

PLANS FOR MEETING SEASONAL EMERGENCY AND URGENT CARE PRESSURES IN ABERTAWE BRO MORGANNWG HEALTH BOARD



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University Health Board



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Gwasanaethau Ambiwylans Cymru
Welsh Ambulance Services
NHS Trust



City and County of Swansea
Dinas a Sir Abertawe



This set of slides summarises the plans being implemented during 2016/17 to ensure that we can deliver the best possible care for people who need urgent or emergency care in our Health Board

Last winter was difficult in terms of emergency pressures right across the NHS, and we had particular challenges in the ABMU Health Board area despite a lot of planning and investment with our partner organisations. In putting together this plan we have aimed to take stock of what has been happening and apply lessons learned.

Overall our aim is to ensure that patients get the right care at the right time from the right person, and we recognise the importance of getting this right in the context of urgent and emergency care.

During the winter we have extra demands to cope with – such as the impact of cold weather on breathing problems and other conditions and the impact of infectious illnesses like stomach bugs and influenza. These impact upon the number and type of patients who attend hospital, as well as on our own staff.

Consequently it is critical that we plan effectively for this time of year.

What went well last year?

- Staff uptake of the flu immunisation exceeded targeted levels and improved uptake for pregnant women
- Continued joint working between ambulance services, our GP Out of Hours services and our emergency departments which avoided un-necessary visits to our emergency departments.
- A generally resilient and reliable GPOOH service which provided continuity of services throughout the winter
- Patients discharged earlier in the day – ‘Home for Lunch ethos’
- A reduction in the number of cancelled operations compared with the previous year.
- New models of care introduced for frail elderly patients admitted to hospital and in the community
- Good infection control support to minimise the impact of the winter vomiting bug

What didn't go so well?

- Low Flu vaccination uptake in young children under 3 years, the > 65 years age group and for at risk patients in the under 65 year age group. (This is where members of the public can help take responsibility for keeping as healthy as possible)
- Too much bed capacity wasted through unnecessary delays for patients waiting in hospital beds particularly between January and April
- Not enough capacity at times to meet peak demands on Emergency Departments
- Unexpected loss of private domiciliary care capacity in Neath which extended patient stays in hospitals
- Peaks in respiratory admissions in March
- Extra-ordinary demand on critical care capacity in March.
- Staffing problems due to shortages of staff to recruit into posts

So in light of this what have we done?

Improvements to our services

Before you get to hospital

- **New Acute response teams in place across the Health Board to provide care to patients in their home environments**
- **A similar range of community services are in place in across the Health Board and our 3 Local Authority areas to ensure consistency for patients**
- **Improved access to dental services for patients requiring an emergency appointment**
- **Ongoing work with the Welsh Ambulance Service, Local Authorities, care homes and 3rd sector partners to provide access to a greater range of services, provide alternative means of transporting patients to hospital, and to reduce repeated attendances at our emergency departments.**
- **New 111 service in place for patients who need to access primary care services out of hours and providing 24/7 access to health information and advice to help you choose the right service.**

In Hospital services

- **Ongoing recruitment of additional and replacement consultants, senior doctors and nurses to improve staffing levels**
- **Redesign of our processes within the Emergency departments to reduce un-necessary delays for patients**
- **Continued improvements to our patient assessment processes to speed up access to treatment and reduce congestion in our emergency departments**
- **The introduction of new pathways of care that provide rapid access to senior specialist assessment, investigation and treatment**
- **Increased emergency theatre capacity and additional capacity for short stay planned operations to reduce cancelled operations**
- **The development of critical care outreach teams and improved processes to reduce un-necessary delays in patients being discharged from our critical care units.**

Improved Patient Flow and Timely Discharge

- **Identifying and targeting the reasons for delays in the care we deliver to patients and in planning their discharge from the time of arrival at hospital.**
- **Reducing the time that patients wait for things to happen before they can leave hospital**
- **Ensuring that individual plans for all patients are reviewed and discussed by the relevant clinical staff every day**
- **Encouraging patients to use our discharge lounges on the day of discharge and for discharges to take place before midday.**
- **Undertaking discharge management planning in patients own homes for appropriate patients**

Effective Processes

- **Improved cover from doctors and managers at weekends and evenings**
- **Clear ways of escalating problems and concerns**
- **Regular communication and co-ordination across the Health Board, with the Welsh Ambulance service, Local Authority and 3rd sector partners**
- **Multi agency planning for the cold weather and festive season to ensure all our services are resilient**
- **Improved access to information about our emergency care services to support early decision making**
- **Listening to the views of our staff and patients to identify opportunities to improve our services and patient experience.**

Extra things you can help us with for the winter



- Use your local pharmacy to assist you to manage a range of common complaints www.abm.wales.nhs.uk/abmchoosewell
- Use Emergency Departments (A&E) and 999 ambulance services for **life-threatening and serious incidents only**
- Look out for the launch of the new **111** contact number during October if you require health information or advice, or need to contact your GP during the out of hours period
- Have the Flu Jab if you are in an 'at risk' group - visit <http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/> to see if you should have the Flu jab
- Where possible avoid contact with the general public if you have symptoms of sickness and diarrhoea to contain spread of illness in the community
- Keep an eye on elderly neighbours and relatives – ensuring they stay warm during spells of cold weather

There are some obstacles we need to manage too:

- Some staff are in short supply and this can affect our plans. We are trying to make the best use of a lot of different staff groups and are introducing new roles to reduce this risk. The Health Board is proactively recruiting staff through local, national and international campaigns.
- Our community service models are still developing and we need to ensure that both patients and staff understand them and what they can provide.
- We have limited single bedrooms on our hospital sites which makes it difficult for us to control infection outbreaks without closing wards.
- The weather can have a huge impact on people's health and wellbeing, and this is unpredictable

Conclusion

- Urgent and Emergency Care is one of the top priorities for the Health Board - we realise how important it is for patients to be able to access good quality care
- In recognition of this we have made a significant investment in the developments outlined above to support our staff to deliver better services
- However, the demands on our services can be unpredictable and can sometimes take even the best of plans off track – you can be sure that our staff strive to provide the best quality of care at all times
- All of us can help the implementation of these plans by using the right services and having our flu vaccinations