



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Bae Abertawe
Swansea Bay University
Health Board

Cadeirydd/Chair: **Emma Woollett**
Prif Weithredwr/Chief Executive: **Mark Hackett**

gofalu am ein gilydd, cydweithio, gwella bob amser
caring for each other, working together, always improving

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg. Atebir gohebiaeth Gymraeg yn y Gymraeg, ac ni fydd hyn yn arwain at oedi. We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English. Welsh language correspondence will be replied to in Welsh, and this will not lead to a delay.

Cais Rhyddid Gwybodaeth / Freedom of Information request **Ein Cyf / Our Ref: 22-H-022**

You asked:

Staffing levels

1. What are your plans to reduce the sickness absence rate and fill the vacancies for doctors and nurses ahead of winter when admissions may increase?

Maximising employee attendance at work is a priority for Swansea Bay University Health Board. The Health Board provide a number of interventions to support employees, managers and teams to remain safe and well at work. The current and future plans, have a targeted approach aimed at preventing sickness absence and improving attendance at work, with a heavy focus on well-being, improving employee experience, healthy working relationships and compassionate and inclusive leadership. We are also planning the roll out of our Autumn co-administered Covid-19 and employee flu vaccine and providing enhanced support for long term absences and clinically extremely vulnerable employees to return to work.

Bed Capacity

2. Do you have a plan in place to increase the number of general and acute beds available now, over the next six months and a longer-term plan to ensure sufficient beds?

No. The Health Board is focusing on out of hospital pathways both in terms of admission avoidance and earlier supported discharge in the community. Please see the link below, referring to the Health Boards AMSR business case referring to the bed plan and supporting initiatives.

<https://sbuhb.nhs.wales/about-us/key-documents-folder/performance-and-finance-committee-papers/performance-and-finance-july-2022/52-appendix-1-amsr-business-case-final-for-special-management-board-23-may-2022-002pdf/>



Pencadlys BIP Bae Abertawe, Un Porthfa Talbot, Port Talbot, SA12 7BR / Swansea Bay UHB Headquarters, One Talbot Gateway, Port Talbot, SA12 7BR

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Bae Abertawe yw enw gweithredu Bwrdd Iechyd Lleol Prifysgol Bae Abertawe
Swansea Bay University Health Board is the operational name of Swansea Bay University Local Health Board

Waiting Lists for operations

3. What plans does the Health Board have in place to tackle the current waiting list and clear the back logs? What is the long-term plan to ensure waiting lists remain low so that patients are reassured they will be treated quickly?

The Health Board has a number of plans in place to tackle the current waiting lists and clear backlog, these include re-establishing pre-Covid levels of operating, additional internal capacity outside of normal working hours, outsourcing to independent providers and insourcing capacity on weekends. However, addressing the backlogs will take several years, as the priority is to treat those most clinically urgent patients and then longest waiting patients.

In the long term, the Health Board has plans to increase and protect elective capacity through the development of elective centres of excellence. An additional day surgery unit has recently been established at Singleton Hospital to support recovery for ophthalmology, in particular cataract surgery and three additional laminar air flow theatres are being installed in Neath Port Talbot Hospital (NPTH), with plans for these to be commissioned in June 2023, providing additional capacity for orthopaedics both locally and regionally. These developments will be complimented by enhanced care facilities at both Singleton Hospital, which will become a centre of excellence for elective surgery and in NPTH. The enhanced care facilities will allow higher acuity patients, who currently can only be treated in Morriston Hospital, to have their surgery on the other sites.

Impact of lockdowns, masks and restrictions on visiting patients

4. Please provide clear clinical and scientific evidence to support the decision to force NHS staff to wear masks in order to reduce the spread of respiratory viruses and the results of any impact assessment carried out at your Health Board that considered the impact on staff and their physical and mental health?

The Health Board follows Welsh Government policy in relation to mask wearing. The scientific advice underpinning policy decisions and any impact assessments are not held by the Health Board.

5. Please provide evidence that the restriction on the number of visitors has reduced the spread of a respiratory virus and details of consultations carried out with patients to assess the impact on their well-being?

The Health Board does not hold this information.

However, in our duty to advise and assist, we have attached a copy of guidance produced by Welsh Government on hospital visiting (appendix 1)

PCR testing for COVID-19



6. Why are staff and patients still being tested with PCR tests? What is the plan to phase out PCR testing and to rely on actual clinical diagnosis on patients and staff with symptoms?

The Health Board is guided by Welsh Government guidance. Please find attached a Welsh Health Circular (WHC/2022/011) regarding testing (appendix 2)

