



25 APR 2017

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Welsh Ambulance Services
NHS Trust

Pencadlys Ymddiriedolaeth, Safle H M Stanley, Llanellwyr, Sir Ddinbych LL17 0RS
Trust Headquarters, H M Stanley Site, St Asaph, Denbighshire LL17 0RS
Ffôn/Tel 01745 532900 Ffacs/Fax 01745 532901
www.ambulance.wales.nhs.uk

EinCyf/Our Ref:
EichCyf/Your Ref:

21 April 2017

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
29 Madoc Street
Llandudno
LL30 2TL

Dear Ms Finch-Saunders

Re: Non-Emergency Transport

I am writing in response to your letter of 24 March 2017 regarding the decision not to provide non-emergency transport to your constituent [redacted] on 20 March 2017.

Please convey my apologies to [redacted] for any distress this decision caused her and thank her for taking the time to raise this issue, allowing the Trust the opportunity to learn from her experience. An investigation under the National Health Service (Concerns, Complaints and Redress Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2011 has been undertaken, including listening to the call in which Mrs Pritchard requested transport.

The Trust received a call from [redacted] on 20 March 2017 and she was asked the questions that form the Patient Needs Assessment. The following questions were asked:

1. Have you travelled with us in the last 3 months?
2. Which hospital are you travelling to next?
3. What's your NHS Number?
4. Are you receiving any renal dialysis or cancer treatment?
5. Do you travel with oxygen?
6. Do you receive a mobility allowance?
7. Are you requiring a walking aid or a chair when you travel?

8. How do you rely on transport usually when you travel to other places outside of the home?
9. If you had a Dr's Appointment how would you get to it?
10. Will you experience any side effects from receiving any treatment in relation to the journey?
11. Do you suffer from any mental health conditions that prevent you travelling alone to your appointment?
12. Why are you unable to use your normal form of transport to attend your appointment?
13. Do you have any eyesight, hearing or speech problems in relation to the journey?

all the questions that were asked which meant that she was not entitled to non-emergency transport, the criteria for which is included in the Welsh Health Circular 2007. was provided with two alternative transport providers, Dial-a-Ride and Red Cross and she was also informed that if she was unsuccessful she could call the Trust the day before her appointment and we would try to accommodate her needs. However, the call taker did have to inform that we could not guarantee that we would be able to offer her transport and our ability to accommodate her would depend on the demands on the service and the resources available to us. The investigation has identified that did not contact the Trust again to book transport and successfully attended her appointment.

The investigation has concluded that the call taker acted in line with his training and the Patient Needs Assessment was correctly applied. That being said a new process had been introduced shortly before call to the Trust, whereby patients who are not eligible for transport on a medical or mobility need are not offered transport. Whilst there was no change to the Welsh Health Circular 2007, this process has been introduced in order to improve efficiencies and value for money for the public purse with the aim of our resources being used for the patients unable to utilise other means of transport.

Historically, patients like would have been provided transport by the Trust under the qualification of a "social need" and not a "medical" and or "mobility" need. Unfortunately, this has increased the demand and in some instances had a detrimental effect on the level of service provided to those who did qualify on medical and/or mobility grounds.

That being said since made her call to the Trust on 20 March 2017, the Trust has stopped using the new process and is considering undertaking more public consultation and information sharing with regard to the Patient Needs Assessment.

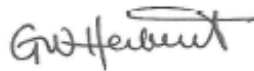
I sincerely hope that this letter has reassured you and your constituent that the Trust has taken her concerns very seriously and if you or still have any concerns or queries about the investigation or our response, you are welcome to meet with representatives from the Trust and Catharyne Punyer, Investigation Supervising Officer, would be pleased to arrange this for you. Catharyne can be contacted on

If you or _____ feels, you do not wish to meet with the Trust at this time but still have concerns or queries write to Tracy Myhill, Chief Executive, Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust, Trust Headquarters, 11 M Stanley Cite, St Asaph, Denbighshire, LL17 0RG.

If _____ is not satisfied with the outcome of our investigation, she may find it helpful to look at the website of the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales which can be found at www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk. Alternatively she can telephone _____ or email _____

I would again like to apologise to _____ for the distress the Trust's decision caused her and to thank her for sharing her experience with the Trust.

Yours sincerely



Tracy Myhill
Chief Executive

(Wendy Herbert, Assistant Director of Quality, Safety & Patient Experience, on behalf of the Chief Executive)