

Eluned Morgan AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Our ref: WQ86537

Gareth Davies MS
Senedd Constituency Member for Vale of Clwyd

Gareth.L.Davies@senedd.wales

15 January 2023

Dear Gareth,

Thank you for your written question asking me for an update on Welsh Government's assessment of GP waiting times in North Denbighshire.

Welsh Government does not hold any data on appointment wait times for patients. As GPs are independent contractors to the NHS, each GP practice is responsible for ensuring their appointment system is fit for purpose and is meeting the needs of the patients that are requiring their services.

Health boards are responsible for the delivery of services to patients and where services are provided by independent contractors, for managing the contracts they hold to ensure service delivery meets the reasonable needs of patients.

This responsibility is underscored by the GMS Access Commitment, launched in April, where participating practices are required to produce a reflective report demonstrating how they have interrogated the data from their telephone systems and evidence call demand comparisons.

The Access Commitment also sets out the expectation that everyone who needs to access GP services will be offered an appropriate consultation, whether urgently or through advanced booking. Patients should be able to contact their GP practice throughout the day to book an appointment, avoiding the '8am bottleneck' that causes frustration to many. A preliminary assessment of the patient's medical need is undertaken to determine the right service for the patient, whether this is an appointment the same day or in the future, or to be signposted to another service. This approach allows patients to have their clinical needs met from their first point of contact with their GP practice and prevents patients experiencing long telephone waiting times.

In 2021 a Quality Improvement project was initiated through the GMS contact agreement to collect GP activity data. This project is at an early stage but will provide additional information on volume of activity in GMS at a cluster level, as defined by GPs in their practices.

Yours sincerely

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

Eluned Morgan AS/MS

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