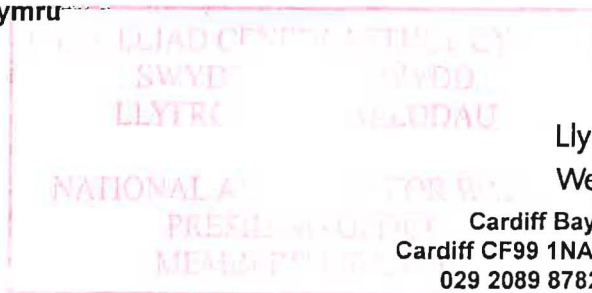


Rt Hon Rhodri Morgan AM
First Minister/Prif Weinidog Cymru

DP 459/03-07



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17 November 2003

Deer Jonathan

At plenary on Tuesday 30 September, you asked me the following question, which I agreed to discuss with the Minister for Health and Social Services and write to you on the matter:

The Parkinson's Disease Society has advocated the Assembly Government using resources to recruit specialist nurses in the community who can work with people who suffer from this debilitating disease. Do you not believe that that would be an effective use of resources, and that you should ask the Minister for Health and Social Services to consider these proposals more fully?

After discussing with the Minister for Health and Social Services, I can confirm that John Griffiths AM, Deputy Minister for Older People met recently with Simon Hatch, Manager of the Parkinson's Disease Society in Wales, where the report of the Parkinson's Disease Nurse Specialist at Conwy and Denbighshire NHS Trust was presented to the Assembly for consideration. In addition, the Deputy Minister has accepted an invitation to meet one of the specialist nurses from Wales to discuss the report further.

As you will be aware, the provision of health services, including neurological services is the responsibility of the Local Health Boards. LHBs are responsible for undertaking local needs assessments and through working with NHS Trusts, the voluntary sector and others, are required to plan and prioritise local health services to meet identified need within the resources available.



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The introduction of the Parkinson's Disease Specialist Nurse within the Conwy and Denbighshire NHS Trust was introduced as a direct result of the recognition of local need. It will be for LHBs across Wales to consider how best services in their area can be developed to meet local needs. This initiative will provide a useful basis from which others may learn.

Yours
Rhodri