

**CLLR. SUSAN JONES  
CONVENER, ADULT SERVICES  
SCRUTINY PANEL**

**(By Email)**

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*Our Ref:* MC/JG  
*Your Ref:*  
*Date:* 14 September 2021

**Dear Cllr. Jones,**

**Re: Response to Convener's letter to Cabinet Member - Adult Services Panel 14 July 2021**

Thank you for your letter received 9/08/21. I apologise for my delay in sending the response.

**Information on Single Point of Access for Mental Health Development**

There is a Single point of Access for Mental health currently in existence in Swansea Bay UHB via the Primary Care GP route however the current developments are being driven by the aims to:

- Ensure that anyone experiencing a mental health crisis can access support 24/7
- Improve mental health pathways for assessment for people experiencing MH problems
- Improve interventions for people experiencing mental health problems

Improving mental health crisis care has been identified as a national priority and this service modernisation aims to develop a 24/7 initial access, response and triage system to provide early and proportionate responses to prevent escalation of mental health crisis. The main objectives are to:

- Ensure service users feel supported & listened to when they ask for help
- Provide access to mental health support as early as possible
- Ensure that mental health crisis is on a level with physical health care
- Provide a wide range of options and information around self-care, self-referral and support for a broad range of mental health and welfare concerns

SBUHB plan to modernise and improve unscheduled care provision in order to provide 24/7 mental health support which will be accessible to anyone experiencing a mental health crisis; key to this would be the development of a centralised assessment & response team, based in an assessment hub.

The assessment & response team would triage all referrals into adult mental health services and ultimately be in a position to accept referrals via an open access platform (such as; 111). SBUHB is currently one of the three pathfinder sites for the 111/mental health pathway development working in conjunction with the NCCU.

The assessment & response team would have two core functions, namely the provision of a 24/7 mental health triage service to co-ordinate a proportionate response for service users who present via

the access point (potentially 111 but currently a local single point of contact number) and facilitate the prompt pathway of those in mental health crisis into services for an assessment.

We are working in partnership with social care colleagues to integrate the social care response via the hub. The hub would also have the capacity to provide direct professional advice to police, paramedics and GPs.

The benefits of creating this model would be to improve patient safety and reduce instances of DSH through the provision of an accessible specialist mental health support and advice service 24/7. The team would provide tailored treatment outcomes to service user need using an evidence-based Mental Health Triage Scale ([ukmentalhealthtriagescale.org](http://ukmentalhealthtriagescale.org)). This would serve to improve service user experience, reduce pressure and attendance at ED and Out of Hours GP. The team would have the scope to provide early detection of mental health relapse and be able to facilitate early interventions.

Evidence from UK pilot sites (Cambs & Peterborough) has shown:

- 25% reduction in ED MH attendances
- 26% reduction in ambulance see, treat & convey
- 39% reduction in OOH GP

The team would provide 24/7 referral acceptance & ownership from Primary care, other health professionals, social care and emergency services (SWP & WAST); building on established pathways.

The mental health practitioners within the team would provide an initial triage assessment and promptly assess the situation and determine whether an urgent action is required. All referrals deemed urgent would have an assessment within a time-frame in keeping with the level of identified need.

Progress to date.

The progress on the project to date has seen the creation of a steering group which met for the first time on July 29<sup>th</sup> 2021. There are ongoing monthly dates set to ensure the opportunity to work through the operational arrangements and interface of the SPoA with existing services such as the Common Access Point and the ambition remains to be able to go live with the Single Point of Access from October 2021.

Yours sincerely



**Y CYNGHORYDD/COUNCILLOR MARK CHILD**  
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