



Our ref: WQ88940

Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Senedd Member for Aberconwy

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25 September 2023

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your written question of September 6 asking me to explain what steps are being taken to ensure lessons are being learnt from the recent Ombudsman 2022/23 Statistics - Health Board report, so that fewer people feel the need to complain to health boards.

I met with the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) in August and discussed both her annual report and "*Groundhog Day 2: An opportunity for cultural change in complaint handling?*" which was published in June.

PSOW receives a small percentage of complaints compared with the number of concerns received by Health Boards and NHS Trusts annually, which may not be indicative of the overall picture. Health boards are keen to contextualise this figure, as organisations encourage a healthy reporting culture where people feel empowered to raise concerns. At practitioner level there is ongoing need for developing good practice guidance for health professionals in complaints handling.

My officials will work with Health Boards and Trusts, using existing reporting processes to track progress and ensure learning is continually embedded. We will work to improve training and awareness for managing complaints and investigations.

The Duty of Candour, introduced in April 2023, is a powerful tool to improve openness, honesty and transparency and will help improve patients' experience of complaints management in NHS Wales. It supports the drive towards a system that is always listening, learning and improving, and which has the trust and confidence of patients and their families.

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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.

NHS organisations are required to report annually on concerns and complaints managed under the Putting Things Right process and compliance with the Duty of Candour.

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 Care