

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau Petitions Committee

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National
Assembly for
Wales



Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd / Cardiff CF99 1NA

26 January 2012

Dear Sir or Madam,

The Petitions Committee of the National Assembly for Wales has received the following petition:

'We the undersigned call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to provide a better service for the hearing impaired (H.I.) in the NHS.

If a deaf person wished to contact their GP surgery to book an appointment, they are unable to do so, as Doctors surgery's don't have a mobile phone text service (Most H.I. don't use text phone, they use mobile phone). When they receive a letter from the Health Board asking them to telephone to book and appointment with a specialist, they are unable to as there are no facilities for them. When attending a hospital appointment, there is no loop system service for them, so that they can hear and answer questions. They say that they can arrange a translator. We have tried accessing this service to no avail. When in hospitals and Doctors' surgeries, H.I. people cannot hear when called, as there are no viewing boards for them to read that they can now go into the Doctors room. Staff 99.99% of the time never speak to the H.I. patient, they always speak to the translator. Lack of Deaf awareness is a problem. As sign language is an H.I. person's 1st language, English is a foreign language, and a H.I. persons English is very layman's. By implementing these changes, it would help with NHS targets, for example lower consultation times, correct diagnosis, saving repeated consultation time. It would help the H.I. with their independence, give them privacy when talking to a Doctor or Nurse. Banks and Post Offices have these services, so why doesn't the NHS have them.'

Questions you may wish to consider in responding

1. Have you or someone you know experienced problems such as those described in the petition? If so, perhaps you could provide us with an outline of what happened.

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2. What are the barriers to providing facilities such as mobile text services, loop systems, viewing boards and translators in the NHS?
3. In your view, would the provision of these facilities solve the problems outlined in the petition or should something else be done?

We are interested in receiving views from individuals, groups and organisations on the subject of this petition. These views will be used as evidence by the Petitions Committee in its consideration of the petition and will also be passed to the National Assembly's Cross-party Group on Deaf Issues for consideration.

If you would like to submit evidence, we would be grateful to receive it by 8 March 2012. Further guidance on the submission of evidence is attached.

We would be grateful if you could share this request with other interested parties or, where appropriate, any of your member organisations.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Abigail Phillips', followed by a period.

Abigail Phillips
Clerk to the Petitions Committee

Advice on Submitting Evidence

- The Committee may call on those who have submitted written evidence to supplement it in oral evidence to the Committee. Please indicate in your response whether you would be prepared to give evidence in person.
- Witnesses should be aware that once written evidence has been submitted to the Committee it is treated as the property of the Committee. Written evidence will be published on the Committee's website, and extracts may subsequently be included in the report.
- The Assembly will not publish information which it considers to be personal data. If you are providing any information, other than personal data, which you feel is not suitable for public disclosure, it is up to you to stipulate which parts should not be published. You should provide a reasoned argument to support this. The National Assembly will take this into account when publishing information or responding to requests for information.
- In the event of a request for information submitted under UK legislation, it may be necessary to disclose the information that you provide. This may include information which has previously been removed by the National Assembly for publication purposes.