

Janet Finch-Saunders AM/AC

Assembly Member for Aberconwy
Aelod Cynulliad dros Aberconwy

Shadow Secretary for Local Government
Ysgrifennydd yr Wrthblaid ar gyfer Llywodraeth Leol

Healthcare Quality Division
Welsh Government

By email
HQDMailbox@wales.qsi.gov.uk

Ref: CO/JFS/HM
30th August 2017

Re: White Paper: Services Fit for the Future

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in response to the consultation on the White Paper: Services Fit for the Future.

A number of points of concern have been raised to my attention with regards to the proposals outlined in this White Paper, with particular reference to Community Health Councils (CHCs), which I wish to be noted:

- The work of CHCs is important to many across Wales. The Welsh Conservative Party has consistently supported them in this work, and I am deeply concerned with the proposed direction the the Welsh Government intends to take with regards to their future, as outlined in Services Fit for our Future.
- Proposals outlined threaten to damage public service accountability in the health sector. The scrutinising role of CHCs is a vital monitoring tool, and enables real changes and improvements to be made by Local Health Boards (LHBs). Across my own LHB in north Wales, for example, the CHC undertook 352 inspections of healthcare premises, including 137 CareWatch inspections, during both day and night, over the course of 2015-16.
- Additionally, these proposals may weaken the voice of Welsh patients. The mediation role carried out by CHCs between patients and LHBs/healthcare professionals is also of benefit to many. Again, across north Wales, the CHC dealt with 385 complaints, 231 enquiries, and successfully closed 262 cases in 2015-16. Clearly, the CHC plays a significant role in citizen advocacy and mediation across the LHB area.
- Given the ongoing crises healthcare in Wales faces, I do believe that CHCs are vital to holding the Welsh Government accountable for the state of our NHS. This is of particular importance in north Wales, where Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board remains under the Welsh Government's special measures, with progress being slow (and in some areas

[Cont.]

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Office of Janet Finch-Saunders AM,
29 Madoc Street,
Llandudno,
LL30 2TL.
01492 871 198

National Assembly for Wales,
Cardiff Bay,
CF99 1NA.
0300 200 7454

janet.finch-saunders@assembly.wales www.janetfinchsaunders.org.uk

Janet Finch-Saunders will treat in confidence any personal information which you may pass on to her, and she will normally allow her staff to see it, so that they can consult with relevant authorities in order to help and advise you. We may wish to write to you from time to time to keep you informed on issues which you may find of interest. Please let us know if you do not wish to be contacted for this purpose.

Mi wnaiff Janet Finch-Saunders cadw unrhyw wybodaeth personol yn gwbl gyfrinachol, ac fel arfer mi fydd rhaid iddi rannu'r wybodaeth 'efo aelodau o staff i'w galluogi nhw i ddellio 'efo'r awdurdodau perthnasol er mwyn eich helpu a'ch cynorthwyo chi. Efallai mi fydd angen i rywun ysgrifennu atoch er mwyn darparu'r wybodaeth ddiweddaraf o bwys. Gadwch wybod i ni os nad oes diddordeb gennych mewn cael eich cysylltu at y diben hwn.

Janet Finch-Saunders AM/AC

Assembly Member for Aberconwy
Aelod Cynulliad dros Aberconwy

Shadow Secretary for Local Government
Ysgrifennydd yr Wrthblaid ar gyfer Llywodraeth Leol

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



[Cont.]

non-existent – for example, waiting times for trauma and orthopaedic surgery).

- I note that the Board of Community Health Councils in Wales have made clear their concerns that the proposals outlined for a new '*citizens voice arrangement*' *do not include a role to 'hear directly from people about their health services, e.g. by visiting people accessing care', nor to 'scrutinise and hold NHS organisations to account on behalf of local people and communities for the way in which they deliver their services'*. Both of these are crucial roles for CHCs currently, the exclusion of which, going forward, would be to the severe detriment of accountability and patient voice across healthcare in Wales. An independent and effective voice for Welsh patients is essential.
- Rather than disbanding CHCs, I feel strongly that it is crucial that the Welsh Government works to ensure that their role is maintained and impact enhanced across Wales.

I trust that full consideration of these concerns will be taken with regards to this consultation.

Yours sincerely,

Janet Finch-Saunders AM/AC

janet.finch-saunders@assembly.wales www.janetfinchsaunders.org.uk

Janet Finch-Saunders will treat in confidence any personal information which you may pass on to her, and she will normally allow her staff to see it, so that they can consult with relevant authorities in order to help and advise you. We may wish to write to you from time to time to keep you informed on issues which you may find of interest. Please let us know if you do not wish to be contacted for this purpose.

Mi wnaiff Janet Finch-Saunders cadw unrhyw wybodaeth personol yn gwbl gyfrinachol, ac fel arfer mi fydd rhaid iddi rannu'r wybodaeth 'efo aelodau o staff i'w galluogi nhw i ddelio 'efo'r awdurdodau perthnasol er mwyn eich helpu a'ch cynorthwyo chi. Efallai mi fydd angen i rywun ysgrifennu atoch er mwyn darparu'r wybodaeth ddiweddaraf o bwys. Gadwch wybod i ni os nad oes diddordeb gennych mewn cael eich cysylltu at y diben hwn.