

20 January 2021

Dear Colleague

As you know, the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee is currently undertaking an **inquiry** into the impact of Covid-19 on health and social care in Wales.

We last met with a number of health boards before the summer recess, and we discussed the effect of the pandemic on waiting times, and the time it may take to return to the pre-pandemic position. This is a matter that the Committee is very interested in, and it was the subject of discussion at the Committee's **meeting** with the Minister for Health and Social Services and the Chief Executive of NHS Wales on 25 November 2020.

We are conscious of the enormous pressure that the pandemic has placed on the health service, and the corresponding impact on waiting times for non-COVID-19 services. At this stage, we are looking to get a realistic and practical picture of the current position. I am therefore writing to all health boards to seek answers, as far as possible at present, to the following questions:

1. What are the main areas of pressure, and what plans do you have in place to deal with these?
2. How will you prioritise the delivery of non-COVID services to target reductions in waiting times?
3. How will you communicate with patients about what they can expect in terms of length of wait, prioritisation, and any management of their condition whilst waiting?
4. What estimates or projections have you made of the time needed to return to the pre-pandemic position?
5. Are you using or considering any new or different approaches to providing care in order to help reduce waiting times, including the use of new technologies, new care pathways, or of capacity elsewhere?



Senedd Cymru

Bae Caerdydd, Caerdydd, CF99 1SN

 Seneddlechyd@senedd.cymru

 0300 200 6565

Welsh Parliament

Cardiff Bay, Cardiff, CF99 1SN

 SeneddHealth@senedd.wales

 0300 200 6565

6. What factors may affect your plans for tackling waiting times (e.g. further spikes in COVID-19 rates, issues with the workforce or physical capacity), and what plans you have in place to manage these?
7. What information have you received on your allocation from the £30m additional funding for waiting times, and how you intend to use the funding?

I appreciate that this is a particularly challenging time for the health service and am conscious of the pressures you must be under so would welcome brief responses to these questions. I would be grateful if you could respond **by Thursday 11 February**. This is to enable your response to inform an oral evidence session on these matters in late February.

Yours sincerely



Dr Dai Lloyd MS
Chair, Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

