

HCS 2

National Assembly for Wales

Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee

Holiday Caravan Sites (Wales) Bill

Response from: Hywel Dda University Health Board



### **Role of the Organisation**

Hywel Dda University Local Health Board provides healthcare services to a total population of around 372,320 throughout Carmarthenshire (178,119), Ceredigion (78,200) and Pembrokeshire (116,001). It provides Acute, Primary, Community, Mental Health and Learning Disabilities services via General and Community Hospitals, Health Centres, GPs, Dentists, Pharmacists and Optometrists and other sites.

### **Our Response**

The UHB welcomes the intention to modernise the regulatory framework for Holiday Caravan Sites so as to bring it into line with that applied to Residential Mobile Homes as set out in the 2013 Act.

Particular issues of interest are:

**Data:** The UHB has responsibility for planning and providing health care services for its population and is concerned about the lack of definitive data in relation to individuals and families living in holiday caravan accommodation on a permanent basis. Hywel Dda provides services for communities along the south and west coastline and is a popular holiday destination. It is likely therefore that this hidden demand for services could be substantial and have a significant impact on our ability to provide services for our known resident population. An important outcome of this Act is that the demand can be quantified and planned for accordingly and that the specific characteristics of this population better understood.

**Tourism:** The area covered by Hywel Dda is largely rural and tourism makes a relatively large contribution to the local economy. There is a risk of an unknown under provision of holiday accommodation which could have a negative impact on the economy which, in turn, will have an impact on the health and wellbeing of local communities. We welcome the clarity that this Act would bring to understanding and mitigating that impact.

**Individuals:** Accommodation used for purposes for which it is not intended could have consequences for health and wellbeing and it is important that sites are safe, well managed and fit for purpose. We support the proposed increased powers for local authorities to take action to ensure that site owners and caravan occupiers have clear caravan agreements and all sites are well regulated.

**Planning considerations:** Recent floods in Wales have demonstrated the particular vulnerability of caravan sites which are often coastal and in flood risk areas. The UHB welcomes the intention that local authorities consult with the appropriate bodies to ensure that this risk is fully taken account of when planning applications are being considered.

**Unintended consequences:** The LHB is pleased to see that the Act will require that where alternative accommodation arrangements are necessary the authorities will take account of any hardship this may cause those affected.