



Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1492
Ein cyf/Our ref JMHSC/11065/24

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair
Petitions committee

petitions@senedd.wales

07 January 2025

Dear Carolyn,

RE: No. P-06-1492 about Maintaining 24-Hour Access to Prince Philip MIU

Thank you for your letter on 5 December about the above petition.

As you will be aware, health boards are responsible for ensuring the provision of safe, good-quality clinical services to their local population.

The temporary changes to the opening hours of the Prince Philip Hospital minor injuries unit were made by Hywel Dda University Health Board on the grounds of patient safety. These issues had been raised by Healthcare Inspectorate Wales following an inspection in June 2023 and by staff working at the unit. They stem from a significant and continued lack of medical cover, leading to clinical concerns in relation to patient safety.

Additionally, it has been shown that a significant number of people attending the unit had a higher acuity than the unit was intended to deliver a service for which resulted in 999 transfers to the nearest emergency department leading to a delay in treatment. This position was reinforced by recommendations following a Health Inspectorate Wales inspection visit and further correspondence from HIW requesting reassurance about patient safety issues.

Closure of the minor injuries unit overnight (8pm to 8am) will be for a six-month period from 1 November 2024. The temporary change will not affect the acute medical assessment unit, and very unwell medical patients will still be taken to Prince Philip Hospital, 24-hours a day, for assessment and treatment, as they have been prior to these changes. These cases typically come into the unit via ambulance or via GP referral.

I understand the health board has engaged with Llais and the public to explain why the changes are necessary. I also understand that work has commenced on potential longer-

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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.

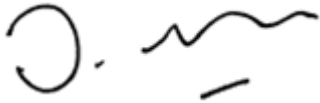
We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

term options for the unit and the health board will undertake a clinically led appraisal of the options for the longer-term model for the minor injuries unit.

I expect the health board to continuously monitor the temporary service change and to fully engage its local communities in line with [national guidance](#).

My officials will also monitor the temporary change to the opening hours.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'J' followed by a series of wavy lines and a short horizontal stroke at the end.

Jeremy Miles AS/MS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care