



Our ref: NB

Ask for: Communications

 01656 641150

Date: 7 August 2019

 communications  
@ombudsman-wales.org.uk

Ms Ann Lloyd  
Chair of the Board  
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

**By Email Only**  
ann.lloyd@wales.nhs.uk

Dear Ms Ann Lloyd

### **Annual Letter 2018/19**

I am pleased to provide you with the Annual letter (2018/19) for Aneurin Bevan University Health Board. This year I am publishing my Annual Letters as part of my Annual Report and Accounts. I hope the Board finds this helpful and I trust this will enable it to review its own complaint handling performance in the context of other public bodies performing similar functions across Wales.

As you will note from my Annual Report, Aneurin Bevan UHB is one of the four health boards in Wales which has continued to receive the highest number of complaints. Whilst the number of complaints investigated is consistent with those investigated last year, you will note that there has been a significant increase in the number of complaints which were upheld, 31 this year compared with only 17 last year, with the number of complaints where intervention from this office was necessary increasing from 31 to 49 this year; this is a worrying trend. You will also note that this year, of the ten public interest healthcare-related reports I issued, two (20%) concerned care and treatment delivered by your Health Board. I consider this to be of some concern as, before this year, I had only issued two public interest reports relating to your Health Board since I took up my post in 2014.

We agreed last year that the Health Board would work with an Improvement Officer to target poor complaint handling. I note that my Improvement Officer met your Contact Officer on a number of occasions and delivered a training session to a Complaints Workshop at the Health Board in January of this year. I am pleased to note an improvement in communication between the Health Board and my office. This work is ongoing and sadly is not reflected in the statistics for this year, but I am hopeful that with the continued support provided to you by my Improvement Officer and, in due course, the Improvement Team, we should see an improvement in complaint handling practice over time.

The Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2019 has now been introduced. I am delighted that the Assembly has approved this legislation giving the office new powers aimed at:

- Improving access to my office
- Providing a seamless mechanism for complaint handling when a patient's NHS care is inextricably linked with private healthcare
- Allowing me to undertake own initiative investigations when required in the public interest
- Ensuring that complaints data from across Wales may be used to drive improvement in public services for citizens in Wales.

I am very much looking forward to implementing these new powers over the coming year.

**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
- Reflect upon the findings in the Public Interest reports I have issued and positively act upon my recommendations to improve services
- Work to reduce the number of cases which require intervention by my office
- Work with my Improvement Officer to improve complaint handling, particularly in the parts of the Health Board which generate most complaints about complaint handling
- Inform me of the outcome of the Health Board's considerations and proposed actions on the above matters by **31 October 2019**.

This correspondence is copied to the Chief Executive of your Health Board and to your Contact Officer. 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 large, sweeping flourish above the name.

Nick Bennett  
Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

CC: Judith Paget, Chief Executive  
Anita Davies, Contact Officer

## Factsheet

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

Health Board	Complaints Received	Average	Complaints Investigated	Average
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board 2018/19	134	146	38	36
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board 2017/18	121	140	43	49
Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board	139	132	35	32
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	194	173	44	42
Cardiff and Vale University Health Board	102	123	28	30
Cwm Taf University Health Board	75	74	22	18
Hywel Dda University Health Board	109	96	20	23
Powys Teaching Health Board	26	33	3	8

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

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board	Complaints Received	Average
Health - Complaint Handling	9	12
Health - Appointments/admissions/discharge and transfer procedures	3	4
Health - Clinical treatment in hospital	96	70
Health - Clinical treatment outside hospital	7	8
Health - Confidentiality	2	1
Health - Continuing care	1	4
Health - Other	11	5
Health - Patient list issues	2	3
Housing - Other	1	0
Various Other - Poor/no communication or failure to provide information	1	0
Various Other - Rudeness/inconsiderate behaviour/staff attitude	1	0

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

Local Health Board/NHS Trust	Out of Jurisdiction	Premature	Other cases closed after initial consideration	Early Resolution / voluntary settlement	Discontinued	Other Reports - Not Upheld	Other Reports Upheld - in whole or in part	Public Interest Reports	Grand Total
<b>2018/19</b>									
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board	19	15	33	18	1	11	29	2	128
Health Board average (adjusted)	23	18	38	29	2	12	29	2	153
<b>2017/18</b>									
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board	19	10	26	14	2	6	17	0	94
Health Board average (adjusted)	22	14	33	22	1	10	20	1	122

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

Health Board	No. of complaints with PSOW intervention	Total number of closed complaints	% intervention
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board 2018/19	49	128	38%
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board 2017/18	31	94	33%
Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board	54	139	39%
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	86	210	41%
Cardiff and Vale University Health Board	37	107	35%
Cwm Taf University Health Board	27	82	33%
Hywel Dda University Health Board	48	115	42%
Powys Teaching Health Board	10	17	59%
Powys Teaching Health Board – All-Wales Continuing Health Care cases	7	16	44%

## **Appendix**

### **Explanatory Notes**

Section A compares the number of complaints against the Health Board which were received and investigated by my office during 2018/19, 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 2018/19, 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 2018/19, with the average outcome (adjusted for population distribution) during the same period. Public Interest reports issued under section 16 of the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2005 are recorded as 'Section 16'.

Section D provides the numbers and percentages of cases received by my office 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 via email to [communications@ombudsman-wales.org.uk](mailto:communications@ombudsman-wales.org.uk)