

Dear [REDACTED] ,

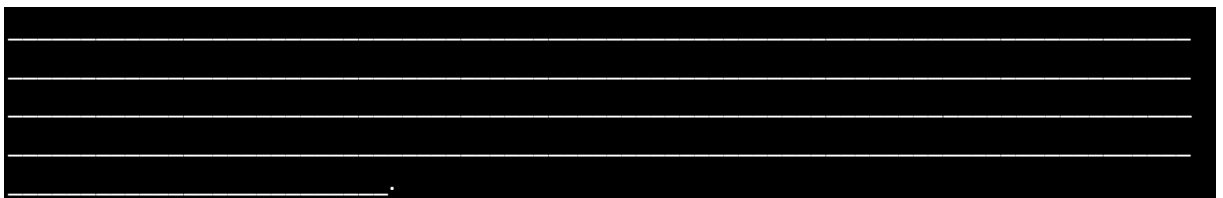
Thank you so much for contacting us and for letting us know that you will be speaking to your Member of Senedd on Friday. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] It was very courageous of you to be prepared to raise up the issues with care at Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board with your Member of Senedd. We fully support you in doing this and we will be pleased to help you as much as we can.

Our advice line has been contacted at least once, sometimes twice, every month since April 2021 about issues with care provision and lack of respect for dignity and human rights at hospitals operated by Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board. In June 2021 we received 5 different enquiries about problems with care under Betsi Cadwaladr. To put it in context we helped over 1080 individual enquirers during the year April 2020-April 2021 and we continue to help around 90-100 individual people a month through the personalised email advice service. In numerical terms, enquiries about care at Betsi Cadwaladr constitute a small percentage of our enquiries: 1-5%, however enquirers come from all over the UK and we do not receive an even or static number of enquiries about each UK NHS Trust or health board.

Given the relatively small population of North Wales compared to other cities in Wales, or to other places in the UK, it has been a notable fact that we are continuing to receive such a steady stream of concerns about the standard of maternity provision at Betsi Cadwaladr. Please also bear in mind that we are a small charity with limited resources, so not every family in the UK even knows that they can contact Birthrights for help, especially those for whom English is not a first or preferred language (including Welsh speaking people). On that basis, the number of enquiries to our advice service is likely to only be the tip of the iceberg if there is an issue with care in a particular region or city of one of the UK nations.

We continue to be concerned about the experiences of people contacting us about Betsi Cadwaladr - both individuals and staff, which reflects some of what you have also experienced. We are not at liberty to share their stories specifically but we could connect individuals who had given mutual consent to do so. The accounts that we are reading are suggestive of a maternity culture that lacks compassion. We are aware of staff who have left through not being able to deliver the care they want to. [REDACTED]



This is the ButNotMaternity alliance spreadsheet which you are also welcome to share with the Assembly Member. It shows current birth partner restrictions from Trusts and health boards throughout all of the nations of the UK. The only update we are aware of is that Cwm Taf is not allowing any inpatient visiting in maternity now. With Aneurin Bevan as the exception, Boards in Wales are not doing well on the visiting front compared to maternity units in England and Scotland. It would be great if the Assembly member was prepared to raise this with the Welsh Health Minister.

We are also aware that the Chair of the Maternity Voices Partnership for North Wales has stepped down and they are struggling to recruit a replacement. This is also concerning in terms of ensuring service user perspectives are being taken into consideration.



All best wishes,



On behalf of Birthrights