# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **South Wales Trauma Network – a year on** |
| **DATE**  | **06 January 2022** |
| **BY** | **Eluned Morgan MS, Minister for Health and Social Services** |

The South Wales Trauma Network was launched on 14 September 2020 to care for adults and children across South and West Wales and South Powys who had suffered a major trauma.

Major trauma can be defined as multiple and serious injuries resulting in disability or death. These may include serious head injuries, multiple injuries caused by road traffic accidents, industrial accidents, falls, mass casualty events, and knife and gunshot wounds. It is the leading cause of death in people under the age of 45 and a significant cause of short and long-term illness or poor health.

A trauma network is a group of hospitals, emergency and rehabilitation services which work together to make sure patients receive the best possible care for life-threatening and life-changing injuries.

The networks are usually made up of a major trauma centre, trauma units, local emergency hospitals and rural trauma facilities, supported by other hospitals within the region. There is strong evidence that a major trauma network saves lives and provides better outcomes for patients, including rehabilitation as close to home as possible.

The launch of the South Wales Trauma Network and the adult and children’s major trauma centre at University Hospital of Wales, in Cardiff was a significant moment for the NHS in South and West Wales. Until last year, it did not have its own major trauma arrangements.

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board is part of the North West Midlands and North Wales Trauma Network.

The development of the South Wales Trauma Network was the culmination of several years’ dedicated work and collaboration across a number of service areas.

The most seriously-injured patients are taken to the major trauma centre. The 14-bed unit at UHW is the first of its kind in Wales. It works closely with Morriston Hospital, in Swansea.

Many trauma patients continue to be managed in their local hospital – health boards have recruited major trauma practitioners and rehabilitation coordinators, and support from rehabilitation medicine consultants. This has led to improvements in the experience and outcome of patients as well as those who return home after specialist care at the major trauma centre.

A year on, the South Wales Trauma Network, has treated more than 1,330 people:

* 10% were children, 61% were adults under 65
* The median age was 48 and 67% were male
* The majority of trauma injuries involved vehicle accidents and falls
* 80% of people who needed rehabilitation received it in the community

The launch and delivery of the South Wales trauma service during the pandemic has been hugely challenging. But these figures show some of the early benefits that are being realised and provides a foundation for success, which will be built on by all the partners over the coming years.

This statement is being issued during recess in order to keep members informed. Should members wish me to make a further statement or to answer questions on this when the Senedd returns I would be happy to do so.