PROPOSALS FOR CHANGES TO HEALTH SERVICES IN MID & WEST WALES
REPORTED TO WELSH MINISTERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COMMUNITY
HEALTH COUNCILS (CONSTITUTION, MEMBERSHIP AND PROCEDURES) (WALES)
REGULATIONS 2010

I am writing further to your letter of 19 April, formally referring elements of Hywel Dda Health
Board’s service change proposals ‘Your Health – Your Future’.

I propose to make a determination on the proposals which the Council has stated it cannot
support as set out in its referral, as follows:

Neonatal Services – specifically in relation to Glangwili and Withybush Hospitals;

A&E Services at Prince Philip Hospital, Llanelli.

In accordance with the process outlined in the Referrals from Community Health Councils
published on 15 February 2013, I am minded to ask the Chief Medical Officer for Wales to
convene a service change Scrutiny Panel to consider these issues. My officials will be in
contact with the Council once the Panel has been established to notify you of its
membership and terms of reference. The Scrutiny Panel will examine all relevant
documentation and may contact the Council or Local Health Board to seek clarification on
certain issues as necessary. It will provide detailed advice and recommendations on the
services in question and form the basis of my determination.
In the meantime, I am able to offer the Council a further opportunity to set out more fully for the Scrutiny Panel the reasons it is not persuaded by the Health Board’s arguments for the changes proposed to neonatal services at Withybush and Glanwili Hospitals and Accident and Emergency Services in Prince Philip Hospital. I would be grateful to receive this additional information as soon as possible but no later than Friday 21 June. Officials will be writing separately to the Hywel Dda Health Board offering a similar opportunity for further comment on the issues referred by the Council.

I am aware of Judicial Review proceedings in respect of A&E services at Prince Philip Hospital. The current position, as I understand it, is that the application has recently been refused by the High Court and the claimant may now ask for the decision to be reconsidered at a hearing in open court. I may need to defer my consideration of this service, depending on how the application progresses.

Consultation

The Council also reported its dissatisfaction with the consultation process undertaken by the Health Board. The vast majority of the Council’s referral relates to the Health Board’s consultation with the wider public and other bodies, as opposed to its consultation with the Council, and would not therefore appear to be within the scope of Regulation 27(7) of the Community Health Councils (Constitutions, Membership and Procedures) (Wales) Regulations 2010. If the Council is seeking to report on the Health Board’s engagement with the Council, you may wish to refine this particular element of the report and resubmit it to me as soon as possible. I have attached a copy of the Regulations for your information.

Although the Council’s report on the Health Board’s consultation with the wider public and other bodies is outside the remit of the Regulations and therefore not something on which I shall make a determination. Once the current round of consultations across Wales has been completed, I do intend to commission a “lessons learned” review of the different consultation exercises and will ensure that your views are considered as part of that process.

Other matters

I will not reopen any matters which have been agreed between the Council and the Health Board, including the arrangements for the minor injuries units in Pembroke Dock and Tenby, and the closure of Mynydd Mawr Community Hospital. I have noted that your referral of 19 April placed certain conditions in agreeing the Health Board’s proposals for these facilities, and consider these to be matters properly for local agreement between the Council and the Health Board, in accordance with the Guidance for Engagement and Consultation on Changes to Health Services in Wales.

I am copying this letter to Chris Martin, Trevor Purt and Carol Lamyman-Davies.

Mark Drakeford AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services