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Welsh Health Specialised
Services Committee (WHSSC)

WELSH HEALTH SPECIALISED SERVICES COMMITTEE JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING – JUNE 2019

The Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee held its latest public meeting on 28 June 2019. This briefing sets out the key areas of discussion and aims to ensure everyone is kept up to date with what is happening in Welsh Health Specialised Services.

The papers for the meeting are available at:

<http://www.whssc.wales.nhs.uk/2019-20-whssc-joint-committee>

Adult Thoracic Surgery in South Wales

The Joint Committee received a paper that re-confirmed the advice from the provider Medical Directors and provided the Joint Committee with further information regarding the adult thoracic surgery consultant workforce arrangements required for a single service located at Morriston Hospital, Swansea and the cover arrangements for the Major Trauma Centre (MTC). This included:

- Detail regarding the anticipated demand for thoracic surgery in south Wales, this included out-patient and surgical activity and allowed for the planned 20% increase in activity;
- Expert advice on the level of activity required to maintain consultant thoracic surgeons' skills;
- Development of indicative job plans for consultant thoracic surgeons to inform an assessment of the appropriate number of consultants;
- Detailed costings for any proposed increase in consultant thoracic surgeons above the original WHSSC recommended level of six consultants;
- Clarity on the role of trauma surgeons in the immediate management of emergency trauma patients and the requirement for input from thoracic surgeons (e.g. telephone advice or on site input); and
- Clarity on the interface of thoracic surgeons in managing trauma patients with other specialties (e.g. rib fixation with orthopaedic surgeons).

In addition, the paper made recommendations regarding the future consultant workforce model and emergency cover of the MTC.

Members carefully considered the information provided in the paper and, after protracted discussion, proposed two alternative motions that were voted on, being:

- A. To acknowledge and support the views of the Medical Directors and clinical body across CVUHB and SBUHB, balanced with the independent experts' opinions; at this stage committing to the appointment of an additional consultant thoracic surgeon to support implementation of the MTC from April 2020 and thereafter to act on the real world experience from the MTC and updated activity figures to ensure that we have the appropriate number of consultant thoracic surgeons in place by the time of opening the new Thoracic Surgery Centre at Morriston Hospital, Swansea.
- B. To accept and support the recommendations of the Medical Directors and clinical body across CVUHB and SBUHB, balanced with the independent experts' opinions; at this stage committing to 7 consultant thoracic surgeon posts with effect from April 2020 with phasing to 8 (or the appropriate final number required) as demonstrated by the real world experience from the MTC and updated activity figures, based on needs and succession planning, to ensure that we have the appropriate number of consultant thoracic surgeons in place by the time of opening the new Thoracic Surgery Centre at Morriston Hospital, Swansea.

Neither motion achieved the required two-thirds majority to succeed. It was agreed that the Managing Director of WHSSC would seek advice from Welsh Government on next steps.

