



Our ref: NB

Ask for: Communications

 01656 641150

Date: 7 September 2020

 Communications  
@ombudsman-wales.org.uk

Mr Mark Polin OBE QPM  
Chair of the Board  
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

**By Email Only**  
mandy.williams7@wales.nhs.uk

Dear Mr Polin

### **Annual Letter 2019/20**

I am pleased to provide you with my Annual letter (2019/20) for Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board.

I write this at an unprecedented time for public services in Wales and those that use them. Most of the data contained in this correspondence relates to the period before the rapid escalation in Covid-19 spread and before restriction on economic and social activity had been introduced. However, I am only too aware of the impact the pandemic continues to have on us all.

As you will note, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board has continued to receive the highest number of complaints. However, the percentage of interventions was in line with the average for Health Boards.

I was pleased to note that the Health Board has developed a programme of improvement to manage complaints in real-time and that it has also developed a programme aimed at improving the quality of its response letters. In addition, Health Board staff met with my Complaints Standards colleagues and expressed a desire to receive complaint handling training at the earliest available opportunity.

The Health Board continues to work with my Improvement Officer and has engaged in regular quarterly meetings. In addition, the Health Board has maintained regular contact with the Improvement Officer during the Covid-19 pandemic, which facilitated effective amendments to working arrangements during these testing times. The Improvement Officer will continue to work with the Health Board to help identify areas where we can provide support.

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I am delighted to report that during the past financial year, we had to intervene in (uphold, settle or resolve early) a smaller proportion of complaints about public bodies in Wales: 20% compared to 24% last year.

With regard to new complaints about public bodies, 1020 or 45% related to NHS bodies — an increase of 1.3% compared to 2018/19.

Complaints about NHS bodies related predominantly to health (88%). However, as in previous years, a significant proportion of these complaints related to complaint handling (8%). We will continue to work with NHS bodies on reducing the number of these complaints, including as part of our new Complaints Standards role.

Work has already started as part of our Complaints Standards role for Wales, so far predominantly with Local Authorities. We have seen great benefits already from this work, including the standardisation of complaints data recording. We look forward to working more closely with you in the coming months to help embed the new 'Once For Wales' system and, for the first time in Wales, provide complaints handling training to Health Boards, free of charge.

**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.
- Continue to work to reduce the number of cases which require intervention by my office.
- Work with my Improvement Officer and my Complaints Standards colleagues to improve complaint handling practices and standardise complaints data recording.
- Inform me of the outcome of the Health Board's considerations and proposed actions on the above matters by **30 November**.

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



Nick Bennett  
Ombudsman

CC: Simon Dean, Interim Chief Executive  
Denise Williams, Contact Officer

## Factsheet

### A. Complaints Received

<b>Health Board</b>	<b>Complaints Received</b>	<b>Complaints received per 1000 people</b>
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board	140	0.24
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	227	0.33
Cardiff and Vale University Health Board	100	0.20
Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board	80	0.18
Hywel Dda University Health Board	92	0.24
Powys Teaching Health Board	23	0.17
Swansea Bay University Health Board	91	0.23
	753	0.24

## B. Complaints Received by Subject with percentage Share

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	Complaints Received	
Adult Social Service - Services for vulnerable adults (eg with learning difficulties. or with mental health issues)	3	1.32%
Complaint Handling- Health	29	12.78%
Health - Appointments/admissions/discharge and transfer procedures	7	3.08%
Health - Clinical treatment in hospital	128	56.39%
Health - Clinical treatment outside hospital	24	10.57%
Health - Continuing care	11	4.85%
Health - De-Registration	1	0.44%
Health - Funding	2	0.88%
Health - Medical records/standards of record-keeping	1	0.44%
Health - Medication> Prescription dispensing	1	0.44%
Health - Non-medical services	5	2.20%
Health - Other	9	3.96%
Health - Patient list issues	3	1.32%
NHS Independent Provider - Care Homes	1	0.44%
Various Other - Poor/No communication or failure to provide information	1	0.44%
Various Other - Rudeness/inconsiderate behaviour/staff attitude	1	0.44%

## C. Complaint Outcomes (\* denotes intervention)

Complaints Closed	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 Report *	Grand Total
Betsi Cadwalladr UHB	6	31	101	42	1	11	24	1	217
Percentage Share	2.76%	14.29%	46.54%	19.35%	0.46%	5.07%	11.06%	0.46%	

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

	No. of Interventions	No. of Complaints Closed	% Of Interventions
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board	55	165	33%
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	67	217	31%
Cardiff and Vale University Health Board	29	104	28%
Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board	9	59	15%
Hywel Dda University Health Board	29	92	32%
Powys Teaching Health Board	7	13	54%
Powys Teaching Health Board - All Wales Continuing Health Care cases	4	13	31%
Swansea Bay University Health Board	7	62	11%
<b>Former Health Boards</b>			
Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board	26	36	72%
Cwm Taf University Health Board	9	21	43%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>782</b>	<b>31%</b>

## **Appendix**

### **Explanatory Notes**

Section A compares the number of complaints against the Health Board which were received by my office during 2019/20, and the number of complaints per 1,000 residents (population).

Section B provides a breakdown of the number of complaints about the Health Board which were received by my office during 2019/20 with the percentage share.

Section C compares the complaint outcomes for the Health Board during 2019/20, with the percentage share.

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 via email to [communications@ombudsman-wales.org.uk](mailto:communications@ombudsman-wales.org.uk)