



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Caerdydd a'r Fro  
Cardiff and Vale  
University Health Board

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**Professor Adam Cairns  
Chief Executive**

18 April 2016

William Powell AM  
Chair  
Petition's Committee  
National Assembly  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NQ

Dear Mr Powell

### **Response to Petition P-04-663 Food in Welsh Hospitals**

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board take Nutrition and Hydration very seriously as part of a patient's care pathway and aims to ensure that every patient's nutritional needs are met whilst they are in hospital. Patients are admitted to hospital due to significant ill health and it is accepted that ill health has an impact on appetite and the normal functions of the digestive system. It can be extremely challenging to provide food to the diverse hospital population which includes patients of all ages with a range of medical conditions, religious and cultural backgrounds, allergies or intolerances as they often require diets and food that are individualised, based on their tolerance levels. The quality of the food, coupled with its efficient delivery, is paramount if the food is to benefit patients holistically and all aspects of the service can impact on the delivery of this.

Patients admitted to any of our hospitals in the Health Board will have their dietary needs assessed on admission and this information is then communicated via a Nutrition & Hydration Bed-plan, which is currently being rolled out across the Health Board so that all staff are aware of patient's individual dietary and hydration needs. This includes registering likes and dislikes.

Ongoing nutrition training is provided for ward based catering staff involved in the patient meal service and an accredited training program is currently being developed for Nutrition Nurse Champions across our organisation.

Nationally the All Wales Menu Framework group is also ensuring that all staff involved in the food chain have access to training so they can:

- promote and market the benefits of the AWMF and standards across Wales
- provide a patient-centred food service to promote good nutritional care
- encourage appropriate patient choices from those at risk of malnutrition to those nutritionally well



- manage therapeutic diets
- maximise enjoyment of meals and minimise waste
- promote healthy options where appropriate

The NHS in Wales procures and provides food across its Health Boards for patients, visitors and staff. There have been a number of developments nationally to ensure high quality provision that meets the range of different requirements of these population groups and more joint working across food procurement and provision for patients:

- Mandatory nutrition and catering standards for food and fluid for hospital inpatients (Welsh Government, 2011)
- All Wales Menu Framework and development of standardised recipes to meet the nutrition standards (2012)
- National Lead Dietitian role for NHS Food Procurement - development of nutrition specifications for food contracts.

The Health Board procurement staff, Dieticians and catering managers are working together to implement Welsh government Food and Fluid standards through the implementation of the All Wales Menu Framework which includes tried and tested, nutritionally analysed, standardised recipes. Work is ongoing to further improve the range of recipes that Health Boards may include on their menus. The All Wales Menu Framework has achieved to date:

- Standardised nutritionally analysed menu items with recipes developed by hospital cooks and chefs from across Wales
- They use ingredients and foods that meet nutrient specifications and are bought on an all Wales contract
- A dedicated web based database accessible to all Health Boards including recipes and full nutritional analysis
- A range of compliant snacks procured through All Wales contracts
- Development of nutrient specifications for All Wales contracts produced by Lead Dietitian Procurement
- Therapeutic menu coding developed to ensure appropriate use of dishes for all patients

This has resulted in:

- Improved adherence to All Wales contracts, use of the standardised recipes from AWMF by Health Boards, awareness raising of staff, patients and visitors through Nutrition and Hydration week campaign every year and local public relations events
- Significant benefit in terms of reducing patient safety risk through access to the necessary nutritional and allergen information to enable safe provision of foods to patients.

In order to monitor both compliance with the standards and the patient /customer experience with catering and food services the AWMF group report into Welsh Government on achievements and health boards are monitored through Health and Care Standards 2.5. A national approach to collating patient experience has been instigated with the second one just completed.

Currently a one week menu is offered to patients within Cardiff and Vale hospitals which provide three main meal and dessert choices at both lunchtime and evening meals. In some circumstances where some patients have more complex needs

these patients will require meals/foods over and above the standard menu which is facilitated on an individual basis by the catering and dietetic staff. We acknowledge that on some occasions that the service may fall short of the standard we expect. However, we proactively tackle issues that are highlighted to improve the service we offer to patients. Menus are available on wards for patients to view.

The menu planning process is undertaken by a group of staff consisting of catering managers and a range of operational staff including dietitians. We constantly strive to improve our menu choices and periodically carry out patient surveys of the food provision. We have recently surveyed 760 patients as part of the all Wales Patient mealtime Survey and together with feedback from in house surveys and questionnaires we have, used the feedback to make the necessary improvements to our menus and service.

Cardiff and Vale survey results showed that:

- 91%( n760) patients scored their overall satisfaction with food and drink between 5-10 score( 1 being dissatisfied and 10 extremely satisfied)
- 79-81% patients felt the number of choices they were offered was about right for the various mealtimes
- 60% patients rated the appearance and presentation of their meals to be good to very good
- 52% patients felt that their meals were tasty and flavoursome
- 59% patients rated the overall quality of their meals as being good or very good
- 75%-86% patients felt the mealtimes were about right (breakfast, lunch and supper).

A new two week menu with an additional a la carte menu is in development which will assist in meeting the needs of patients on allergen free, food intolerance and patients who wish to choose vegetarian or vegan meals. This will address some of the issues highlighted to enable more variety and choice for patients. The hospital did provide dietetic consultation to explore food provision options for Miss F and in this case, it is clear from Miss F's media articles we failed to cater to her needs.

Yours sincerely



**Professor Adam Cairns**  
**Chief Executive**

