



Delyth Jewell MS
Senedd Regional Member for South Wales East

Delyth.Jewell@senedd.wales

1 November 2021

Dear Delyth

On 12 October at Business questions you asked a question regarding the temporary changes to maternity services at Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.

On 18 October Aneurin Bevan University Health Board resumed all maternity services and women, again, have a full range of birth choices available to them. The decision was taken by the Health Board to temporarily suspend services following a full risk assessment due to sickness absence, self-isolation and vacancies within Midwifery workforce. The Health Board took this decision following an impact assessment which confirmed the Grange University Hospital would be in a position to support and facilitate all births for the Health board. My officials were assured by the Health Board that a co-ordinated communication and engagement plan for expectant women and their families was in place and the Board made key stakeholders and the Community Health Council fully aware of their action.

In October 103 newly registered Midwives joined the Health Boards workforce and are already having a positive impact within Maternity Services across Wales.

You will be aware on Tuesday 19th October I published the [Health and Social Care Winter Plan](#). Winter always challenges our NHS and social care services, but we are expecting this winter to be more challenging than ever before with high demand for services at a time when the workforce is tired and as susceptible to illness as other sections of the community. The Plan is not the beginning of this process, our organisations already have plans for the year, we have been in regular communication with health and social care leaders and we have continued to review the supporting guidance and investment we put in place during the pandemic. This may be particularly true for Maternity services, which delivers services 365 days of the year, 24 hours a day. To support the winter planning the Maternity and Neonatal Network, which sits within the NHS Wales Collaborative, is developing a specific

Action Plan to support national and local actions to meet the demands of the winter ahead. This Plan has been developed by clinical leads across all health boards and will be published in the next few weeks.

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