



Mark Isherwood
Member of the Senedd for North Wales
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1 March 2022

Dear Mark,

Thank you for raising the important issue of Hepatitis C elimination during plenary last week. I committed to consider whether it was possible to bring forward the current target date of 2030.

The response to the pandemic has been our top priority and has naturally required the redirection of resources both within central Government and within our NHS. I recognise the need to reinvigorate the drive to eliminate hepatitis C but we also need to recognise that our services need time for recover and regroup.

Latest modelling suggests that to achieve elimination in Wales by 2030 we will need to identify and successfully treat 1,000 individuals a year. I am acutely aware that prior to the pandemic we never reached that annual treatment figure and, even before the pandemic, our treatment numbers were reducing year-on-year because our services had found it harder and harder to identify individuals for treatment.

A range of work was underway prior to the pandemic to support elimination and our health boards are now in the process of developing service recovery plans. A number of commitments were made by Welsh Government in response to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee's inquiry into our progress against hepatitis C elimination and my officials are in the process of reviewing these commitments to prioritise Welsh Government action going forwards.

While I do not rule out bringing forward the elimination target in the future, realistically, our current target of elimination by 2030 is already very stretching. Wales remains committed to eliminating hepatitis C and I will continue to update the Senedd on our progress.

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