

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: WAQ78144, 78145, 78146 and 78147

Llyr Gruffydd AM
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

3 May 2019

Dear Llyr,

I'm writing in response to WAQs 78144, 78145, 78146 and 78147 about the unilateral decision taken by Countess of Chester NHS Foundation Trust (CoCH). Sorry for the delay in replying.

The decision taken by CoCH, comes during a period of constructive engagement on a national level between officers from NHS Wales and English NHS agencies, supported by Welsh Government and UK Government officials, to seek a collective fair agreement for cross border payments so that patients can experience seamless care across the border. Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board lead on the local engagement with providers in relation to the needs of their population in line with the national framework.

The decision by the CoCH does not affect any other cross-border arrangements we have in place with other English NHS organisations. I have been very clear the action taken by the CoCH is not in line with the statement of values and principles agreed between the NHS in Wales and NHS in England that we will act in the best interest of patients at all times.

My focus and priority is to urgently resolve the problem and work with the UK Government Department for Health and Social Care to de-escalate the position and resolve issues in the best interest of Welsh residents. I have been in direct contact this week with Baroness Blackwood, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department of Health and Social Care. Welsh and English Government officials, the NHS in England and a number of Welsh Health Board, local commissioners and provider colleagues also held a constructive meeting this week. They were able to reach consensus on some matters and are looking to resolve the outstanding issues as quickly as possible, to allow for communications to follow to all affected trusts and health boards.

Yours sincerely,

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
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Minister for Health and Social Services

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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.