

# Public Feedback about NHS services during the Coronavirus

Issue 5

September 2020

## National Survey

As your independent NHS watchdog, CHCs across Wales want to continue to play a vital part in reflecting people's views and representing your interests in the NHS at this critical time.

### Your feedback will help make a difference.

We will share with the NHS what people and local communities are telling us. This is so the NHS can see what people think is working well and take action to make care better where this is needed - as quickly as it is possible to do so. Please give us your NHS feedback by taking survey here:

<https://tas.survey-me.com/take-a-survey/6mp1r>

## This is what you told us about in September 2020

Fifteen people contacted us in September to share their views and recent experiences with NHS Services

### Things that could have been better

- Some people commented on the need for hospital appointment letters to include an explanation for how they will be greeted at their clinics to make people "feel safe" before their arrival. A site map may help some.
- Further comments were made about access to B12 injections usually administered by GPs. One person felt there was inconsistent access between different GP sites.

Useful links about the Coronavirus:

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board - guidance on service changes:  
<https://abuhb.nhs.wales/coronavirus/guidance-and-changes-to-individual-healthcare-services-and-divisions/>

Welsh Government – guidance:

<https://gov.wales/staying-home-and-away-others-guidance>





## Things that could have been better

- A number of people commented on a lack of access to follow-up appointments for “hands on” physiotherapy and T&O.
- A number of comments were made by the same individual about early discharges for a number of relatives. Whilst the early discharges were understood, due to COVID measure, they felt that support at home for catheter care for one relative was difficult to resolve and then communication with the ward about a relative readmitted has not been forthcoming.
- Some people are now asking for information about a pathway for post Covid care when not hospitalised.
- Some people want to know when face to face appointments will resume for both secondary and primary care.
- A few people shared experiences of delayed or awaited GP call backs for telephone appointments. One person found the lack of a stipulate call time unhelpful and another person was disappointed to not have received a call back when indicated regarding her poorly daughter.
- A few people reported issues with obtaining Covid test appointments or home testing kits.

## The positives

- People shared with us positive stories about quick access to scans and treatment.
- We received comments about positive outcomes and quick treatment following primary care telephone consultations.
- We received a positive experiences of attending Nevill Hall Hospital (ophthalmology) and Royal Gwent Hospital (GP referral).



## The comments

"1. Excellent phone-consult with surgery-based pharmacist to discuss changes to meds. 2) Phoned GP as worried about husband's symptoms. Reassuring & helpful. Arranged to see GP. Checked over - probate kidney infection. Antibiotics prescribed - all OK."  
*Monmouthshire resident - GP Surgery*

"Whilst I understand that Covid resulted in staff being reallocated to work in Covid wards I am left concerned that essential equipment and therapy stopped and has still not resumed. Patients have no idea when it will resume and in what form. Being offered a video call is no substitute for hands on help and therapy. I would like to see a rote map to get back to hands on therapy as it is not sufficient to say that it is no longer possible and Covid is likely to be with us all for years. The fear is that everything else will also stop until it is irradiated. That cannot be acceptable."  
*Monmouthshire resident - Physiotherapy*

"I rang the surgery at 8am for my 13yr old daughter, told the receptionist her symptoms... she then told me that she would put her on the list for the doctor to ring me so keep the line free. I am still waiting for the call I haven't had any missed calls and have had the phone with me at all times... I understand the strain the NHS is under as I work in healthcare myself but this is a 13yr old that is ill and nobody seemed to care to even give me a call back... Just a call back would be appreciated".  
*Blaenau Gwent resident - Brynmawr Medical Practice*  
**(Some details redacted to protect confidentiality)**



"I was seen by my GP in July and referred for an urgent MRI. By the end of September, I have had my MRI, received my result and seen a consultant. Excellent service, thank you so much."  
*Torfaen resident*

"Good experience at Nevill Hall Hospital - very secure, hygienic and safe feel to outpatients - greeted at door instructed and assured. In and out in optimum time. Poor administration with the invite letter - no details on how you will be received at the clinic, no map of the site. Details on the letter showed errors in places - e.g. wrong date of birth, wrong GP surgery given - as a result reception at the hospital required to print up a new set of labels for the consultant to use at the appointment."

*Caerphilly resident - Ophthalmology outpatients*

"I require a b12 injection every 12 weeks and was due on 21st May. However, my GP practice is still not able to provide this injection - citing that it is not a priority. I do understand in the early stages of the pandemic, yet I have been called into the surgery to see the nurse for diabetic clinic and asked if I could have the b12 injection whilst I was there, but was told no. I am now very tired all of the time and am concerned my well-being is being impacted. I am aware from relatives that some GP practices are offering b12 injections, so am baffled. More explanation as to the rationale behind decisions and consistency amongst GP practices."

*Caerphilly resident - GP surgery unknown*



"Appointments are not being timed at my surgery. Patients are expected to sit at home for the entire day, as you are placed on a list, therefore expected to stay near the phone, or risk losing your appointment. Whilst maintaining the phone service, I suggest that surgeries at least give an A.M or PM apt time, as an indicator". *Blaenau Gwent resident*

"There are no follow up appointments available, and my condition has worsened considerably and it seems ridiculous that these surgery appointments cannot continue, alongside the pandemic. The waiting lists will be even more unmanageable. When we finally get back to normal. What are all the clinicians doing whilst not seeing patients especially when for example I know for a fact that there has been previously very few COVID patients in Nevill Hall. To stop all other appointments is unacceptable. Utilise the additional hospitals that have been put on standby, test before appointments if necessary but don't stop all appointments, the cases of cancer will be much higher etc., and damage to mental health is unacceptable."  
*Monmouthshire resident – T&O service*

"Excellent service from GP & RGH."  
*Newport resident*

"Provide a pathway for post Covid care when not hospitalised. Don't just ignore the long term because they were lucky enough to initially not require hospital admission."  
*Caerphilly resident*



"I'm a hairdresser and work with the general public! I see up to 13 clients per day! My trainee felt unwell and tried booking a test with none available!! Prioritise people who work with the general public. As it could be spread quicker otherwise".

*Blaenau Gwent resident*

"My husband was admitted to hospital in March, pre lockdown, when he left he was on a strong intravenous IV antibiotic , due to Covid they (reasonably) wanted to get him off the ward and send him home, so sorted out tablets to finish the course at home. The tablets made him so ill he could not eat or drink, not even sips of water, the result was that he became so weak and frail he could no longer walk or get to the bathroom. In April I called 111, then on their advice the GP, who tried to get frailty to call out to see him, they refused, so GP told me to call an ambulance, it arrived, they tried to talk us out of him going in (again reasonably) as the Royal Gwent was rife with Covid at this time, eventually he agreed that he could not be left at home ... I could not visit at this time and eventually... he phoned me at 8am to go and get him. I sat in the car park most of the day and he finally come out at about 4pm. because he could not walk unaided when he went in, and they did not have time to take him to the bathroom they inserted a caterer, he failed the TWOC on the day of discharge so they sent him home with it, since then district nurses have had to call every 4 weeks to change it, (each time they insist they will be back in a few months and each time I have to point out that the box the caterer came in says for use for 4 weeks, which they insist does not exit!!!). He has an infection, for months, which is not going away, they catheter is still in at the end of September. We have received a call to say that he has been referred to Urology, but no idea of when that appointment may be..."

*Newport resident*

***(Some details redacted to protect confidentially)***



## A round up of your feedback

The comments in this bulletin offer a snap shot of the things people told us about. We'd like to thank everyone who wrote to us to share their experiences, this will be used to help the NHS learn from your comments.

To sum up: we heard about the following themes:

- People are keen to see more information about a return to usual services, such as face to face appointments, follow-up care and "hands on" therapy.
- People would welcome additional information in the clinic letters about the set up in departments for safety and social distancing, before they arrive at their clinic.
- People had a mix of positive and less satisfactory experiences with accessing their GP surgeries on the telephone.
- A further message about B12 injection access.
- A view that post-COVID pathways for those not hospitalised would be welcomed.

### **Accessible formats**

If you would like this publication in an alternative format and/or language, please contact us. Our publications are also available to download and order from our website.

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