



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Via email
Neil Galbraith
Chair
NHS Western Isles

Health and Sport Committee
T3.60
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP
Tel: 0131 348 5210
Calls via RNID Typetalk: 18001 0131 348
5224
Email: healthandsport@parliament.scot

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Dear Neil,

I refer to the evidence NHS Western Isles gave to the Health and Sport Committee on Tuesday 15 May alongside NHS Shetland and NHS Orkney. As has become the normal approach following such sessions the Committee wishes further information on evidence heard during the session and to raise questions there was insufficient time to ask.

The Official Report of the meeting is available [here](#) and for ease of reference I will refer to passages from it by reference to the relevant column numbers.

Recruitment and retention

We heard in evidence (COL 13) that seven of your consultants and four of your anaesthetists are Polish and the need to be concerned about whether they will stay post-Brexit. Can you advise what anticipatory planning has been undertaken in the event they all leave the Western Isles?

Health and Social Care Integration

In your submission to the Committee we note many of the strategic aims outlined in the Balanced Scorecard Performance Report 2017/18 are not being met. These include indicators on premature mortality and emergency hospital admission rates. We would be grateful if you could advise:

- what are the obstacles to meeting the unmet targets?
- the extent to which the integration of health and social care is assisting in affecting performance?

Redesign of Local Services

The Cabinet Secretary's response to your annual review requested you keep the health directorates informed of progress with redesign of local services. We could not see any detail of this in your submission to the Committee. Can you advise what progress has been made and what baseline information and data you are measuring progress against?

Waiting Times

In your submission to the Committee you pointed out pressures on the waiting times budget resulted in limited options around running extra clinics. However, areas identified in the improvement plan included different scheduling options and a greater use of eHealth support. We would be grateful if you could advise:

- whether the budgetary constraints continue to restrict progress?
- progress on implementing the technological solutions
- detail of other solutions being implemented which increase capacity or address demand

Cancer Waiting Times

We note from the most recent data from Scotland Performs NHS Western Isles is the fifth lowest performing health board when it comes to the 62 day cancer waiting time target of 95%. We would welcome details of:

- what work the board is doing to improve the situation; and
- the extent to which you are dependent on other board areas in achieving the target

Dementia Post Diagnostic Support

The national target for people newly diagnosed with dementia getting access to a minimum one year's post diagnostic support is 100%. Your submission notes, as of December 2017, only 18% of people in the Western Isles are receiving this service. Can you advise what steps are being taken to meet the target?

Delayed Discharge

In your submission to the Committee you explained delayed discharge has, and continues to be a major challenge for the Western Isles Partnership. You also advised steps were being taken in 2017/18 to help improve the situation. Can you advise:

- the reasons for NHS Western Isles having the highest proportion of delayed discharge bed days as a % of all bed days
- the extent to which the action points to help towards reducing delayed discharge rates been successful
- your assessment and expectations as to whether the actions will lead to a permanent sustained improvement
- the extent of learning from other health boards such as NHS GGC who have had successes in this area

Finances

We would welcome:

- an update on the position with regards to savings achieved at the end of 2017/18, in particular the balance between recurring and one-off savings;
- details of work being undertaken to increase the proportion of annual savings that come from recurring savings;
- details of future savings plans; and
- what longer term financial planning is being undertaken to ensure that services are designed to meet changing demographics and challenges.

The Committee would welcome your response to this letter by 31 July.

Yours sincerely



Lewis Macdonald
Convener
Health and Sport Committee