



Date: 17 June 2013
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Mr William Powell AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1NA

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 12 June 2013 concerning the petition you are considering in relation to Continuing NHS Healthcare (CHC). I enclose a copy of my report on the Implementation of the National Framework for CHC which was published on 13 June 2013.

I would confirm that my report details the differences between the decision support tool that is used to assist decision making on CHC eligibility in Wales and England. Specifically the report deals with the differences in the way cognition needs are treated (paragraphs 1.24 to 1.27). I also recommend that the Welsh Government reviews the differences between Wales and England, particularly in respect of cognition (recommendation 4b, page 15).

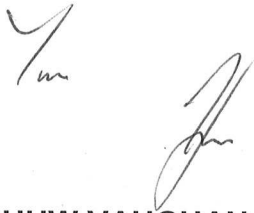
My review team did not find any direct evidence that CHC eligibility decisions are being influenced or determined by budgetary constraints. My report did identify a recent reduction in the number of CHC cases and expenditure, but that the extent to which the Framework or the way it has been implemented has contributed to the reduction is not clear (paragraphs 1.18 to 1.41). However, the report did conclude that more needs to be done to ensure all cases are dealt with fairly and consistently (Part 2 of the report). My report includes a number of recommendations for the Welsh Government aimed at improving consistency, including:

- a) reconsidering the use of a screening tool – to help ensure that all people who should be assessed for CHC are indeed assessed (recommendation 4a, page 15); and
- b) establishing peer review arrangements – to help ensure decisions on eligibility are consistent between different health boards (recommendation 5a, page 16).

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I would also confirm that the Alzheimer's Society provided written evidence to my review team on these matters, references to which are included in paragraphs 1.26 and 3.16 of the report.

Finally, should you think that a meeting with my review team about the report would be helpful to the petitions committee, then please do not hesitate to get in touch.



HUW VAUGHAN THOMAS
AUDITOR GENERAL FOR WALES

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