



Mr Paul Roberts
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26 October 2011

Dear Mr Roberts,

Dignified Care Hospital Review and notification of end of Review

I would like to thank you for responding on time to my request for further information in relation to Recommendation 4 (patients' personal information) of my Review 'Dignified Care? The experiences of older people in hospital in Wales'.

My team and I have assessed the third and final response thoroughly. We have had help from a panel of advisors whose names are listed on our website.

The response states that Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board is committed to using a consistent approach to ensure that discussing patients' personal information in the hearing of others 'will cease'. I would like to clarify that the actual wording of Recommendation 4 is that it should cease 'wherever possible'. I acknowledge that there will be a few rare circumstances in which it will be impossible to keep information completely confidential. My recommendation seeks an assurance that the older person's right to privacy will be central to the thinking of staff who have access to, or who discuss, personal information - either with each other or with the older person.

The response also states that Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board will “seek to work further with the Commissioner, other Health Boards in Wales and to learn from best practice internationally to develop additional ‘creative’ solutions to ensuring privacy of information for patients in communal wards who cannot be moved from their beds into rooms for private conversation”. I welcome this commitment and would encourage Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board to look at the responses of other Health Boards, which are on our website.

I am, on the whole, satisfied with Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board’s third response. It addresses the issues about which I had requested further information in greater depth.

Since your third response has satisfied my request for information that will persuade me that all of my recommendations will be complied with, the official Review as it relates to Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board has now ended. My team and I will be active in working to ensure that my recommendations and Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board’s action plan become practical realities which benefit older people in Wales. We hope to meet with you in the spring of 2012 to discuss the progress that has been made and opportunities to share best practice.

If you have any questions about this letter that you would like to discuss, please contact Anna Buchanan on 08442 640670 or anna.buchanan@olderpeoplewales.com.

Yours sincerely,



Ruth Marks, Older People’s Commissioner for Wales