



WALES CANCER ALLIANCE CYNGHRAIR CANSER CYMRU

Statement by the Wales Cancer Alliance concerning the publication of the Audit Wales report “NHS Wales’s strategic approach to improving timeliness of cancer diagnosis and treatment”

Lowri Griffiths, Chair of the Wales Cancer Alliance said:

“The Wales Cancer Alliance welcomes the publication of Audit Wales’ report into NHS Wales’ strategic approach to improving timeliness of cancer diagnosis and treatment.

With only a few exceptions, cancer waiting times across Wales for all tumour sites has stagnated below 60% and far from the national target of 75% for several years. Wales’ cancer outcomes are also amongst the worst across the developed world and cancer inequalities are increasing - this is unacceptable.

We welcome Audit Wales’ overall conclusion and recommendations, they have been based upon a rigorous appraisal of the performance, resources, and strategic direction of cancer services in Wales, and validate our own frustrations around the strategic leadership of Cancer Services over recent years.

It is an established view of the Wales Cancer Alliance that Wales needs a cancer strategy - one that takes a long-term approach to cancer planning, service delivery and performance management. We therefore welcome Audit Wales’ call for “a coherent, long-term strategic approach for cancer in Wales, supported by clear system leadership and informed oversight.”

The positive working arrangements between the third sector and cancer services that were developed prior to the covid-19 pandemic were not resurrected post-pandemic, that is regrettable. New governance arrangements associated with the new NHS Executive’s Cancer Recovery Programme have taken an extended period to emerge with little consultation and involvement from our membership.

Updates and opportunities to scrutinise and support the delivery of cancer services during this period has been frustratingly slow and sporadic, often only happening as a result of the dogged determination of cancer charities to represent their beneficiaries. People affected by cancer do not have the luxury of time on their side.

We intend to make representations to the Senedd’s Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee; we hope that the additional scrutiny will help with recharging engagement and ensuring that patients are at the heart of future developments.

Every year cancer charities raise and invest millions of pounds across Wales, but to ensure our work adds value to the work of cancer services in NHS Wales there must be an ongoing, productive dialogue with the third sector. Only then, with the third sector working in partnership, alongside Welsh Government and the NHS, can we hope to improve cancer outcomes for the people of Wales.”

Notes for Editors

Please send any enquiries concerning this statement to Catrin Hallett, c/o Tenovus Cancer Care catrin.hallett@tenovuscancercare.org.uk.

The report “Cancer Services in Wales: A review of the strategic approach to improving the timeliness of diagnosis and treatment” is available in [English](#) and [Cymraeg](#)