# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Update on progress being made by the Women’s Health Implementation Group** |
| **DATE** | **20 December 2018** |
| **BY** | **Vaughan Gething AM, Minister for Health and Social Services** |

In May 2018, I announced the establishment of the Women’s Health Implementation Group (WHIG) to oversee some specific areas of women’s health requiring urgent attention and improvement. I directed that the first priority of the WHIG would be to oversee the implementation of recommendations from the vaginal mesh and tape review.

The WHIG, which is chaired by Tracy Myhill, CEO of Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board, has now met on three occasions and I am happy to report progress in relation to several key areas.

I indicated on establishment that the WHIG would be supported by up to £1 million of Welsh Government funding per year of operation. The group have decided that the first year’s funding will be spent on establishing a number of key posts to deliver some of the recommendations of the vaginal mesh and tape review.

The WHIG has listened to concerns from the Mesh Survivors Group and has decided to appoint a national pathway manager to deliver the recommendations of the vaginal mesh and tape review by leading the creation of a network of Pelvic Health and Well-being Coordinators within each health board. They will have a clinical background from an appropriate discipline, e.g. physiotherapy or pain management and will work with the national lead to deliver the required changes to local services.

The group is also taking advice from patients and clinicians on how to achieve the consistent provision of translabial scans where they are appropriate across Wales.

Finally, I have also recently directed the Chair of the WHIG that the group should begin to consider the recommendations from the report into endometriosis services in Wales produced by the Endometriosis Task and Finish Group chaired by Mr Richard Penketh, a consultant gynaecologist in Cardiff and Vale University Health Board.

I anticipate there will be synergies in approach between the management of endometriosis and issues arising from the use of vaginal mesh and tape and so it is appropriate that the WHIG consider them both.

*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 Assembly returns I would be happy to do so.*