



Our ref: WQ84850

Russell George MS  
Senedd Constituency Member for Montgomeryshire

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13 April 2022

Dear Russell,

Thank you for your recent Written Question asking me if I am aware of any breach of do not resuscitate orders during the pandemic.

In Wales, we do not use the term “Do Not Resuscitate Order”. ‘Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation’ (DNACPR) decisions and forms are advisory documents; they are not ‘orders’. Resuscitation is a wider encompassing term than the very specific intervention of CPR.

CPR in palliative and end of life situations is usually unsuccessful and can lead to significant trauma for both patients and relatives. Many patients now ask for this treatment to be withheld in future, should the need arise, but still receive all other treatments including chemotherapy, antibiotics etc. Anyone involved in sensitive discussion about future wishes regarding CPR, should adhere to the guidelines set out in the All Wales DNACPR policy, which is a policy open to the public, containing multiple information resources. This policy and its wrap-around education material, including resources for patients and the public, is subject to ongoing review, and has also been subject to equality and protected characteristics impact assessments.

I am aware that there have been some high profile media reports of blanket DNACPRs being applied and have been notified of some isolated incidents where it is alleged that DNACPR policy has not been followed. The Welsh Government takes these allegations very seriously and in each case has acted promptly to investigate and seek confirmation of the governance and assurance processes in place within the relevant health board to ensure these decisions are taken in line with extant clinical guidance.

At the start of the pandemic and in 2021, the Chief Medical Officer and Chief Nursing Officer for Wales issued a joint letter to all health boards, to ensure there was clarity around ethical decision making for people with any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. It emphasised that decisions should be made on an individual and consultative basis with people and that it is unacceptable for advance care plans, with or without DNACPR form completion to be applied to groups of people of any description. The letter was also issued widely to third sector partners and in an easy read format.

A further CMO/CNO letter will shortly be issued to health boards seeking their assurance that DNACPR decisions are not being made purely on the basis of an individual's age, having a disability, learning disability, autism, mental illness or other condition. The CMO/CNO have also written to the chair of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges asking them to consider how the Academy could support spreading this important message amongst its members.

I trust this information provides you with the assurance that you are seeking.

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