



Ein cyf/Our ref: WQ91827

Andrew R.T. Davies MS
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Dear Andrew,

Thank you for your recent Written Question asking what action did the Welsh Government take to improve health data collection in 2023.

In July 2023, I launched our **Digital and Data Strategy for Health and Social Care in Wales**, which sets out our ambition to improve digital infrastructure to deliver digital services that will enable a more accessible, safe, joined-up, responsive, and intelligent system of health and social care across Wales. It recognises that *to achieve this*, further development is required to improve data quality, access, standards, as well as the need to improve the digital and data skills of the workforce. This strategy provides a clear sense of direction for leaders and their delivery teams across health and social care in Wales. Delivered well, it will improve the collection and use of high-quality data which underpins digital services.

Throughout 2023 the Welsh Government has continued to support the development of the **National Data Resource (NDR)**. The NDR is a major digital transformation programme which will make it easier to join-up health and care data from various sources, for use within the health and care service in Wales. The programme is committed to adopting the principles of open architecture and adopting common data standards, which will also make it easier for our IT systems to 'talk' to each other. The NDR will enable the development of a single digital health and social care record for Wales. The process of joining up health data from various sources will provide a more complete health record and ensure that any discrepancies between data sources can be verified, to improve the quality of the data collected.

I include below several examples of digital initiatives that were rolled out or expanded in 2023 to enable better sharing of information about patients. For each of these, the digitisation and standardisation of information being shared has improved the quality of the data collected:

- The **Welsh Nursing Care Record** went live in 2021 and has been gradually y rolled out to all adult inpatient wards in Wales by March 2024. This has allowed staff to record,

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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.

share and access patient information electronically across wards, hospital sites and health boards. It has also standardised information collected about patients in hospitals, eliminating variation. Patients and staff are able to move across services in Wales using this single system, ensuring consistency and accuracy.

- The **Electronic Prescription Service** allows GPs to send prescriptions securely online to the patient's choice of community pharmacy, without the need for a paper form. The service went live on the 7th of November 2023. This is the first major step in digitising the prescription process across all health settings in Wales, making it more efficient for clinicians and patients alike. The new service will be rolled out across Wales from January 2024, and is part of a wider commitment to introduce digital medicines and ePrescribing in all hospitals and primary care settings in Wales. Most importantly, ePrescribing will reduce medication errors and improve the safety of care delivery.
- The Wales Ambulance Service Trust (**WAST**) **electronic Patient Care Record** was rolled out in early 2023. This replaced paper notes and "digitiser" pens on ambulances, with iPads with live data streaming from the ambulance to control rooms and Emergency Departments, improving the quality of the data.
- The **NHS Wales App** was also launched in 2023 and will be available across all GP surgeries in 2024. The app and accompanying desktop website includes a variety of useful features such as appointment scheduling, test result access, and prescription ordering. Providing citizens with an opportunity to view their own health information, will provide citizens with the opportunity to correct any information they perceive to be incorrect, and will ultimately improve the accuracy of the data collected.

Yours sincerely,



Eluned Morgan AS/MS

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