

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-301
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/05795/11

William Powell AM

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

19th August 2011

Dear Bill,

Thank you for your letter of 14 July. The Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee (WHSSC) is carrying out a fundamental review of the Wales Gender Dysphoria policy, definitive pathway and service model. This was commissioned by the previous Health Minister and is being undertaken in collaboration with representatives from the Transgender community. The project is developing a planning strategy for specialised gender identity services, and will examine the current arrangements for assessment, making recommendations to the WHSSC Joint Committee on the future service models for patients resident in Wales. The project is in the early stages and WHSSC is currently reviewing and refining the project aims, scope and timeframe.

WHSSC have established an interim arrangement with West London Mental Health Trust (WLMHT) for the assessment of patients with Gender Dysphoria. Referrals to this service are managed through a gatekeeping arrangement, in which a referring clinician will refer via the designated gatekeeper in their Local Health Board to ensure that the patient meets the agreed access criteria. If the gatekeeper approves the referral, it is forwarded to WHSSC who authorise funding for the referring clinician to refer into WLMHT.

The current waiting times for outpatient assessments are approximately six months, however this is not a Körner speciality and as such is not subject to Welsh Government waiting times targets. There are assessment services provided and commissioned by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and Aneurin Bevan Local Health Board for their local residents, however my understanding is that as these services are not standalone and provided either as part of the general psychiatric or psychosexual services, they have waiting times in excess of six months.

With regard to the guidance note issued to English GPs, I will share this with WHSSC in the context of their review and await the outcome.

Regards
Lesley

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Minister for Health and Social Services

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0845 010 4400
Correspondence.lesley.Griffiths@wales.gsi.gov.uk

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