



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE **The Report of the Public Inquiry into Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust**

DATE **7 February 2013**

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Yesterday the Francis Inquiry report into the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust was published. Whilst this reports on events which happened in England, in a different NHS system, I want to ensure we in Wales use the report to continuously improve our approach and learn from it in our delivery of Safe Care, Compassionate Care.

We need to take time to evaluate this report in detail. I intend to comment fully before summer recess and lead an Assembly Debate in March to help inform the Welsh approach. The serious matters Francis reports on transcend political boundaries.

As Assembly Members, we all know from our post bags things sadly do go wrong. There can be no simple guarantees in what is a people run system. The vast majority of our staff do an excellent job under great pressure, sometimes, in challenging circumstances. What we must insure against is the risk of any wide 'systemic' failure. Everyone, public, patient and NHS employee, places Safe Care, Compassionate Care at the centre of our NHS Wales culture. This means a culture which is open, transparent and learns from mistakes. I am mindful our behaviour as politicians can help set the tone and beliefs of the public and NHS staff.

Care and compassion is not something which can be mandated upon and which employee would not say this is what they do daily? There is a leadership challenge for NHS Boards and Trusts and all organisations who deliver care in Wales. I want NHS Wales to demonstrate how the public can be confident we are listening actively, being vigilant for every learning opportunity and addressing any problems fairly with passion and pace, both now and into the future.

We already have significant building blocks and a clear governance framework which

sets out roles, responsibilities and our expectations to ensure high quality care in NHS Wales. What I think could rightly be seen as a cynical short term reaction, is a raft of new initiatives. Across all organisations we need to build on what is already working, accelerating pace where needed and removing any blockages. I will shortly be announcing my response to the consultation we have just completed on strengthening Community Health Councils to help amplify the voice of the patient. We already have measures of patient experience, although I think we can do more. When things go wrong, we have our Putting Things Right regulations. All Health Boards and Trusts must now produce a public facing annual Quality Statement. Our Inspectorates in Wales have a key role to provide independent professional assurance. We are piloting “Peer Audits” so Health Boards and Trusts can learn from one another. All of this is overseen by the NHS Wales National Quality and Safety Forum.

I know the vast majority of NHS staff have care and compassion for people when they are most vulnerable as their key values, no matter whether doctor, nurse, manager or cleaner. However, good governance and clear accountability is essential to ensure intent translates into action and we must involve patients and staff to inform decisions.

This morning I visited Morriston Hospital to see the fantastic progress we have made in reducing hospital acquired pressure sores, led by our 1000 Lives Plus quality improvement work. We do have the knowhow and leadership skills we can be proud of. What I want the debate to focus on is how we learn from the Francis Inquiry, to truly embed Safe Care, Compassionate Care. We must go forward confidently with no complacency, knowing there are challenges we can and will overcome and continue in our efforts to serve the people of Wales to our best ability.

I know Assembly Members will join with me to reflect on the truly horrific scale of what happened in Mid Staffordshire and the lessons which may be applicable to Wales. We must focus our debate on the needs of the public and those who need the Safe Care, the Compassionate Care, the NHS provides.