

Eluned Morgan AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref:WQ91125

Andrew R.T. Davies MS
Senedd Regional Member for South Wales Central

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21 February 2024

Dear Andrew,

Thank you for your recent Written Question asking for an explanation for the reasons for two-year NHS waits in Wales standing at 24,785, compared to 227 in England.

In April 2022 when we published our commitment to reduce long waits over two years, we had over 68,000 (10%) of our waiting list to clear. As of November 2023, the percentage of over 2-year waits has reduced to just over 3%. The Welsh NHS has delivered on a much more challenging agenda with an older, sicker and poorer population.

Data suggests in England more people have paid to have their treatment privately.

We have always prioritised the most urgent cases and average monthly referrals for suspected cancer have increased by 53% since 2020. Much of the diagnostic capacity for those on elective waiting lists has been used up by those with more urgent cancer referrals. It should also be noted that in England waits for diagnostic treatment and therapies are not included in their figures.

Despite the growth in demand and the recognised older population, Wales has also managed to reduce the growth in the total waiting list in the last month reported. In the last twelve months the overall waiting list in Wales went up by only 1.4%, compared with 5.9% in England.

Yours sincerely,

Eluned Morgan AS/MS
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Minister for Health and Social Services

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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.