



Abigail Harris
Chief Executive
Swansea Bay University Health Board

01 November 2024

Dear Abigail,

Improving Waiting Times for Children's Neurodevelopmental Services

The Welsh Government has set out to reduce waiting times for children's neurodevelopmental assessment services in Wales as one of our top priorities this year. The NHS in Wales continues to have long waits for children's neurodevelopmental diagnostic assessments and health boards, as requested, have set out additional plans which are aimed at reducing the longest waits in the next six months. These proposals, sit alongside the existing delivery plans and innovation work being undertaken through the Neurodivergence Improvement Programme.

To enable the delivery of a reduction in the longest waits across Wales, the Cabinet has approved funding to support the delivery of the plans submitted by health boards in September 2024.

Each plan has been risk assessed for delivery and its impact on the longest waits across Wales. The allocation of funding was determined by impact confidence. The allocation is in line with the Health Board's assessment of what is possible to deliver by March 2025.

This risk assessment sits alongside the risk to delivery of existing trajectories for children's neurodevelopmental diagnostic assessment wait times, which are expected to be delivered by each health board and support the projected waiting list position for year-end.

You have provided proposals to address the longest waits, as outlined in Appendix 1, you are now expected to work up final detail and assurance and deliver the proposed solution/s.

- a) Additional funding as outlined in this letter will be ringfenced for the purpose outlined in this letter.
- b) You will be expected to deploy solutions and deliver against trajectories submitted.
- c) The additional funding allocation will only be issued on confirmation of delivery, milestones and trajectories achieved and actual expenditure on a monthly basis until March 2025.



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- d) Robust monitoring will be put in place on this specific allocation in addition to routine monitoring arrangements.
- e) Any delays or unanticipated risks to proposed plans and delivery will be transparently reported and retained by Welsh Government.
- f) Regular reporting of progress will be provided to the Cabinet Secretary for Health, recognising the importance of progress related to achievement of a key Welsh Government priority.

Your funding allocation that has been ring-fenced pending delivery is £874,626.

All funding allocated in this financial year will be for the specific purpose of delivery of the schemes and patient episodes in your plans and this funding is allocated for this year only and will be non-recurrent.

Further work to tackle the continued referral demand and waiting times is planned i.e. the Accelerated Design Event 27 and 28 November 2024. Health Boards are expected to engage with this new work alongside current arrangements under the Neurodivergence Improvement Programme.

The Director of Operations, NHS Wales will be liaising with Chief Operating Officers and NHS Executive Performance & Assurance to establish robust monitoring process and provide specific oversight and assurance of schemes. This will include monthly returns to capture both expenditure and activity delivered. This will be set out under separate cover later this week.

Further enquiries about this allocation can be directed to the Welsh Government Neurodivergence [mailbox](#).

Yours sincerely,

Rhiannon Ivens
Deputy Director
Inclusion and Corporate Business
Social Services and Integration Directorate
Welsh Government



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Appendix 1

Swansea Bay University Health Board Proposed Allocation

Final allocation will be based upon actual delivery

Neurodevelopmental services	End of March position 25						
	Allocated monies	52 weeks to 103 weeks (existing capacity only)	52 weeks to 103 weeks (with additional funding)	1 04 weeks to 155 weeks (existing capacity only)	104 to 155 weeks (with additional funding)	> 156 weeks (existing capacity only)	> 156 weeks (with additional funding)
SBUHB							
	£874,626	880	0	425	0	116	0