# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Arrangements for Early Medical Abortion at Home**  |
| **DATE**  | **24 February 2022** |
| **BY** | **Eluned Morgan, Minister for Health and Social Services** |

Today I am announcing that the temporary arrangements introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic, which enabled women and girls to take both pills for Early Medical Abortion (EMA) up to 9 weeks and 6 days gestation in their own homes, following a telephone or e-consultation with a clinician, without the need to first attend a hospital or clinic, are being made permanent in Wales.

This is a progressive step which demonstrates Welsh Government’s commitment to supporting women.

I am satisfied that the arrangements are safe and bring significant benefits to women and girls who wish to access abortion services, with reduced waiting times enabling them to access the help they need more quickly than would have been possible under the previous arrangements. The benefits to the NHS are also significant, with a reduced number of appointments being required.

Welsh Government consulted on the temporary arrangements between December 2020 and February 2021 and I have carefully considered the responses along with subsequent information on the safety of abortion services under these arrangements in making this decision.

New guidance has been developed by clinicians working along with the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, the Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare and British Society of Abortion Care Providers to enable the NHS in Wales to implement the change as effectively as possible. The guidance includes steps to ensure women accessing the service are not subject to coercion or exploitation in line with Welsh safeguarding protocols. The guidance also emphasises the need to provide advice and support to women on contraception and reproductive health.

This statement is being issued during recess in order to keep members informed. Should members wish me to make a further statement or to answer questions on this when the Senedd returns I would be happy to do so.