



Ein cyf/Our ref WQ82290

Angela Burns MS
Member of the Senedd for Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire

30 March 2021

Dear Angela,

I am writing in response to your WQ (WQ82290) about gynaecological treatments.

You asked:

What support is currently available for patients waiting for delayed gynaecological treatments, including mental health support? (WQ82290)

My response:

Covid-19 has placed unprecedented challenges upon the NHS both in Wales and the UK more broadly. The Welsh Government has been clear that the ambition is to maintain as much NHS essential service activity as possible, and to further reintroduce and upscale routine activity where it is safe to do so, alongside the Covid-19 response, and the NHS Wales Chief Executive Dr Andrew Goodall recently wrote to health boards to emphasise this ambition.

Guidance has been developed and issued to support health boards reintroducing services that have been delayed as a consequence of Covid-19. Consultants have been asked to go through their waiting lists and to risk stratify and prioritise each patient, so that when it is possible to safely reintroduce relevant services, those with most urgent need are seen first. The work is being clinically-led, which is the correct approach and adds the level of risk assessment.

Health boards have been holding outpatient appointments in different ways, making use of technology to have appointments virtually. However, where there is a need, service-users are still being seen face to face when it is safe to do so for both parties.

If people are concerned about their health or if they feel that their condition is deteriorating, they should contact their General Practitioner for advice.

Mental health services were positioned as essential services during the pandemic although services models may have needed to change in response to the restrictions. Whilst it is

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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.

understandable that some patients may need to wait longer to access services due to the restrictions, patients are prioritised based on clinical needs.

We have also made a range of mental health support available that is easy to access and doesn't require a referral from a health professional. The support can be accessed via the 111 website: <https://111.wales.nhs.uk/encyclopaedia/m/article/mentalhealth/>

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Vaughan Gething AS/MS

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