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Bae Abertawe
Swansea Bay University
Health Board



Meeting Date	24 February 2022	Agenda Item	2.1
Report Title	Outcome of the Engagement Changing for the Future Public Engagement on our Proposals for Hydrotherapy Services following Covid-19		
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Report Sponsor	Siân Harrop-Griffiths, Director of Strategy Christine Morrell, Director of Therapies and Health Science		
Presented by	Siân Harrop-Griffiths, Director of Strategy		
Freedom of Information	Open		
Purpose of the Report	<p>The Health Board has recently completed a public engagement exercise on proposals for enhancing the future provision of hydrotherapy services. The engagement took place between 20th December 2021 and the 18th February 2022.</p> <p>The report outlines the responses received to the engagement, any mitigations proposed and a suggested way forward.</p>		
Key Issues	<p>This public engagement arose following the Changing for the Future engagement in summer 2021, where it was identified that further engagement on proposals for hydrotherapy services across the Health Board were required. The total number of people responding to this engagement was relatively small. This was not unexpected as the engagement is focused on hydrotherapy, a single but important component of treatment offered by physiotherapy as part of a programme of rehabilitation. 54 responses were received, this included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 29 completed response forms • 24 comments on the Health Board intranet / email submissions • 1 written submission • Feedback from 4 meetings 		

	<p>More or less equal numbers of respondents supported and disagreed with the proposals. The main themes from a supportive perspective were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition that this reflects the roles of the different hospitals and centres of excellence in the Health Board • Provides additional community access to pools, through extended opening hours, and making them available to community groups • Proposals support the Health Board's approach to recovery from COVID and tackling the backlog of patients waiting for care and treatment through using facilities appropriately • Better use of resources across the Health Board <p>Those that disagreed with the proposals focused on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern over closure of the pool at Morriston in relation to access for inpatients • Ability to access pools and transport to Singleton and Neath Port Talbot • The resource implications of the changes, and whether this is just a cost saving exercise • Capacity in Singleton and Neath Port Talbot to meet demand • Low response rate 			
Specific Action Required <i>(please choose one only)</i>	Information	Discussion	Assurance	Approval
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Recommendations	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOTE the service change proposals outlined in the hydrotherapy engagement • NOTE the engagement process undertaken • NOTE the responses and issues raised through the engagement process • NOTE the financial implications • CONSIDER and AGREE the recommendation to proceed with the proposal to close Morriston Hydrotherapy pool • NOTE that the Community Health Council discussed the outcomes of the engagement at its Service Planning Committee on 22nd February and feedback will be provided at the Board meeting. 			

OUTCOME OF THE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS FOR THE PROVISION OF HYDROTHERAPY SERVICES ACROSS SWANSEA BAY UNIVERSITY HEALTH BOARD

1. INTRODUCTION

The Health Board has recently completed a public engagement exercise on proposals for the future provision of hydrotherapy services across the Health Board area. The engagement took place between 20th December 2021 and the 18th February 2022.

The engagement focused on asking for views on our proposals to:

- Use our Hydrotherapy pool at Neath Port Talbot Hospital for all inpatients requiring this service for their rehabilitation prior to returning home.
- Use our Hydrotherapy pools at Singleton and Neath Port Talbot Hospital for outpatients and rehabilitation for relevant patients after they return home.
- Make the Hydrotherapy pools at Singleton and Neath Port Talbot Hospitals available out of NHS operating hours for hire by community groups and voluntary sector organisations.
- Close the Hydrotherapy pool at Morriston Hospital permanently, as the inpatients who have traditionally received a service there will now do so (in line with the new Centres of Excellence being developed) at Neath Port Talbot Hospital instead. Patients attending Morriston historically on an outpatient basis have already been transferred to receive their hydrotherapy at Singleton or Neath Port Talbot Hospital, depending on which is easier for them to get to.
- Free up the space in the middle of Morriston Hospital site, which will be used to locate other services which can only be on the Morriston Hospital site and which are needed there in order for Morriston to fulfil the role of the Centre of Excellence for urgent and emergency care for Swansea Bay. Specifically, the Health Board is looking at the possibility of using this area to enable Fracture Clinic services to be relocated back from Neath Port Talbot Hospital (where it was temporarily moved during the pandemic to reduce footfall at Morriston Hospital) so that this service and the associated Plaster Room can be provided alongside the Emergency Department at Morriston Hospital to provide a central hub for support regarding orthopaedic emergency and urgent care.
- Provide improved services across the Singleton and Neath Port Talbot Hydrotherapy pools for the whole of Swansea Bay, the number of hours each pool operates for will be increased from 5-6 hours a day (9-3pm) to 8-10 hours a day (8am – 6pm), with all sessions utilised. This equates to an increase of 11% of activity across the 2 pools compared with when the 3 pools were operating.
- Lengthen the operating hours Monday to Friday from 9am – 3pm to 8am – 6pm at the two proposed Hydrotherapy Pool sites, as well as considering making the service available for hire over weekends to manage any increased demand.

- Provide further specialist training to staff to allow a wider range of physiotherapists to support the Hydrotherapy services, supported by a Swansea Bay clinical lead for these services.
- Work with our Local Authorities and local leisure centre providers to provide training and support to offer aquatic therapy within some of their community pools. This 'closer to home' model would help support members of the public to improve their health and wellbeing.

This report outlines the responses received to the engagement, proposes the actions to be taken to address these issues and a proposed way forward.

2. BACKGROUND

The proposal on public engagement on proposed changes to hydrotherapy services in Swansea Bay was approved by the Health Board on 16th December 2021.

Swansea Bay UHB currently has 3 hydrotherapy pools situated at each of our main hospitals – Morriston, Singleton and Neath Port Talbot. These pools are used to support appropriate patients in the management of a range of debilitating short and long-term conditions. Some examples of patient groups that access the pool as part of their rehabilitation include those affected by Stroke, Parkinson's, Multiple Sclerosis, Haemophilia, Learning Disabilities, Cancer, Muscular-skeletal fractures or injuries, persistent pain, post-operative orthopaedic surgery (both adults and children), Cerebral Palsy and Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy.

Hydrotherapy offers the opportunity to perform activities or exercises within water. These exercises/ activities are guided by a physiotherapist and form part of a wider rehabilitation programme; it is not a standalone treatment. Performing these exercises within the hydrotherapy pool can benefit patients as the water offers buoyancy, reducing body weight and supporting patients as they move. In addition, the pools are at least 33 degrees in temperature - the warmth of the water offers both pain relief and encourages relaxation, which is particularly beneficial for some patient groups. Both the temperature of the hydrotherapy pools and their access options (e.g. hoists) make them different to pools within community leisure facilities in the Health Board area. Many people do not require the additional higher temperature to benefit their rehabilitation. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, which advises the NHS on the effectiveness of treatments, recognises hydrotherapy as a treatment tool that can be used as an aid to rehabilitation.

We have reviewed capacity and usage of these pools on all our sites pre-Covid 19. On average the pool facilities were open for use for approximately 5-6hrs per day, on a Monday-Friday basis. Within these bookings not all sessions were fully utilised, and usage rates were approximately 80% at Singleton; 60-80% at Neath Port Talbot and 35% at Morriston.

When the Covid-19 pandemic started early in 2020, the NHS in Wales needed to reorganise services to respond to the pandemic. As a result, a number of changes were made to physiotherapy services, which included hydrotherapy services:

- All pools were temporarily closed in March 2020 in line with Welsh Government guidance to stop routine activity and staff were temporarily redeployed to cover ward areas.
- In May 2021 the pools at Singleton and Neath Port Talbot Hospitals reopened, operating 7 hours a day on average, with all sessions Monday to Friday utilised. Advice from infection prevention and control on procedures for both of these pools have allowed these to be used.
- The pool at Morriston Hospital has remained temporarily closed based on infection prevention and control advice due to the higher risk of Covid-19 infection on this site. Most Swansea Bay patients who haven't been pretested for Covid-19 are admitted to Morriston and the location of the pool requires patients to travel across much of the site to access the pool. The Morriston pool also requires investment for refurbishment if it is to reopen.
- Due to the previously underutilised capacity at the pools at Singleton and Neath Port Talbot Hospitals it has been possible to enable all patients who require hydrotherapy across Swansea Bay to receive this treatment even with the continued temporary closure of the Morriston pool.

Changing for the Future, the extensive public engagement exercise undertaken by the Health Board in 2021, set the direction of travel for the organisation, reflecting the priorities set out in our Clinical Services Plan. Each of our main hospitals would be a Centre of Excellence – Morriston for urgent and emergency care and specialist services; Singleton for cancer, diagnostics and women's service; Neath Port Talbot for rehabilitation, orthopaedic and spinal services. All our plans must be developed to enable this. The proposals set out in the engagement document for hydrotherapy support this.

We want to expand access for outpatients, community groups and voluntary sector organisations to hydrotherapy services. Both Singleton and Neath Port Talbot Hospitals offer good access to patients visiting their sites and so will be available for these individuals and groups – either as patients or through hire. These proposed changes will offer significant benefits including:

- Improved access with increased capacity allowing more patients to be treated
- Dedicated slots for different patient groups
- Concentrating staff resources on fewer sites will allow more hydrotherapy staff to develop expertise which in turn will improve the service patients receive
- Improved options for long term self-management by linking with more patient support groups and enabling pool hire out. This will allow more of our population with chronic conditions to access our pools and self-manage on a long term basis.
- Supporting ongoing recovery by linking with local leisure facilities. Empowering our patients with the confidence to access their own local facilities will give them more flexibility to take an active role in their own rehabilitation and potentially progress further and /or quicker.

- Some patients will have hydrotherapy at locations closer to their homes.

There are some potential disadvantages which could arise from these proposed changes:

- Some outpatients may have to travel further to access facilities
- A very small number of Morriston Hospital in-patients may not be able to receive hydrotherapy on site, including patients receiving critical. However, the development of centres of excellence will promote early discharge from Morriston Hospital so they can attend hydrotherapy at Singleton or Neath Port Talbot Hospitals as outpatients depending on where they live or patients being transferred to Neath Port Talbot Hospital for specialist rehabilitation.

It was agreed with Swansea Bay Community Health Council that public engagement on these proposed changes should run for 8 weeks from 20th December 2021 to 18th February 2022.

To support this, an engagement document was developed (**Appendix A**) together with an engagement plan (**Appendix B**), which were approved by the Board on 16th December 2021.

3. RESPONSES TO PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND NEXT STEPS

During the engagement period, a total of 54 responses were received, this included:

- 29 completed response forms, although not all respondents completed all questions. Of these:
 - Strongly Agree or Tend to Agree = 12 responses (41%)
 - Neither Agree nor Disagree = 5 responses (17%)
 - Strongly Disagree or Tend to Disagree = 12 responses (41%)
- 24 comments on the Health Board intranet / email submissions
- 1 written submission
- Feedback from 4 meetings

The comments and issues raised in all responses have been taken into account in the consideration of the feedback received and any subsequent actions to be taken by the Health Board. Detailed information in relation to each of the questions asked is provided in Annex C, and the full comments are available as **Appendix D**.

The details of these responses have been shared with Swansea Bay CHC.

The main themes which were raised during the engagement are set out below.

Supportive of the Proposals:

- Recognition that this reflects the roles of the different hospitals and centres of excellence in the Health Board
- Provides additional community access to pools, through extended opening hours, and making them available to community groups

- Proposals support the Health Board's approach to recovery from COVID and tackling the backlog of patients waiting for care and treatment through using facilities appropriately
- Better use of resources across the Health Board

Concerns

Loss of Hydrotherapy Pool at Morriston

Due to Infection, Prevention and Control restrictions we have been unable to reopen Morriston Pool. Footfall on the site is still restricted and likely to remain so. On the advice of specialist estates professionals, the pool in Morriston was drained during the pandemic, (due to its size, design and condition (as a result of its age). To reopen and refill the pool there would need to be extensive checks and potential maintenance requirements at significant cost.

Concern has been expressed by a small number of staff on the loss of the service from Morriston, particularly for critical care patients. The numbers of patients impacted would be very small; only between 6-12 patients have used the service over a 12month period, most of these for a single session. No spinal or orthopaedic patients used the pool. These patients did not attend on regular occasions with the majority of their rehabilitation occurring outside of the pool. We would anticipate there to be no impact on length of stay if the hydrotherapy pool was not used within the course of rehabilitation, as conversely there was no evidence to demonstrate reduced length of stay when the pool was occasionally used. Patients are still able to access rehabilitation within a gymnasium so will not be disadvantaged.

Meetings and discussions have been held with the staff who have voiced concerns, and they recognise that there only a very small number of their patients per annum who this may effect and that patients are still able to access rehabilitation within a gymnasium so will not be disadvantaged.

As set out previously, the Health Boards' proposals for the future of Morriston Hospital does not align with it being a hospital where patients spend time requiring rehabilitation. This care will primarily be provided at Neath Port Talbot Hospital, and the provision of Hydrotherapy in this facility will enable wider access. Children needing hydrotherapy primarily access care through out-patient settings, and so can access that care at Singleton and Neath Port Talbot.

There are very few services, and a low number of patients, that could potentially benefit by keeping the pool at Morriston in the new model of care.

If the proposal is supported, the space will be repurposed to provide the Fracture Clinic which was transferred to Neath Port Talbot Hospital at the start of COVID. It cannot return to its previous location as this is being developed to enable the transfer of the acute medical take to Morriston to support improved urgent and emergency care services in the Health Board. The area which the Fracture Clinic currently occupies in Neath Port Talbot Hospital needs to be made available to

enable additional orthopaedic activity to be undertaken and reduce the unacceptable waiting times for these patients who are coming to harm.

Capacity in Singleton and Neath Port Talbot Hydrotherapy Pools

Prior to COVID, the pools were not being utilised at full capacity. Since the two pools in Singleton and Neath Port Talbot have reopened, there has been sufficient capacity to meet demand. Analysis has shown that the two pools will be sufficient to deliver 98% of demand. The proposals for the new opening hours result in a further 11% increase in capacity. The demand and usage of the pools will be monitored, and if there is a demand for further capacity, the opening hours will be reviewed again.

Depending on the outcome of the engagement, further discussions on utilising community facilities will be progressed for those patients who would benefit from hydrotherapy but don't need access to pools with the higher temperature. Patients have indicated that they would be happy to travel, with the priority being the ability to access their regular clinical teams. This would also support improved access to treatment in community settings and reduce some travel requirements.

Maximising Resources

Concern was raised that this is being used as a cost saving exercise. This review or recommendation was not driven based on achieving cost saving, it was developed to improve outcomes for patients. Staff will continue to be part of the physiotherapy team and support rehabilitation (both aquatic and land based). The concentration of staff on two rather than three sites will enable the development of further services and expertise. There will be investment in services for patients and developing rehabilitation as part of the Centres of Excellence Model. There will be a small incidental saving related to regular maintenance of the Morriston Pool. However, reopening the Morriston pool will also investment in an overhaul and would divert funds from the other plans to enhance hydrotherapy services.

This service review also provides significant opportunities to work with our local leisure partners to support and empower our patients to transition from health care to local community facilities and make life long health benefit changes. We know from our benchmarking that this approach is already widely used across other health boards within Wales.

It would not be a prudent use of staff and resource to keep the old large pool in Morriston open for occasional use. Other equally effective rehabilitation approaches are being used for these patients.

Access and Transport to Services

The ability to access services on our hospital sites is consistently raised as a concern and was a central theme arising from the Changing for the Future engagement. As part of the response to Changing for the Future engagement it was agreed a new approach is taken to travel planning to support these service

changes, including working with partners to improve the interconnections of public transport between sites and also with the third sector to provide alternative transport options. This would apply to this service change

Patients have been accessing the hydrotherapy pools at Neath Port Talbot and Singleton and difficulties accessing sessions at these pools have not been raised by patients.

Low Response Rate

It is always disappointing to have a low response rate to a public engagement. However, that is to be expected for a small and specialist service. The following actions were taken to invite people to respond to proposals:

- Information available on the internet
- Information circulated through Health Board social media accounts
- Circulation of information to the stakeholder database, external networks across Swansea Bay, Stakeholder Reference Group and Accessibility Reference Group
- Copies of documents available at hydrotherapy pools
- Random sample of existing patients sent copies of documentation inviting them to feedback

Two online engagement events were held to offer the public the opportunity to find out more and share views about the proposed changes.

It is important to acknowledge the range of views we received as part of this engagement. The main area of concern raised was from a small number of staff who have expressed concerns regarding the impact of the removal of hydrotherapy on inpatients in Morriston Hospital. However, this needs to be balanced with the views of other clinical staff which are supportive of the change, to enable the Health Board to deliver other care to patients – particularly those waiting for orthopaedic care – to enable recovery from COVID and reduce waiting times.

During Covid, the hydrotherapy pools have been operating as proposed in the engagement with Morriston closed and Neath Port Talbot and Singleton meeting the needs of the patients. This has demonstrated the proposal works, patients' needs have been met within the existing provision and the extension of opening hours will provide additional capacity. Patients receiving hydrotherapy at Neath Port Talbot and Singleton have not raised issues regarding accessing these pools.

Increasing the opening times of the hydrotherapy pools and extending access to community groups and the extension of aquatherapy into community settings to support self-care and wellbeing have been well received, especially by local authority and third sector partners.

In conclusion it is proposed that the changes proposed in the engagement document are implemented.

Swansea Bay Community Health Council have received all the responses to the engagement plus the Health Board's proposals regarding next steps and considered

their response at their Executive Committee on 22nd February 2022. The feedback from the CHC will be made available at the Board meeting.

3 GOVERNANCE AND RISK ISSUES

Engagement on service change inevitably evokes strong feelings from respondents and these can be seen in the responses received. It is important that the Health Board takes due regard of the issues raised and those arising from the Equality Impact Assessment in making any decisions about how the service changes proposed in the engagement document should be implemented.

Hydrotherapy services were stopped during the initial phase of COVID, and restarted at Singleton and Neath Port Talbot Hospitals in May 2021. There has been sufficient capacity to meet demand during this time, and no concerns have been raised about access to care.

A Stage 1 Equality Impact Assessment was prepared and available as part of the engagement process. This has subsequently been amended to a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment with the views expressed in the engagement (**Appendix C**).

Usage of the Hydrotherapy pools will continue to be monitored through internal performance management arrangements, and any requirements for increased capacity will be addressed through routine planning arrangements.

Engagement on service change was carried out in partnership with Swansea Bay Community Health Council and the relevant information was circulated widely as agreed at that time.

There are no staff permanently based within the Hydrotherapy pool at MGH therefore no formal OCP process would be required. The staff resource that were providing hydrotherapy on a sessional basis will be utilised on the other sites. There is no reduction in staff resource going into the hydrotherapy services overall.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Implementation of the proposals in the engagement document will result in an investment of ~£13,000 in the purchase of a new hoist at Singleton, which is part of the 2022/23 draft financial plan, and a financial saving of £53,356 p.a..

5 RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to:

- **NOTE** the service change proposals outlined in the hydrotherapy engagement
- **NOTE** the engagement process undertaken
- **NOTE** the responses and issues raised through the engagement process
- **CONSIDER and AGREE** the recommendation to proceed with the proposal to close Morriston Hydrotherapy pool
- **NOTE** the financial implications

- **NOTE** that the Community Health Council discussed the outcomes of the engagement at its Service Planning Committee on 22nd February and feedback will be provided at the Board meeting.

Governance and Assurance		
Link to Enabling Objectives (please choose)	Supporting better health and wellbeing by actively promoting and empowering people to live well in resilient communities	
	Partnerships for Improving Health and Wellbeing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Co-Production and Health Literacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Digitally Enabled Health and Wellbeing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Deliver better care through excellent health and care services achieving the outcomes that matter most to people	
	Best Value Outcomes and High Quality Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Partnerships for Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Excellent Staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Digitally Enabled Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Outstanding Research, Innovation, Education and Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health and Care Standards		
(please choose)	Staying Healthy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Safe Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Effective Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Dignified Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Timely Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Individual Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Staff and Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Quality, Safety and Patient Experience		
The report highlights how the Health Board has been raising awareness and seeking feedback from staff, patients, families, and our stakeholders to inform our approach and deliver more sustainable hydrotherapy services.		
Financial Implications		
The engagement process is supporting the development of more sustainable hydrotherapy services for the future and making best use of Health Board resources.		
Legal Implications (including equality and diversity assessment)		
The Health Board has a requirement to ensure that it complies with Welsh Government guidance on public engagement and consultation and that it considers the impacts of these proposed changes on the protected characteristic groups outlined in the Equality Act 2010, including the newly introduced Socioeconomic duty.		
Staffing Implications		
There are no staff permanently based within the Hydrotherapy pool at MGH therefore no formal OCP process would be required. The staff resource that were providing hydrotherapy on a sessional basis will be utilised on the other sites. There is no reduction in staff resource going into the hydrotherapy services overall.		
Long Term Implications (including the impact of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015)		
The actions outlined in the report support the five ways of working outlined in the Act. Swansea Bay UHB is working collaboratively with partner organisations to improve services provided for patients requiring hydrotherapy services.		

Report History	Board Report 16 December 2022 - Recommendations to support provision for hydrotherapy provision under Changing for the Future: Centre of Excellence Model
Appendices	Appendix A Engagement Document Appendix B Engagement Plan Appendix C Stage 2 EQIA to follow Appendix D Engagement Responses

Q1b Comments to support your answer

Key issues raised by respondents:

- Concerns about reduced access to hydrotherapy services for patients, particularly affecting critically ill patients and inpatients
- The closure of Morriston will put additional pressure on Neath Port Talbot and Singleton
- Morriston is the best site for a hydrotherapy pool, in terms of location, accessibility, parking and travelling
- Hydrotherapy benefits a small number of patients, repurposing the area would benefit a far greater number of patients and be a better use of space
- Fits with the proposals for keeping Morriston for acute patients only. Access is available on other sites as part of patients' rehabilitation journey
- Accessing the pool at Morriston is difficult and using the facilities is not a good patient experience

Examples of comments from respondents:

I am a Specialist Neurological Physiotherapist... I strongly disagree with the option to close the hydrotherapy pool in Morriston Hospital....Morriston Hospital is the nearest hospital to a large number of our patients and asking them to go further can be difficult for them.

I use the pool in Singleton as it is on the same site as the Haemophilia Centre. The access and parking is easy. I do not need to use the pool in Morriston.

I have been a patient who attended Morriston hydrotherapy pool for treatment. The pool was lovely, but the waiting area is inappropriate, it's a main thoroughfare and on the corridor to private offices. The showers felt very exposed and not in the changing area and the facilities were not very good. Also as there were no toilet facilities had to use public toilets out of the physiotherapy area.

Q2 What comments / issues do you want the Health Board to consider in relation to the closure of the Hydrotherapy pool at Morriston when it considers the outcome of this engagement?

Key issues raised by respondents:

- Ensure the provision of adequate and appropriate hydrotherapy services for patients across Swansea Bay
- Concerns these proposals will hinder early discharge
- Consider transport to access health services across the Swansea Bay area to ensure access for people who live near Morriston and wider communities who may be affected
- Consider the parking issues at Morriston
- Emphasis on patient centred care and taking a holistic approach towards patients including people with learning disabilities
- Importance of tackling the backlog of patients
- The relocation of fracture clinic is positive
- Community aqua therapy welcomed

- More investment in equipment and maintenance of hydrotherapy pools at Neath Port Talbot and Singleton
- Lack of patient engagement in this process

Q3 Are there any groups protected under the Equality Act 2010 who you believe will be positively or negatively affected by our proposed changes? If so, what could we do to enhance positive or reduce negative impacts?

10 respondents said yes there would be an impact, 1 identified no impact and 18 respondents did not include a response to this section.

Concerns were expressed on the impact proposals would have on people with disabilities, older people and pregnant women. Access to services and transport were identified as issues to consider.

Respondents suggested the following actions to improve and enhance services for people with protected characteristics:

- provide more services for people with learning disabilities as part of these proposals
- the provision of women only sessions
- consider individual cubicles for changing

5.2 Feedback through intranet / email submissions (24 responses)

Initial feedback from staff through the intranet was negative and subsequently more positive feedback was received as part of the engagement process. There was strong opposition to the loss of the pool at Morriston and feedback included:

- the loss of the pool on inpatients, especially ITU patients, critical care patients, orthopaedics and spinal patients.
- concerns the lack of access to hydrotherapy services could result increased length of stays
- transport and access difficulties for patients
- concerns around the capacity of Neath Port Talbot and Singleton to meet the demand with the closure of the Morriston hydrotherapy pool
- this is a cost-saving exercise
- with the creation of centres of excellence, patients will benefit from an enhanced offer
- a preference for additional resources to be spent at Singleton and Neath Port Talbot
- use of hydrotherapy by inpatients is not always a viable option

Examples of comments from respondents:

I have seen the wonderful impact hydrotherapy can have on a patient and their rehabilitation journey. It was suggested to us that we would be able to use the hydrotherapy pool in NPTH, whilst that might be an option for outpatients it would be completely impossible to transport a critical care patient to NPTH

we should not lose any of our hydrotherapy pools access for the community must be prioritised losing the hydrotherapy pool at Morriston Hospital is terrible and poor planning

limiting services to only the NPT or Singleton sites for hydrotherapy outpatients is outrageous. SBUHB covers a wide area including many patients who do not have access to a car, do not drive, maybe immobile or are unable to access public transport. It is not feasible for people to rely on family members or friends for transport especially when many patients may not have this luxury. Taxi transport is extremely expensive and completely unrealistic. Therefore, many people will not be able to access the services they require and shouldn't patient centred care be our main concern.

With regard to the hydrotherapy pools, in an ideal world it would be lovely if every hospital had one. However, as we do not live in an ideal world, one pool in each health authority area is a good compromise. As long as it doesn't involve patients who need that treatment, waiting longer to get it.

The plan to expand availability of the hydro pools to community groups and the voluntary sector is a great idea.

it is difficult to get to Morriston hospital if you are unable to drive,

Pre Covid, it was not possible to utilise the hydro pool at Morriston Hospital for this co-hort of patients due to lack of staffing capacity. Offering this time consuming and man-power heavy service to a small cohort of patients would have been detrimental to a larger group of other trauma patients.

As a physiotherapist providing a hydrotherapy service in Singleton, I would prefer that the facilities were improved on Singleton and NPT sites for service users. Singleton is best placed in terms of access from a health and safety point of view is better as patients do not have to walk through the main hospital to access.

As long as you keep the Singleton and Neath pools open and invest money into Community. I have had a long stay on ITU in induced coma and would benefit from post exercise therapy. I would prefer to go to a leisure centre than hospital as less danger of Covid

5.3 Feedback through meetings

Accessibility Reference Group

The group provided feedback around the following:

- Confirmation there had been discussions with Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) colleagues.
- Clarification around the ability to deliver increased opening hours of pools with the same number of staff.
- There is a commitment to providing service closer to home – what about those living close to Morriston Hospital, they'll have to travel further.
- Lack of parking on all hospital sites and the disabled parking in Singleton has been reduced recently.
- Raise awareness that people can self-refer to physiotherapy
- Will physiotherapists be located within the community sites to assist with sessions?
- Temperature of community venues need to be the same as those in the Hydrotherapy Pools.
- Use of community pools is an excellent idea. Consideration should be given to local hotels with pools, Ysgol Crug Glas and Pentrehafod.

- Attending community venues provide opportunities to raise awareness and training for staff around accessibility, awareness raising around disability
- For children who've got more complex needs having sessions on a Saturday and Sunday would be of benefit. Disabled children receiving swimming lessons could benefit in having a physiotherapist in attendance as well as a BSL translator.
- The online link to access the engagement document was difficult to use.

Stakeholder Reference Group

- Singleton Hospital was deemed the best location to access Hydrotherapy Services with Neath Port Talbot Hospital being used for rehabilitation.
- Reassurance received from Neath Port Talbot Hospital that the service is being retained there.
- Good transport links to Singleton and Neath Port Talbot Hospitals are essential.
- Those accessing hydrotherapy value the service
- Ensure the pool temperature of community venues is similar to that of Hydrotherapy pools.
- Positive response to the use of community venues.

Online public engagement sessions

The first online engagement session was held at 6.00pm on 3rd February 2022. There were no members of public in attendance at this session. There were two representatives from the CHC in attendance and the following queries were raised:

- How do staff feel about the change?
- ICU - what will they use for rehabilitation if the pool in Morriston is removed?
- Was the pool at Morriston used more regularly in the past?
- Issues have been raised previously regarding the temperature of community pools and whether they are as warm as the Hydrotherapy pool. Is this being taken into consideration when looking for community locations.
- What pools are being proposed for community use.
- What will be offered to patients within the community pools – will it be a course and if so how much will this cost?
- Number of completed forms received to date
- What other comments have been received during the engagement?
- What is the timeline for the engagement?

The second online engagement session was held at 6.00pm on 10th February 2022. In addition to a representative from the CHC just one person attended. They left the session without sharing any comments or asking any questions.

5.4 Written submissions

A submission was received from the Back Care Swansea Branch. The key issues raised were:

- a request that nothing be done which would prevent the reopening of hydrotherapy facilities at Morriston Hospital at a future date.
- the intention of the Health Board to increasing the operational hours of the hydrotherapy pools was noted

- making the Hydrotherapy Pool at Singleton available to community groups and voluntary sector organisations was welcomed.
- reservations were expressed regarding the facilities only being available outside NHS operating hours. Prior to Covid classes ran between 4.30 pm and 6.30 pm and this had the advantage of public transport being available and the avoidance of dark evenings. It was hoped classes could resume at these times.
- appreciative of the co-operation and help from staff members in the Singleton Hospital Physiotherapy Department.