

Mr Nick Ramsay AM
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Dear Nick

Welsh Government response: Informatics Systems in NHS Wales

The clerks have requested my advice on the Welsh Government's response to the Committee's report on NHS Informatics. I understand that a plenary debate has been scheduled to discuss the report.

Overall, the response is positive, with the Welsh Government accepting the Committee's recommendations. The Welsh Government has put in place various reviews related to NHS informatics and is in the process of developing a new National Informatics Plan. While the response is largely focused on what is being reviewed, it highlights positive developments, such as adopting the Government Digital Service design principles. In general, the breadth and depth of the reviews and activity seem to reflect a recognition that significant changes are needed to address the concerns that my predecessor and the Committee have identified.

The Welsh Government has promised a further update in six months. By that time, the reviews should be completed and the Welsh Government will have produced the new National Informatics Plan. The Committee may wish to schedule a session with the Welsh Government during July 2019 to take further evidence on the basis of that update. No doubt the Committee will want further assurance that, following what has now become a lengthy period of review, the Welsh Government and wider NHS will act with urgency to put in place the resources and practical changes needed to improve informatics across the whole system. The Committee may also wish to check with the Welsh Government whether it intends to publish the findings and recommendations from the reviews or share them with the Committee.

The Committee identified significant concerns about data outages. The Committee may wish to request that the Welsh Government provide comparative information, showing whether the number/severity of data outages has reduced, as part of its update in six months.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adrian', with a horizontal line underneath it.

ADRIAN CROMPTON
Auditor General for Wales