



Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1217
Ein cyf/Our ref EM/13108/21

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions Committee

26 October 2021

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 6 October regarding petition no. P-06-1217 about opening one-stop medical hubs and clinics for people with Long COVID.

I have seen first-hand how patients are being supported with Long COVID so they can return to live as full a life as possible, but I also recognise the frustration that people feel when progress and improvement is slow.

People are experiencing a wide range of challenges and symptoms as part of this syndrome and some are very debilitating. I am determined that we will do all we can to continue to learn from our ongoing experience and develop services to support these individuals.

On 15 June, I announced a £5m package to support the Adferiad (Recovery) Programme, which supports those experiencing ongoing effects from a COVID-19 infection. It remains key that our services can change and adapt, based on the learning from experience as well as research and evaluation, which is why I have asked my officials to review the programme on a six monthly basis.

Working with the NHS, we developed the *All Wales Community Pathway*, which aligns with both NICE guidelines and *A Healthier Wales* to provide a framework for the development of services in each of our health boards.

Each health board in Wales has worked with its GP practices and community services to establish clear local pathways to ensure people with Long COVID can access the services they need. The majority of these; be that multi professional assessment, investigation, treatment and rehabilitation support, can be provided as close to home as possible from primary and community care services.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Gohebiaeth.Eluned.Morgan@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Eluned.Morgan@gov.wales

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.

People who require access to more specialist services available only from hospital-based services are referred to the most appropriate expertise to improve their health, and GPs can access specialist advice from hospitals to support people in the community. The *All Wales Community Pathway* for Long COVID and online resources are also now available to GPs and healthcare professionals in Wales via a digital guideline, launched on 18 June. There are also extensive online advice and self-management resources on each health board website. For many people, recovery from COVID-19 can be self-managed. Where this is appropriate, support can be provided via the NHS Wales Recovery app, which launched on 20 January.

Our approach seeks to minimise the number of referral points and hand-offs for people and to ensure that people are managed holistically and only referred to specialised medical services in the minority of cases in which the assessing health professional identifies a specialist need.

I hope this helps clarify the approach we have taken in Wales.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. E. Morgan'.

Eluned Morgan AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services