

P-04-568 Public Inquiry into ABMU Health Board – Correspondence on behalf of the Petitioner to the Committee, 03.12.14.

Dear Sirs,

We are in receipt of Mr Mark Drakeford's letter addressed to Mr Williams Powell AM and dated the 3 November 2014. We understand that the same is to be considered at a meeting to be held on the 9 December 2014.

We note that Mr Williams has been invited to comment further. However, we would not wish to waste the committee's time in repeating the comprehensive representations put forward to the Committee on behalf of ABMU Victim Support Group, all of which are still relevant and rebuts the brief comments made by Mr Drakeford.

Specifically in relation to Mr Drakeford's response in which he states "...I do not believe that a public inquiry is likely to advance understanding of the cause of the failings identified at Princess of Wales and Neath Port Talbot hospitals...", we refer the committee to the information previously provided on behalf of ABMU Victim Support Group. Mr Drakeford is asked, in the absence of a public inquiry, to explain the cause of the failings identified. It is doubtful that Mr Drakeford would be able to provide a meaningful answer, on the basis that a public inquiry would do just that, get to the bottom of how such failings have been allowed to occur.

Mr Drakeford has referred to the unannounced spot checks. Sadly, the spot checks have revealed continuing issues that were highlighted in the Trusted to Care Report and that have been highlighted by members of ABMU Victim Support Group for a number of years. This only serves to demonstrate that the very limited report of Professor Andrews has not had the desired impact. Also, since the committee's last consideration of this issue two further nurses have pleaded guilty to the wilful neglect of patients at ABMU as part of the police investigation known as Operation Enfield. This makes the total who have pleaded guilty, three, and the total charged, five. There are 15 nurses suspended in total as part of the same investigation. This level of police investigation is unprecedented. Whilst it is admirable that these nurses have accepted responsibility, there is a strong feeling that they have been 'hung out to dry'. Responsibility and accountability does not just stop with these nurses. There has to be a 'root and branch' inquiry to understand how we have

reached this point in order for there to be any meaningful cultural change and restoration of public confidence.

Kind regards

Mrs Helen Rundle

Helen Rundle Associate Solicitor