

Vaughan Gething AC/AM  
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gwasanaethau  
Cymdeithasol  
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MA-P/VG/1453/18

Angela Burns AM  
Assembly Member for Carmarthen West  
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9 May 2018

Dear Angela,

During health questions on 13 December you raised the matter of services for people with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). My officials have received responses from all but two health boards and given the length of time since the matter was raised I did not want to wait any longer before replying to you.

Health boards should provide services for people affected by IBD in line with national standards. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) published a quality standard on IBD in February 2015, which can be found at:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs81>

Based on the responses from health boards, there appear to be relatively low levels of compliance with quality standard one, which relates to waiting times for IBD specialist care. However, there is at least some level of compliance across all health boards for quality standards two relating to multi-disciplinary team support. There is mixed compliance with quality standard three regarding surgical leadership but there is high compliance with quality standard four, which relates to monitoring of drug treatment.

The Welsh Government expects health boards to give due regard to standards produced by bodies other than NICE. However, the Welsh Government does not expect health boards to implement all standards produced by other bodies. For example, the IBD standards referred to in your remarks do not include consideration of cost-effectiveness.

However, my officials also asked health boards to confirm they are participating in the IBD registry, which supports good quality care. Four of the health boards providing specialist IBD care have confirmed they participate.

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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.

Health boards are required to develop sustainable workforce plans as part of the Integrated Medium Term Plan process. Workforce planning should be designed to meet the needs of the local population and the design of services in each health board area. The Welsh Government does not specifically endorse the staff to patient ratios set out in the standards you refer to.

However, my officials asked health boards for an assessment of their workforce planning. Three health boards reported their intention to develop business cases to appoint additional staff to meet the needs of their local population.

I hope this information is helpful

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Vaughan Gething AC/AM**

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Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services