



Ein cyf/Our ref: MA-P-VG-2158-19

Alun Davies AM
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

11 June 2019

Dear Alun,

I am writing to you in relation to comments you raised during Health Questions on 5 June, about ambulance handover delays.

You asked me to look again at the way ambulance patient handovers at emergency departments are conducted to ensure ambulance crews are able to leave promptly to respond to other patients in the community.

I have been clear with poor performing health boards about my expectation for urgent and sustained improvements to enable patients to be handed over to hospital staff in a safe and timely manner. At a local level, the Aneurin Bevan UHB Executive Team met last month to consider and agree immediate improvement actions. These discussions were supported by a joint visit, with colleagues from the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust, to north west England to learn more about local improvements.

At a national level, I have directed the Chief Ambulance Services Commissioner to work with health boards and the Welsh ambulance service to deliver local and national actions to support improvement, and mitigate the impact of ambulance patient handover delays on patient experience and ambulance response times.

This work has commenced and close working with clinical staff and health board managers has enabled testing of new approaches which, if successful, will be explored at other challenged areas.

These actions will need to be delivered alongside broader, whole system changes to improve community care and enable people to leave hospital when they are ready. These actions are also being supported through the National Programme for Unscheduled Care.

We will monitor the situation closely, with a view to identifying opportunities for this work to help inform consideration of new approaches to provide challenge and support to other health boards that continue to report persistent ambulance handover delays.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
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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.

I hope this response provides you with the assurances you were seeking.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial 'V' and a trailing flourish.

Vaughan Gething AC/AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol

Minister for Health and Social Services