
Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust Annual Report from Healthcare Inspectorate Wales 2014-15

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Purpose

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) is the lead independent inspectorate for healthcare in Wales. Its purpose is to provide independent and objective assurance on the quality, safety and effectiveness of healthcare services making recommendations to healthcare organisations to promote improvements.

This annual report has been produced by HIW as a summary of the activity that HIW carried out between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2015 in Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (WAST).

The outcomes we seek to influence as a result of our activity within this and other health boards/trusts are that:

- Citizen experience of healthcare is improved
- Citizens are able to access clear and timely information on the quality, safety and effectiveness of healthcare services in Wales
- Citizens are confident that inspection and regulation of the healthcare sector in Wales is sufficient, proportionate, professional, co-ordinated, and adds value.

Overview

During this year, HIW has not conducted any inspections at WAST, however four of the Dignity and Essential Care Inspections (DECI) were conducted at Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments. At some of these, there were observations around interactions with WAST.

Key Themes and Noteworthy Practice

During the course of our DECI inspections at A&E departments, we observed the following:

- Good working relationships between A&E department staff and ambulance crews.
- There are different handover practices in different organisations. During busy periods at two hospitals, the ambulances tended to hand over the patients on arrival. These patients were then initially cared for in the corridors of the A&E department. At another hospital, ambulances (with patients inside) waited outside the hospital until the A&E department had capacity to take the patients and at the other hospital, nothing was observed on this as it wasn't a busy period when HIW inspected.

Governance and Accountability

WAST's vision is "An ambulance service for the people of Wales which delivers high quality care wherever and whenever it is needed".

The self assessment conducted and submitted to HIW by WAST for 2013-14 indicated the following:

Under the *Setting the Direction* theme, the organisation believed that they had demonstrated level 3 maturity – are developing plans and processes and can demonstrate progress with some of their key areas for improvement. Under priorities for improvement, the organisation has included information on its ambitious change and improvement plans that focuses on the following strategic areas:

- Improved engagement with local Health Boards and patients;
- Exploration of opportunities to access more alternative care and direct pathways with local Health Boards;
- Embedding a clinical culture based on robust clinical leadership;
- Unscheduled care working with local Health Board partners;
- Improved CPD and support mechanisms for staff;
- Supporting the Health, Safety and Welfare of staff;
- Operational improvement in response times;
- Development of resourcing and deployment models;
- Matching resourcing to demand;
- Strengthening governance and compliance arrangements; and
- Cost-effective investment in estate, fleet and clinical equipment.

Under the *Enabling Delivery* theme, the organisation believed that they had demonstrated level 3 maturity – are developing plans and processes and can demonstrate progress with some of their key areas for improvement. A large number of improvement actions were highlighted including implementation of the medium term integrated business plan objectives (in particular the stated Year 1 deliverables), implementation of communications strategy, estates and fleet developments/vehicle procurement.

Under the *Delivering Results, Achieving Excellence* theme, the organisation believed that they had demonstrated level 3 maturity – are developing plans and processes and can demonstrate progress with some of their key areas for improvement. A number of improvement actions were identified including the initial implementation elements of the Clinical Strategy (that was approved by Trust Board and Welsh Government in 2013).

In addition, conclusions from the Wales Audit Office's Annual Audit Report 2013 indicated that the trust has revisited its budget-setting process and recognises that more work is needed to address the significant challenge of breaking even whilst maintaining service delivery. The trust faces a number of financial and resource challenges whilst balancing the delivery of service transformation with maintaining service delivery. The trust's governance arrangements are broadly sound and the Ambulance Service Reform Programme is expected to have a positive impact on the Trust's ability to achieve its strategic objectives and plans.

In the self-assessment, WAST indicated that they would be further improving financial planning arrangements to ensure the budget is fully aligned with delivery and service objectives. They also noted that a revised integrated governance framework had been designed to enable the Board to respond dynamically to the rapidly changing environment, whilst ensuring quality and safety remain at the heart of its overall assurance framework.

Engagement

HIW's Chief Executive, Kate Chamberlain, along with the Relationship Manager, Sarah Jones went to the WAST Board meeting on 17 July 2014 to give a presentation on what HIW does, the annual reporting process and to introduce the concept of Relationship Managers in HIW.

Kate Chamberlain and Sarah Jones met with Sara Jones, Director of Quality and Nursing and Jane Palin, Quality Clinical Practice & Improvement Lead, at WAST on 13 August 2014.

Kate Chamberlain and Sarah Jones met with WAST's Chief Executive, Tracy Myhill and Deputy Chair, John Morgan on 23 December 2014 as part of Kate's 2014-15 visits to all Health Boards and Trusts in Wales to establish and build relationships.

Sarah Jones and Alison Kedward (Clinical Director) from HIW met with Wendy Herbert (Assistant Director of Nursing) and Jane Palin (Quality Clinical Practice & Improvement Lead) from WAST on 17 February 2015.

These meetings have formed part of the ongoing liaison with the trust.

Special Reviews and Investigations

During 2014-15, HIW did not carry out any special reviews and investigations at WAST.

Follow Up and Immediate Assurance

HIW did not carry out any inspections at WAST during 2014-15.

Inspections Activity

Dignity and Essential Care Inspections at A&E departments

Location	Date
Wrexham Maelor, Betsi Cadwaladr UHB	30/09/14
Nevill Hall, Aneurin Bevan UHB	03/12/14
Royal Glamorgan, Cwm Taf UHB	14/01/15
Princess of Wales, Abertawe Bro Morgannwg UHB	17/02/15

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