



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Caerdydd a'r Fro
Cardiff and Vale
University Health Board

Executive Headquarters / Pencadlys Gweithredol

Woodland House
Maes-y-Coed Road
Cardiff
CF14 4HH

Ty Coedtir
Ffordd Maes-y-Coed
Caerdydd
CF14 4HH

Eich cyf/Your ref:
Ein cyf/Our ref: SR-jb-0324-10566
Welsh Health Telephone Network:
Direct Line/Llinell uniongychol: 029 2183 6010

Suzanne Rankin
Chief Executive

22 March 2024

Dave Gilbert OBE
Chair of the Board of Trustees
Wales Air Ambulance
Tŷ Elusen
Ffordd Angel
Llanelli Gate
Dafen
Llanelli
SA14 8LQ

Dear Dave

Thank you for letter of 19 March 2024 regarding the EMRTS Service Review.

Firstly, on behalf of Cardiff and Vale University Health Board I wish to thank you, your team and volunteers for the incredible work that you do for the people of Wales. Whilst I recognise your frustrations with the process and the outcome of the discussions at the EASC meeting earlier this week and your consequent conclusion with the respect to the value my colleagues and I place on the work of the Wales Air Ambulance Charity, I am at pains to reassure you that the Charity and the work you do is held in the highest regard. A feeling that was powerfully reinforced by the Patient Story earlier in the same meeting.

The vital partnership between the NHS and the Wales Air Ambulance Charity is critical in enabling the best possible outcomes for the people we jointly serve. I share your ambitions for a robust conclusion to this important service review and I commit to work diligently and speedily to achieve this.

I fully understand that you expected a recommendation to be forthcoming from our meeting on Tuesday so that the Health Boards could make their decisions and that EASC would then enact that decision. You will appreciate that in order for me to make a recommendation to the Board I would need to give assurance that due consideration had been given to all of the information and engagement. In addition, I supported the view that the Chief Ambulance Service Commissioner's recommendations needed to be considered collectively rather than separately in order to ensure coherence in the subsequent implementation. I did therefore feel that further assurance was required in relation to two key elements:

1. Further assurance in relation to the issues raised by Llais in their capacity as the statutory Citizen Voice Body and the points they have raised in their most recent correspondence of 17th March.
2. Further detail in relation to Recommendation 4 so that as health boards we understand how our shared commitment that “if people receive the service now they should receive the service in future” is achieved, particularly in relation to road response when the air ambulance is not available.

I am acutely aware of the time pressure and the need for resolution for all of the reasons you have set out. I repeat my absolute commitment to work at pace and in collaboration with all stakeholders to ensure that the necessary next steps are completed in order that I am confidently able to take a recommendation to my Board at the earliest opportunity.

The abuse you refer to is clearly unacceptable and I am unequivocal in my condemnation of the hostility shown to your team and volunteers. I understand the EASC engagement and communication teams have been asked to work with Welsh Air Ambulance Charity to raise awareness of our shared expectations to treat people with kindness and respect, building on the work under way through the NHS Wales Anti Violence Collaborative.

I'm sorry that we have not yet reached a point where we can provide you with the certainty you deserve. If a discussion would in any way assist you then please do not hesitate to let me know.

I thank you again for your highly valued support and partnership and for the work that the Welsh Air Ambulance Charity does every day for the people of Wales, and look forward to concluding this work expeditiously so that a clear plan for the future can be enacted.

Yours sincerely



Suzanne Rankin
Chief Executive