

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



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Our ref: WQ86279

Andrew R T Davies MS
Senedd Regional Member for South Wales Central

AndrewRT.Davies@senedd.wales

31 October 2022

Dear Andrew,

Thank you for your written question asking me what assessment I have made of the impact of GPs doing fewer face-to-face appointments on emergency department capacity.

The introduction of the Access Commitment in April 2022 places a large emphasis on meeting community healthcare needs via a blended model of access, including a mix of remote and face-to-face consultations. GP's use their clinical judgement to decide if a face-to-face appointment is appropriate, taking into consideration the patient's medical history and relevant wider needs. This blended service delivery approach, coupled with the use of multidisciplinary professions working in practices, provides improved access to primary care services.

Patients undergo a preliminary assessment in order to determine the right service for their healthcare need. In order to make sure the patient is receiving the best support, they may be signposted to another service, which reasons will be clearly explained to them. This includes referring patients to Emergency Departments if their symptoms are deemed critical or life-threatening.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Despite an increase over recent months, attendances at major Emergency Departments generally remain below pre-pandemic levels. This is an indication that some of our national programme priorities are having a positive impact and more people are being seen in the right place, first time. It is encouraging that we are now seeing around 5,000 people per month being assessed and treated away from the Emergency Department at one of our nine Urgent Primary Care Centres across Wales, and more people are being signposted to minor injuries units. We continue work with primary care services to better manage demand in the community to help deliver care closer to home and reduce pressure on Emergency Departments.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

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

Eluned Morgan AS/MS

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