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Ymddiriedolaeth GIG
Gwasanaethau Ambiwylans Cymru

Welsh Ambulance Services
NHS Trust

Pencadlys Rhanbarthol Ambiwylans a Chanolfan Cyfathrebu Clinigol
Regional Ambulance Headquarters and Clinical Contact Centre
Tŷ Vantage Point / Vantage Point House, Tŷ Coch Way, Cwmbran NP44 7HF

Irrelevant & Sensitive

www.ambulance.wales.nhs.uk

CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE

Our Ref: JK/26/20/JJ

16 March 2020

Dr Andrew Goodall CBE
Director General Health and Social Services
NHS Wales Chief Executive
Health and Social Services Group
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Dear Andrew

COVID-19 PLANNING & RESPONSE

Thank you for your letter dated 14th March. I am grateful for your assistance in facilitating the rapid decision by the Minister which will allow time for NHS Wales to prepare the additional capacity required to manage the increasing number of patients presenting with Covid-19.

Please find below the actions being taken by the Trust in response to the framework of actions outlined in your letter:

1. We will prioritise the use of Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services to focus on hospital discharge and maximise our emergency ambulance response to patients in the community. Likewise, with effect from today NEPTS are not accepting bookings directly from the public to ensure that we move in step with our health board colleagues. As outpatient clinics wind down it is expected that NEPTS journeys will reduce, creating additional capacity which we can utilise to support our EMS capability. Our proposals for this work stream will be finalised before the end of this week.
2. We are working with Swansea University to finalise a 'scope of practice' for paramedic students to join WAST should universities close. The invitation for

Cadeirydd/Chair: Martin Woodford
Prif Weithredwr/Chief Executive: Jason Killens

Mae'r Ymddiriedolaeth yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg, ac na fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi
The Trust welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English, and that corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay



students to join us will be on a temporary, voluntary basis and provide welcome additional resource for providing low acuity ambulance response.

3. The Trust has experienced a huge increase in demand for our 111 service. We are therefore increasing the call taking capacity available for managing covid-19 queries. Using an existing framework agreement, we have sourced additional agency staff call handlers. I should underline that this extra resource will be ring fenced for managing covid-19 related calls only in order to implement this as quickly as possible. The first cohort of 111 trainees will begin training next week and a second cohort the following week. Training is programmed to last 5 days before the additional call handlers move into a live environment.
4. An assessment of back office functions will be completed later today and a decision made on Wednesday in terms of which existing staff members can work from home (to reduce potential transmission) or be redeployed in to frontline duties (or supporting roles). A number of staff have already been identified which will move into additional 111 roles as described above.
5. Additional accommodation will be required for the extra 111 call handlers. A decision was made today to rent additional office space in Vantage Point House, Cwmbran on a temporary basis. This can be implemented at pace as we already occupy part of the building and the additional space is already networked.
6. Our final initiative to support and make resilient our 111 service is asking all clinically qualified 111 team members to work from home. The final arrangements will be better understood later this week before a final decision is made.
7. An incentive scheme for 111 staff has been approved to encourage the voluntary uptake of over time to maximise our clinical capacity.
8. The Trust has agreed with EASC to the recruitment of 136 WTE front line clinicians by 31st March 2020. I wish to assure you that this remains a key focus and priority and will add to the Trust's capacity in responding to the covid-19 pandemic.
9. I have had initial informal discussions about seeking additional ambulance driving capability from the military to plug expected gaps in EMS resource. A formal request is being worked up and I will forward this to you for your approval and onward submission to the MOD.
10. We are meeting our Trade Union partners on Wednesday to ensure they are sighted on arrangements which impact upon our people. One of the main issues for discussion will be a proposal to suspend the approval of annual leave for a defined period of time.
11. I am aware we are committing additional expenditure in enhancing our services to respond to covid-19 and therefore achieving the required savings as included in our IMTP will be increasing unlikely.

I hope the above information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Personal Data

**Jason Killens
Chief Executive**