



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

WRITTEN CABINET STATEMENT BY THE WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT

Title: Update on Renal Services

Date: 28 April 2010

By: Edwina Hart, Minister for Health and Social Services

I agreed in Plenary last week, following questions about the proposed dialysis unit in North Gwent to provide Members with a written update on expanding renal dialysis services across Wales.

The Welsh Renal Managed Clinical Network (the Network), which is now responsible for planning and securing renal dialysis services, was formally established from 1 April as a sub-committee of the Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee. The Network is progressing the dialysis expansion programme with the additional funding of £9.3m that I have allocated for this in 2010-11.

The provision of haemodialysis facilities is complex and they represent significant resources. Resources must be carefully planned and targeted at agreed priority areas across Wales. The first prioritisation exercise carried out by the former two regional Networks in 2009 identified a number of sites that were scored as highest priority and a second group of developments were scored as lesser priority and will be considered in phase two of the expansion programme. The proposed unit for North Gwent falls in to the phase two category.

Whilst formal option appraisals and production of business cases are not yet underway for phase two schemes, work is continuing to refine the Network's view of the needs and the processes by which the Network can best deliver services in these areas. The Network plans to revisit these phase two schemes, including the one for North Gwent, this summer to agree the order of priority for their development.

As part of the dialysis expansion programme, the former two regional Renal Networks considered the use of mobile renal dialysis units. The Networks concluded that small mobile units presented a number of additional risks, such

as mechanical faults and lower resilience. Such units were considered likely to be more expensive than static units and therefore might not represent good value for money. Larger vehicles that may overcome some of these risks, such as those used in North America were not considered suitable for the areas that would benefit most i.e. rural areas with low population density, due to road infrastructure.

In remote areas, with small numbers or individual patients, the Networks considered that the use of home dialysis and the use of community support services would be more appropriate. The new all Wales Renal Network will review the further development of home and community-based dialysis services as part of its work plan for 2010-11.

In advance of permanent facilities and where there is currently an absence of any local service, the Renal Network has been establishing interim dialysis units through the use of refurbished existing space within an NHS facility or demountable dialysis units which are typically purpose-built portacabin designs. The use of such facilities is limited and needs careful consideration; therefore it is only considered once the design and business case for the permanent unit are well advanced.

An update on each scheme identified as a priority can be found in the table attached at Annex 1.

Renal transplants are often the optimal treatment for people with renal disease, rather than dialysis. Construction is in the final phases on a new Welsh Assembly Government-funded £4.2 million, purpose-built 21-bed renal transplant centre and new renal outpatient facility at the University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff. It is anticipated that this will open at the end of July 2010. The Centre will increase current capacity and greatly improve the quality of life for renal patients.

Annex 1 - Update on the current position of each dialysis facility

New dialysis facility	Status	Current Position
West Wales General, Carmarthen	Opened March 2008	
Pentwyn, North Cardiff	Opened Nov 2008	
Pembrokeshire	Interim Facility at Withybush Opened Dec 2008	Subject to satisfactory business case new unit (24 stations) planned to open by end of 2011
Powys (Welshpool Memorial)	Immediate priority	Temporary unit anticipated to be operational by November 2010; Subject to satisfactory business case new unit (12 stations) planned to open early in 2012
Powys (Llandridnod Wells Memorial Hospital)	Immediate priority	Renal network looking to create 4 station unit refurbished ward of Llandridnod Wells Memorial Hospital to be opened by Autumn 2010
Meirionnydd/South Gwynedd (Ysbyty Alltwen, Tremadog)	Interim unit operational with expansion mid-May 2010	Subject to satisfactory business case new unit (12 stations) planned to open by end of 2011
Aberystwyth	Replacement	Replacement of current (7 station) unit with new (12-15 station) linked with Padarn Surgery Primary Care development unit early in 2011
Merthyr	Replacement	Replacement of current (15 station) unit with new (24-27 station) unit by February 2012.
Deeside	Renal Network considering prioritisation of these Phase 2 schemes in Summer 2010	Under consideration
North Gwent		Undertaking option appraisal
Baglan / Bridgend		Undertaking option appraisal
Bangor (Refurbishment)		Under consideration
CRI, Cardiff (Replacement)		Under consideration