

Freedom of Information Request	FOI 21-445	5 th November 2021
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Please could i have copies of consultations, emails, discussions with doctor surgeries in Risca/ Pontllanfraith / Cwmfelinfach, where residents on the Ynysddu Ward (Wattsville, Brynawel, Cwmfelinfach, Ynysddu and Wyllie) are registered, in relation to Aneurin Bevan Health Board 'Review of Doctor surgeries'?

The Health Board conducted a review of access arrangements with all 72 GP practices across the Health Board area, which was agreed in conjunction with the Gwent Medical Committee and Aneurin Bevan Community Health Council.

All practices were asked to provide details of their current access arrangements. This information helped to provide a level of understanding in relation to the significant pressures and challenges GP practices are currently facing and to consider ways in which the Health Board can provide support and guidance.

The Health Board will be focussing on some key areas:

- Rates of face to face appointments
- Number of clinical sessions provided per week
- Number of telephones lines available

There has not been any individual discussions with any of the above named practices to date.

Also, what recommendations and decisions have been reached with regards to doctors' surgeries in the Ynysddu ward, with timescale for anticipated changes from the review ?

This is an ongoing process and the Health Board is considering ways in which to support practices. Again, no changes have been agreed to date.

The Health Board has implemented a local enhanced service which has been offered to all GP practices. This scheme provides additional funding to support practices increase clinical capacity.

At a time of increasing pressure throughout the health and social care system, it is important that we maintain and support the provision of care that is delivered through General Practice and we recognise the commitment of these teams and the services they provide to their local communities.

General Practice is reporting unprecedented demand, an increase of approximately 20%, as are other parts of the healthcare system, and we need to

support and facilitate service delivery to ensure safe and effective care continues to be provided to patients.

Coupled with increasing demand we also see further challenges with the increased rates of COVID-19 in the community and, as many other services, we are experiencing an increase in staff needing to isolate for either testing positive or being identified as a contact. This is placing a further strain on the workforce, who are already feeling exhausted from their continued efforts during the pandemic and their concerted contribution to the delivery of the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

Practices continue to manage competing demands, whilst often facing criticism of service delivery and a misconception that practices have been closed or are not providing care.

It is also important to recognise the role of the public in making the right choice when seeking help and advice. A cultural shift is also required to recognise that a GP, or the GP surgery, is not always the most appropriate professional or location for every issue that does not require hospital attendance.