnightly basis. We will be looking to extend the scope and membership of these meetings as we progress to include the patient voice through patient representative options to the future.</p> <p>The feedback from the recent Town Council meeting was mostly positive and IHC members in attendance do not underestimate the trust the local community places in the Health Board and our responsibilities in ensuring appropriate local health service provision. They are keen to see this trust restored through continued communication and eventual successful recruitment to vacancies.</p>
<p>What assurances can you give the people of Tywyn regarding the reopening of the inpatients provision at Tywyn Hospital with regard to the specific timescale involved, the numbers of beds and numbers and specialisms of staff employed?</p>	<p>Tywyn Hospital Action Group</p>	<p>Recruitment for qualified nursing staff continues, recent job adverts have closed with interviews for suitable shortlisted applicants set for 16th June 2023. Once we have successfully recruited the minimum number of staff to safely open in-patient beds again, we will do so. We are unable to provide an exact date or timescale until we have secured the minimum number of qualified staff.</p>



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		<p>The number of beds funded for Dyfi ward is 10, and recruitment for the required staffing for the 10 beds is currently being advertised/recruited to.</p> <p>The provision of our inpatient beds across our community sites is for older people. We are advertising for nursing staff, Band 5, Band 6 and Band 7. Medical input into the ward has been provided by Caerffynnon practice (Dolgellau), however there are other models of care including nurse led beds that could also be considered. We are exploring alternative models of care already on offer in Powys and we are also keen to explore new service developments which will benefit the local community, such as palliative care beds and a treatment room service which will include IV therapy treatments. The development of new service initiatives will need be considered alongside the planning of the number and use of inpatient beds.</p>
<p>As an action group we have found the lack of transparency, consultation and communication with the Health Board to have been insufficient. How do you propose to remedy these crucial issues?</p>	<p>Tywyn Hospital Action Group</p>	<p>The BCU Engagement Team is supporting the West Integrated Health Community (IHC) with conversations with the community around the current situation and exploring what models of care might be possible in the future. This engagement will support discussions at BCU about what happens next and the population of Tywyn will be involved. Building on the success of recent engagement events such as the health and well-being bite size event held in March, further events are planned and will be extended to include the wider cluster, which incorporates primary care and</p>



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		<p>other community service partners. Members of the West IHC are also linked into the mid Wales collaborative which also allows learning and sharing across rural mid Wales.</p>
<p>Please explain what the health board considers to be the role of the inpatient provision at Tywyn hospital with relation to neighbouring hospitals, in Dolgellau, Machynlleth and Aberystwyth; how will Tywyn Hospital fit in and what will be its role?</p>	<p>Tywyn Hospital Action Group</p>	<p>As a Health Board we are keen to understand the health needs of the local population in and around Tywyn and how we can support the delivery of services which best meets these requirements. We are keen to do this in partnership with our Local Authority colleagues and other partners including neighbouring Health Boards and these relationships are already in place with service discussions well embedded. We are committed to reopen the Minor Injury service and are looking to do so in an innovative way which will also support similar demand for same day minor ailments presenting at the Health Centre.</p> <p>We are also committed to reopening an inpatient ward in Tywyn to provide appropriate inpatient care to support the step down from acute hospital admission on discharge (from Bronglais and Ysbyty Gwynedd), and also step up from home when patients deteriorate and may benefit from a short stay in hospital for treatment. We know that there are patients within our hospitals across BCU that do not require a hospital bed and that their inpatient stay is prolonged, due to the lack of alternatives such as home care or residential and nursing home placements. Since the temporary closure of the inpatient ward in Tywyn, some of the Health Care Support Workers have been re-</p>

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		<p>deployed to the Tuag Adref service, which supports patients to return home after a hospital stay providing support with low level health and social care needs. The service commenced on the 22nd May and within 1 day the team had 4 patients referred - one discharge from Dolgellau, one discharge from YG and one discharge from Bronglais, the other patient was already at home but required some additional support.</p>
<p>In its final Reporting period 12 months to Sep 2021 BCUHB accounted for 68% of all death and severe incidents in Wales.</p> <p>There will be many reasons for this some may go beyond simple quality of Service and be a result of inconsistency in HB data collection, collation & reporting.</p> <p>To counter these possible inconsistencies Once for Wales was introduced under the NHS WSSP.</p> <p>Could you please confirm for Thursdays Board</p> <p>1) what % of equivalent Death and Severe harm Cases BCUHB account for as a proportion of the Welsh Total since Sep 2021 (i.e., what percentage of Death and severe harm incidents BCUHB account for under The Once for Wales system)</p> <p>2) Could you also (in relation to concerns raised at Remuneration Committee re Employer (low) -v- patient (high)) confirm what percentage of all Wales NMC</p>	<p>DG</p>	<p>1) At present, there is no national benchmarking of the data as Wales is no longer part of the NRLS system, and the Health Board does not have access to data from other organisations to undertake this analysis ourselves. There is national work underway to develop a national quality dashboard and all-Wales data and reports, and we are engaged with that work.</p>

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<p>Employer referrals BCUHB account for and what percentage of NMC patient/public referrals BCUHB account for.</p>		<p>2) We have approached the NMC regarding the all-Wales NMC referrals comparison as BCU would not hold this data. There is no national benchmarking of NMC referrals/reasons across Welsh Health Boards.</p>
<p>Please ask the following questions at the Board meeting 25 May 2023:</p> <p>1. New Independent Members Please provide clarity as to which Independent Members are now permanent and which are Interim? Have any now been selected through a formal recruitment process?</p> <p>2. What contact does the Health Board have with families that have lost a loved one and are dealing with a delayed coroner's inquest due to the health Board not providing information to the coroner to enable an inquest date to be arranged?</p>	<p>JJ</p>	<p>1. New Independent Members. 6 Interim Independent Members have been appointed directly by the Minister for Health and Social Services from the beginning of February 2023 and have been appointed for one year until 29 February 2024. The Bangor University nomination is Professor Mike Larvin and is a four-year term until April 9 2027. We are currently seeking ministerial endorsement for the Trade Union nomination and Local Authority representative, each serving a 4-year term. We received nominations from Local Authorities in the region for a Local Authority representative, followed by a short listing and interview process.</p> <p>2. The decision to list an inquest is made by the appropriate Coroner, and where they feel information is outstanding, they can issue Directions, organise a Pre-Inquest Hearing or issue a Schedule 5 Notice requiring documents to be submitted. The Health Board strives to ensure all information requested by the coroner is provided on time, but we do accept that on some occasions this is not possible. In some recent cases this has been due to failures within the Health Board and we apologise for these – we are working with our teams and local coroners to make improvements.</p>



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<p>3. At the last Board meeting it was stated that the new Independent Members would be reviewing a variety of reports. Could you clarify if these include HASCASS and Ockenden to still progress all the outstanding issues.</p>		<p>In respect of an inquest, the Health Board is approached by, and responds to, the coroner. Families will be kept informed by the coroner's officers. As coroners are independent judicial officers, the Health Board would not wish to do anything that could undermine their investigations or the legal process. The Health Board may have ongoing contact with a family where there is an incident investigation, complaint investigation or claim underway, however on matters relating to an inquest we would always defer to the coroner.</p> <p>3. Yes, the new Independent Members will continue to be aware and reviewing of a variety of reports including the HASCASS and Ockenden reports to review progress on all the outstanding issues.</p>