



Our ref: WQ87128

Peter Fox MS  
Senedd Constituency Member for Monmouth

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24 January 2023

Dear Peter

Thank you for your recent written question, further to WQ83864, asking me to outline what progress has been made in achieving the actions set out in the Emergency Ambulance Services Committee delivery plan.

The first iteration of the Emergency Ambulance Services Committee delivery plan was introduced in September 2021. It identified a range of actions for delivery by the Welsh Ambulance Services Trust (WAST), Health Boards, and actions for joint delivery to support better management of 999 demand in the community, increased ambulance capacity, improved responsiveness to people with time sensitive complaints and ambulance patient handover. The plan remains a live document and has been updated during this time to reflect developments and progress made since September 2021.

Progress made since implementation of the plan is outlined below:

- In support of the plan, Welsh Government investment of £250,000 has been made in new 999 triage. Video consultation technology to support confident decision making by paramedics has further enabled WAST to increase the number of 999 callers who can be safely managed through remote telephone assessment, enabling people to receive the support they need in the community and freeing up ambulance resources to respond to other calls.
- In June 2022, we made a further investment of £3m to enable the Trust to increase ambulance capacity, including the recruitment of 100 additional frontline staff and a range of agreed workforce efficiencies.
- The Welsh Ambulance Services Trust has informed me that it has successfully recruited 90 of the additional 100 staff required into the organisation, 60 of whom will be operational on or before 23 January 2023, with a further 30 more to complete training and become operational in February. By the end of March, the Trust will have achieved a net increase of 100 WTE staff, which will help to future-proof its workforce.

- The Trust has also confirmed it has completed the implementation of new staff rosters for emergency medical services (EMS), marking the end of a two- and half-year project including 146 rosters, 80 working parties, and 1,800 staff. The efficiencies associated with the new rosters will equate to 72 whole time equivalent staff. The project will now be evaluated to support longer-term benefits realisation and learning.
- We have also seen progress from the Trust in delivering the agreed workforce efficiencies which are helping to increase capacity, including a reduction in sickness absence, supported by an attendance management programme and 40-point plan. Discussions between the Trust and its trade union partners regarding further workforce efficiencies are ongoing.

Since August 2022, all health boards in Wales have had an ambulance handover improvement plan in place. They have committed to handover improvement trajectories for each major emergency department, with an initial focus on eradicating delays over four hours and reducing the average number of minutes lost per ambulance arrival. We have started to see improvement in ambulance patient handover performance in some areas although we are concerned about the levels of delay reported nationally.

I can further confirm that specialist advice and guidance for ambulance clinicians are in operation across all health boards. Arrangements are in place by which health board clinicians across all health board areas are directly managing ambulance patients and redirecting them to clinically safe alternatives.

I hope this information is helpful.

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