



Our ref: WQ88241

Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Senedd Constituency Member for Aberconwy

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2 June 2023

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your written question asking me to detail what involvement the Welsh Government has had with Betsi Cadwaladr University health board since putting it into special measures.

Following my decision to place the health board into special measures, I have appointed a new chair and six independent members. The new board met for the second time on 25 May. A Trade Union independent member will be appointed in the coming weeks and a campaign to recruit to the full Board will commence over the summer. An interim chief executive was appointed last month, and the process for recruiting a permanent chief executive started in March 2023 and is ongoing.

The Welsh Government has continued to work closely with the health board, as well as other relevant stakeholders including regulators and inspectors to understand the range, nature and scale of issues which contributed to the health board being placed into special measures and identify necessary actions to drive improvement. This has informed the development of a Special Measures Framework focusing upon a number of areas of concern and focus, which has been agreed with the Board and work is now starting in each of these areas.

My officials meet regularly with the health board to discuss a range of local and pan-organisational matters, including but not limited to, those areas identified in the special measures framework. Over the last few months, the Chief Medical Officer, the Chief Nursing Officer, the Director of Operations, and the Chief Digital Officer have also met the health board executive team in person as well as considerable meetings via Teams.

A Special Measures Assurance Board has been established, chaired by the Welsh Government, and met for the second time last month. The purpose of the Board is to support the health board's executive leadership team in determining what steps are necessary to ensure the delivery of quality, board and clinical governance, financial grip and management, effective and compassionate leadership and improved culture, and in doing

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

so support sustainable change and improvements in performance, operational delivery and improved clinical services with better patient outcomes. The Board will also be required to advise me, through agreed governance routes, that necessary steps have been taken.

I have also established a monthly Special Measures Improvement Forum, where I meet with the health board's chair, chief executive and executive leadership team to seek assurance on progress and set out my expectations for immediate and sustainable improvement. We last met on 3rd May, where I made clear my expectations on the priority areas the health board must focus on and the improvements I expect to see over the next nine months, and we will meet again next week. I also meet monthly with the Chair, most recently 22 May 2023. The Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing and the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd have also recently met with the Chair.

The Welsh Government has appointed independent advisers and commissioned direct support for the health board, which is embedded within the health board and NHS Wales Executive to work across the special measures domains, including board effectiveness and developing the organisational response to the Audit Wales review.

A number of interventions are also taking place around patient safety, mental health, orthopaedic and planned care delivery and executive portfolios. A summit focusing upon urgent and emergency care in Glan Clwyd took place recently. My officials also attended an in-person planning event with the BCUHB Board on 4 May, where plans and priorities for the next three months were discussed.

In the last few weeks, I have made a number of visits to operational sites including Tywyn, Ysbyty Gwynedd and Llandudno Hospital.

Given the seriousness and exceptional nature of this escalation, these arrangements will be monitored closely to ensure progress.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. E. Morgan'.

Eluned Morgan AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services