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Eich llais mewn iechyd | Your voice in health  
a gofal cymdeithasol | and social care

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01/06/23

Dear Steve,

We are writing to set out our recommendations following public consultation related to hospital site selection and to provide a balanced commentary on the issues and themes that were identified. It will also remind HDUHB of the recommendations made by HDCHC on Transforming Clinical Services which were adopted by HDUHB on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

We will continue to represent the views of the public through the next stages of this programme and continue to welcome comments and views from the public as we do so.

Llais attended each of the public consultation drop-in events and online events. We have also monitored social media comments where possible. We felt that the Health Board's approach was generally very good with welcoming events and helpful senior staff present to discuss the options and wider clinical model. Some of the travel time information was confusing for the public and meant that some conversations started on the wrong foot. Otherwise we felt that the consultation period was well-run and appropriate given the site selection focus.

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Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg. Os byddwch yn ysgrifennu atom yn Gymraeg, byddwn yn ateb yn Gymraeg. Ni fydd hyn yn arwain at oedi wrth ymateb i'ch gohebiaeth.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh and English. If you write to us in Welsh, we will answer in Welsh. This will not lead to a delay in responding to your correspondence.

Llais does not have a favoured option as we must represent the views of all and there were natural differences in terms of outlook.

## Themes coming through the events

### Transport

In a number of discussions we took part in, the public were concerned about the impact that a new hospital in St Clears or Whitland zones would have on ambulance response times.

An issue that was raised regularly during the consultation centred around transport and being able to access NHS services. For some it was an overriding issue, with one saying; “I don’t care where the hospitals are, if I can’t get there it doesn’t matter”

For Llais it is certainly a fundamental issue that is critical to the success of the proposals being made by the Health Board. It was clear during the consultation that HDUHB would require more transport capacity in the future. Many people felt that the current provision does not meet their needs now.

People were also worried that transport infrastructure was not currently sufficient to support the logistical challenges of many people accessing a new hospital.

Llais feels that whilst there has been much discussion around the financial investment needed to build a new hospital, Health Board must look at patient transport strategically and innovatively with a commitment to invest appropriately. It will be important that looking to the future, this model is based on a sound understanding of transport needs as service changes develop and that providers of transport services are put on a sound footing to meet those needs as stated in the 2018 HDCHC response (recommendation 5) to Transforming Clinical Services

#### **Recommendation 1**

We expect the Health Board to make a clear commitment to placing transport at the heart of its strategic plans with a willingness to innovate, a clear understanding of need, and appropriate funding to meet those needs. Transport providers including third sector providers need to be closely involved with planning

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## Access, urgent care and emergencies

Concerns about the limitations of local road infrastructure and the related impact for ambulances were raised by members of the public from the three counties, an issue that many felt was important especially when the A40 gets many road accidents and sometimes gridlocked within the summer months.

### Recommendation 2

The Health Board will need to take an active role with stakeholders such as the County Councils in Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, the Highways Agency regarding road infrastructure.

Along with concerns around longer travel times, people highlighted worries that they may find it difficult to access services that could be more distant due to low income, and the cost of travel.

Parking was another area of concern given the difficult challenges people currently experience on some Health Board sites and there was a clear expectation that parking capacity should be generous in the planning process.

It was clear from many events that the public were worried about current emergency departments in Withybush and Glangwili becoming minor injuries services when the new hospital is built. The Health Board must commit to engaging further with the public around their urgent care needs so that they feel equipped to make the right choices. This may need to be a standalone process or form key part of future continuous engagement plans. From recently updated Guidance for Engagement and Consultation on Changes to Health Services (2023);

*“The NHS must establish and sustain continuing engagement with citizens, staff, staff representative and professional bodies, stakeholders, third sector and partner organisations not only when changes are at issue, but also on a routine basis. It should give people the opportunity to understand its aspirations and achievements, and the challenges it faces, and to influence decisions about changes in direction and specific services developments”*

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### **Recommendation 3**

The Health Board should engage with the public on planned changes to urgent care services at Glangwili and Witybush.

### **Staffing**

The public were clearly aware of workforce issues being at the heart of current challenges and also the future solutions to those problems. They were also concerned that the proposals were assuming that clinicians would be attracted to work in the new system.

*“How are you going to staff the new hospital? The Health Board can’t get staff now “*

We feel that the Health Board must do more to demonstrate how it will develop and build the workforce necessary to make its proposals work. This would be an important foundation in developing public trust. Again, continuous engagement would be a helpful vehicle for in sharing workforce plans.

### **Recommendation 4**

Continuous engagement with stakeholders and the public should highlight the progress that workforce plans are making

Finally, you will recall that in 2018 Hywel Dda CHC made 18 recommendations after the Transforming Clinical Services consultation and we want to highlight the following which we feel still remain directly relevant to the overall transformation process:

#### ***Recommendation:***

*For all services we expect the Health Board to ensure that no service change can take place which would lead to care that was less safe or of a lesser quality than existing services.*

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**Recommendation:**

*We expect the Health Board to assure the public that no final decisions on removing specific services will be made until a fuller case is developed.*

**Recommendation:**

*We expect the Health Board to engage and where necessary consult further with the public on specific changes as a clearer picture of how new services would run emerges.*

**Conclusion**

It is apparent from attending the engagement events that people are passionate about their NHS. After attending all the engagement events, the main themes and worries of the public are transport, access, staffing, what services were going to be in the new hospitals and what was going to happen to Glangwili and Worthybush hospitals. To bring the public along and to help shape NHS services early continuous engagement is need with the public of the three counties.

Yours sincerely,



Donna Coleman  
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