



Our ref: WQ90478 & WQ90479

Tom Giffard MS  
Senedd Regional Member for South Wales West

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Dear Tom,

Thank you for your recent Written Questions asking me what steps the Welsh Government is taking to help secure the future of the Wales Fertility Institute, and what is the Welsh Government's strategy for increasing fertility treatment options in Wales.

The Welsh Government is committed to the provision of equitable and accessible fertility services and the Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee (WHSSC) is responsible for commissioning IVF services on behalf of all Health Boards in Wales.

All fertility clinics in the UK are governed by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) and IVF can only be provided by centres that can meet the rigorous requirements of the HFEA. Due to concerns about the long-term sustainability and quality of the service, the Wales Fertility Institute was put into level 4 of the WHSSC escalation process in November 2023.

The Welsh Government wrote to WHSSC and the Health Board to clarify the processes they had gone through in reaching the level of escalation and to understand intended actions going forward in addressing any issues. At this point, the focus of Swansea Bay University Health Board (SBUHB) and WHSSC is on working with the Wales Fertility Institute team to address the sustainability concerns and work to ensure that the HFEA license conditions continue to be met, ahead of planned HFEA licence inspection visits to both clinics in early 2024. Both SBUHB and WHSSC are seeking to put the service on a sustainable footing before decisions are made and are also putting in place contingency plans. SBUHB are currently undertaking a deep dive service review. This will inform the options and recommendations for putting the service on a sustainable footing. Some of the potential options may require consultation, in which case SBUHB and WHSSC will work with Llais.

To ensure that patients receive the best standards of specialist care such as IVF, specialist centres need to serve a large population. The population must be large enough to mean there are sufficient numbers of patients to provide an adequate workload for the centre.

WHSSC have identified three providers of specialist fertility services which are able to meet the standards laid out by the HFEA and provide the outcomes our patients deserve: Swansea Bay University Health Board (Wales Fertility Institute at Neath Port Talbot Hospital and Wales Fertility Institute at University Hospital for Wales), Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust (The Hewitt Centre at the Liverpool Women's Hospital) and The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust (Shropshire and Mid-Wales Fertility Centre at Shrewsbury Hospital).

My officials continue to engage with WHSSC and SBUHB on these developments.

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