



Ein cyf/Our ref: WQ83342

Russell George MS
Senedd Member for Montgomeryshire

Russell.George@senedd.wales

21 September 2021

Dear Russell,

Thank you for your recent Written Question asking me what steps is the Welsh Government taking to increase public and health professional awareness of the symptoms of leukaemia.

Symptoms for cancer are very clearly set out by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence whose guidance, added to the expertise of health care professionals, helps with the early referral, investigation and diagnosis of cancers. However, there are more than two hundred types of cancer, and set in the context of many other common diseases or conditions, it is very challenging to expect members of the public to recall symptoms relating to each type of cancer or other disease.

During the pandemic, the Welsh Government has delivered public awareness messaging encouraging people to seek help from appropriate NHS services. This has included a focus on cancer. In addition, the NHS and third sector have partnered to deliver campaigns specifically on cancer. Overall the message is if people are concerned about any significant or prolonged changes in their physical health then they should contact their GP.

The NHS has partnered with Macmillan Cancer Support on a five-year programme to support general practice on the referral and management of people affected by cancer. This successful, award winning programme, has now transitioned into the NHS to continue to build on its success and support general practice in symptom identification. In addition, the development of pathways for vague symptoms is helping to provide referral options for GPs

that have a serious suspicion of cancer but where symptoms do not match the recommended referral criteria.

I hope you find this response helpful.

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