



Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1534
Ein cyf/Our ref JMHSC/02532/25

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair
Petitions committee

petitions@senedd.wales

21 October 2025

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your letter of 29 September on behalf of the Senedd Petitions Committee about **Petition P-06-1534 End corridor care in Wales**. I will respond to the points raised in order:

1. *Begin recording and reporting on corridor care in Wales, starting by making it a 'never event' for patients to receive care in chairs for more than 24 hours.*

The Welsh Government does not endorse the routine delivery of care in non-clinical or unsuitable environments and agrees that improved reporting, investigation and action on such incidents are essential to support system-wide learning and improvement.

Never events in the NHS are defined as serious medical errors with the potential to cause serious harm or death, they are wholly preventable incidents that should not occur if the available safety measures have been implemented. While there have been calls to classify care delivered to a patient in a chair for more than 24 hours as a never event, this does not meet the established criteria due to the complexity of underlying causes.

Ambulance patient handover delays are a key marker of optimal hospital flow. In June 2025, I established a National Handover-45 Taskforce to support health boards and the Welsh Ambulance Service to deliver system-wide improvements by focusing on high-impact community pathways, emergency department processes and discharge productivity throughout acute hospital sites.

There has been sustained improvement over the last five months in the average patient handover time as well as the total lost hours lost by the Welsh Ambulance Service as a consequence of handover delays.

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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.

To support further improvements and delivery of maximum 45-minute ambulance patient handovers across Wales, further consideration is being given to our national escalation processes and strengthening accountability through the national daily system call. This includes consideration of the information reported by health boards on a daily basis which informs escalation decisions.

Work is underway for delivery of a broader public statement on the availability and transparency of NHS data and I will update the committee once timescales are confirmed. I will be holding a series of public accountability meetings with each NHS organisation between 23 October and March 2026, which will be streamed online, to provide a transparent platform for reviewing performance and engaging the public.

2. Pause reductions in NHS Wales hospital beds. Nationally review capacity and deliver a clear, costed workforce plan to ensure hospitals and wider care settings can meet future demand.

The responsibility for planning and delivering healthcare services in Wales lies with individual health boards. I have been clear in my expectation services must be safe, sustainable, and responsive to the needs of local populations, delivered in line with professional standards and clinical guidance. This includes robust planning around demand, capacity, workforce, and financial resources to ensure services are both effective and resilient.

Health boards are best placed to assess the specific needs of their communities, including determining the appropriate number and configuration of beds required to meet current and future demand. Strategic decisions on bed capacity must be evidence-based and aligned with broader system goals to improve patient outcomes and optimise resource use.

The NHS Wales Planning Framework 2025-28 sets clear expectations for health boards to optimise bed capacity and improve patient flow across the system. A key focus is on reducing delays in hospital discharge, with organisations expected to demonstrate a 12-month reduction trend in delayed transfers of care, as measured by the Delayed Pathways of Care dashboard. Health boards are also required to increase capacity in Enhanced Community Care and weekend community nursing, including specialist palliative care, to levels previously set for 2024-25 or higher.

These actions aim to relieve pressure on acute beds, support timely discharge, and ensure patients receive care in the most appropriate setting. The framework emphasises that building community capacity is essential to achieving sustainable bed utilisation and improving access to care across Wales.

In addition, several health boards across Wales are actively developing their clinical services plans to review and reshape services within scope. The aim is to ensure these services are delivered in the most efficient, effective, and sustainable way, with a clear focus on improving patient outcomes, addressing service fragility, and meeting quality and access standards.

3. Invest in community-based care by:

- increasing the number of District Nurses (and nurses with a community nursing master's degree) back to, and above, 2010 levels to meet demand.*

- *restoring the proportion of NHS Wales funding in general practice to historic levels, with aspirations to increase, so that we train, recruit and retain enough GPs to move toward the OECD average number of GPs per 1000 people.*

Management information received by NHS Performance and Improvement demonstrates there has been a 5% increase in registered nurses working within the district nursing service since 2018 and an increase in district nursing teams to 176 teams, each of these teams is led by a specialist practice qualified district nurse, supported by a deputy team leader.

GP numbers in Wales have remained steady, supported by ongoing recruitment and a comprehensive package of measures to retain GPs in practice. These include the centrally funded General Medical Practice Indemnity (GMPI) scheme, which covers all NHS clinical negligence liabilities for GPs and their staff under the National Health Service (Clinical Negligence Scheme) (Wales) Regulations 2019, and full reimbursement of non-domestic rates, which removes a significant business cost and risk from practices.

These actions are kept under regular review, and contracts continue to be agreed through annual tripartite negotiations with GPC Wales and NHS Wales, ensuring the profession is supported now and for the future.

The number of staff working in NHS Wales is at a record high, with over 110,000 dedicated individuals delivering care and support across the country. Both short-term and long-term workforce trends show consistent growth, reflecting our continued investment in strengthening the health service for the people of Wales.

4. Prioritise prevention and early intervention. Sustainable emergency care needs a strong focus on population health and early diagnosis to reduce avoidable crises

A Healthier Wales is our 10-year strategy and was launched in 2018. It sets the vision for everyone in Wales to have longer, healthier and happier lives, and to be able to remain active, independent and in their own homes for as long as possible.

In October 2023, following a report by the then Welsh Government's Chief Scientific Adviser for Wales - [*NHS in 10+ years: An examination of the projected impact of Long-Term Conditions and Risk Factors in Wales*](#) - it was announced that Welsh Government would undertake a refresh of the *A Healthier Wales* actions.

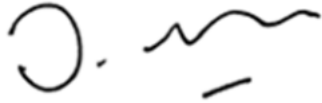
Through the delivery of *A Healthier Wales*, we are working towards our ambition of a whole-system approach to health and social care which focusses on keeping people well by anticipating health needs, preventing illness, and reducing the impacts of poor health. I want to ensure that services deliver the same high quality of care, and achieve more equal health outcomes, for everyone in Wales. Our actions under *A Healthier Wales*, will support people to be able to access a range of seamless services based on their individual needs and what matters to them.

In December 2024, I published a set of 35 refreshed policy actions aimed at supporting delivery on this ambition - [*A healthier Wales: long term plan for health and social care | GOV.WALES*](#). In developing our refreshed actions approach we took the opportunity to frame these actions within the context of five key themes and five key enablers.

The refreshed themes ensure prevention and early intervention are key components to health and well-being, supporting people to live longer and healthier lives whilst ensuring

people can receive the right care they need at the right time and in the right place. There will also be a focus on shifting resources to the community, with more care being delivered closer to home.

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