



Our ref: NB/MM

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To: Chair of Health Board  
Powys Teaching Health Board

### Annual Letter 2017/18

Following the recent publication of my [Annual Report](#) I am delighted to provide you with the Annual Letter (2017/18) for **Powys Teaching Health Board**.

The number of health complaints coming to my office and the variance in health board performance in complaint handling continues to be a concern. Whilst we saw a welcome 2% reduction in the total number of complaints, complaints against health boards have increased by 11% from 676 in 2016/17 to 747 in 2017/18. As a result, my office organised two special seminars; one for health bodies in jurisdiction on health complaints and best practice in June 2017 and another on complaint handling culture for all public services in February 2018. At the latter event, I was very pleased to see further progress on Out of Hours services with the Rapid Response for Acute Illness Learning Set (RRAILS) project improving out of hours services in health boards across Wales, partly in response to my office's thematic report, "Out of hours: Time to care", on the subject.

Four [public interest reports](#) have been published in the past year. All were health-related. Whilst none of the reports were issued against your Health Board, the cases raised issues which provide learning points for all health boards in Wales. I therefore urge the Board to consider whether any of the systemic failures identified in those cases provide opportunities for the Board to review and improve its service provision.

As you will be aware, a new Public Services Ombudsman Bill has been introduced by the National Assembly and is currently at the second stage in the legislative process. This means that Members have agreed with the general principles of the Bill and a Financial Resolution was agreed on 17 July 2018. It is important that Wales continues to adopt best practice in complaints handling and public service improvement, and this new legislation would help drive up public service standards. If the Bill progresses I will be engaging with public bodies in Wales in preparation for the introduction of the new powers within the Bill.

### **Complaints Received – Powys Teaching Health Board**

The number of complaints received in 2017/18 about Powys Teaching Health Board was 42, a 52% increase from the 20 complaints received against the Health Board in the year 2016/17.

However, 29 of these complaints were regarding Continuing Care, and I note your role as the host organisation for the All Wales Retrospective CHC Project.

In the year 2016/17, no complaints were investigated by PSOW against Powys Teaching Health Board. However, this year PSOW investigated 8 complaints against the Health Board. Five of these were related to retrospective CHC cases and three relate to Powys provided services. The figure remains below the Welsh average adjusted for population.

I suggest that the Health Board considers whether there are any learning points from the general rise in complaints and that more complaints require investigation by my office.

The **subjects** of complaints broadly reflect the Welsh average including subjects such as complaints handling, appointments/ admissions/ discharge and transfer procedures.

### **Complaints Closed – Powys Teaching Health Board**

The total number of complaints closed between April 2017 and March 2018 for Powys Teaching Health Board was 31. 13% of these, four complaints, prompted an intervention by PSOW, all of which were either early resolutions or voluntary settlements.

Each of the four cases which prompted an intervention by PSOW concerned either the Community Mental Health Team or Community Care Services.

### **Action for the Health Board to take:**

- Present my annual letter to the Board to assist Board Members in their scrutiny of the Board's performance;

- Consider whether there are any learning points from the rise in the complaints against your Health Board and the number of complaints which require formal investigation by my office;
- Consider whether there any learning points from the systemic failures identified in the public interest reports (in respect of other health boards) I issued during 2017/18.

This correspondence is copied to the Chief Executive of the Health Board and to your Contact Officer within your organisation. I would reiterate the importance of this role. Finally, a copy of all annual letters will be published on my website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Bennett', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Nick Bennett**  
Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

CC: Chief Executive

### Factsheet

#### A. Complaints Received and Investigated with Health Board average adjusted for population

<b>Local Health Board</b>	<b>Complaints Received</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Complaints Investigated</b>	<b>Average</b>
Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board	121	127	37	44
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board	121	140	43	49
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	186	167	70	58
Cardiff and Vale University Health Board	94	118	33	41
Cwm Taf University Health Board	74	71	32	25
Hywel Dda University Health Board	109	92	38	32
Powys Teaching Health Board	42	32	8	11

#### B. Complaints Received by Subject with Health Board average

<b>Powys Teaching Health Board</b>	<b>Complaints Received</b>	<b>Average</b>
Complaint Handling - Health	5	12
Health - Appointments/admissions/discharge and transfer procedures	1	4
Health - Clinical treatment in hospital	5	62
Health - Continuing care	29	8
Health - Other	2	6

**C. Comparison of complaint outcomes with average outcomes for health bodies, adjusted for population**

<b>Local Health Board/NHS Trust</b>	<b>Out of Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Premature</b>	<b>Other cases closed after initial consideration</b>	<b>Early Resolution/voluntary settlement</b>	<b>Discontinued</b>	<b>Other Reports- Not Upheld</b>	<b>Other Reports Upheld - in whole or in part</b>	<b>Public Interest Report</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
Powys Teaching Health Board	1	7	19	4					31
Health Board average (adjusted)	5	3	8	5	0	2	5	0	28

**D. Number of cases with PSOW intervention**

<b>Health Board</b>	<b>No. of complaints with PSOW intervention</b>	<b>Total number of closed complaints</b>	<b>% interventions</b>
Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board	27	10	27
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board	31	94	33
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	70	17	40
Cardiff and Vale University Health Board	32	81	40
Cwm Taf University Health Board	24	65	37
Hywel Dda University Health Board	40	10	38
Powys Teaching Health Board	4	31	13

## **Appendix**

### **Explanatory Notes**

Section A compares the number of complaints against the Health Board which were received and investigated by my office during 2017/18, with the Health Board average (adjusted for population distribution) during the same period.

Section B provides a breakdown of the number of complaints about the Health Board which were received by my office during 2017/18 with the Health Board average for the same period. The figures are broken down into subject categories.

Section C compares the complaint outcomes for the Health Board during 2017/18, with the average outcome (adjusted for population distribution) during the same period.

Section D provides the numbers and percentages of cases received by the PSOW in which an intervention has occurred. This includes all upheld complaints, early resolutions and voluntary settlements.

### **Feedback**

We welcome your feedback on the enclosed information, including suggestions for any information to be enclosed in future annual summaries. Any feedback or queries should be sent to [catrin.wallace@ombudsman-wales.org.uk](mailto:catrin.wallace@ombudsman-wales.org.uk) or [matthew.aplin@ombudsman-wales.org.uk](mailto:matthew.aplin@ombudsman-wales.org.uk)