

The British Gynaecological Cancer Society (BGCS)

C/o Williams Denton Cyf
Glaslyn
Ffordd Y Parc
Parc Menai
Bangor
Gwynedd, LL57 4FE

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Russell George MS
Chair, Health and Social Care Committee
Welsh Parliament

By email to: SeneddHealth@senedd.wales

Dear Mr George

Thank you for inviting us to give our views on the recently published Welsh Government response to the Committee's report - Unheard: Women's journey through gynaecological cancer.

It is reassuring to note that the Welsh government has responded to each recommendation and has accepted most recommendations in part or full. We wish to make the following points:

1. It is disappointing to note that there will be no specific funding for research in gynaecological cancers and this is all included within a national approach to cancer research as part of the Cancer Research Strategy for Wales.
2. Rejection of pre-covid services not being reinstated is acceptable as new pathways have been developed to help the cancer recovery programme, however, there has to be more emphasis on providing an equal and equitable service offered and delivered across Wales.
3. There has to be an increase in capacity to see patients to match the volume of patients that need to be seen.
4. Currently, only some hospitals have access to certain services such as prehabilitation and psychological support to cancer patients. Though these services and others are of proven benefit to patients, they are not available as standard of care to all patients in Wales.
5. If six months is not enough time to review emergency presentations with gynaecological cancers, perhaps a longer period of time should also be reconsidered to complete this. As mentioned, the outcomes in these patients are worse and only if we undertake a review of the incidence and trends can an evaluation be undertaken to improve where the need may be.

6. We look forward to having standardised digital services across Wales and welcome the investment that has been put into this.

7. We welcome the proposed evaluation of the performance of Rapid Diagnostic Centres to ensure that they contribute effectively to early cancer detection.

8. A focus on cervical cancer screening uptake including self-sampling and providing clarity that it does not identify other gynaecological cancers, raising awareness of cancer symptoms should be funded and prioritised.

9. We note the steps towards workforce planning and the involvement of Health Education and Improvement Wales in undertaking this. We hope the Welsh government will support and provide funding for building an adequate workforce.

Overall, we are optimistic that the response is focussed towards development and improvement of services in Wales and would recommend a further review of the accepted recommendations and what has been achieved in the next 12-18 months.

Yours sincerely.



Stephen Dobbs
President