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THROUGH
INDEPENDENT AND
OBJECTIVE REVIEW

Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust Annual Report from Healthcare Inspectorate Wales 2015-16

August 2016

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This document is also available in Welsh.

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1. Purpose

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) is the lead independent inspectorate and regulator of health care in Wales. Our purpose is to provide the public with independent and objective assurance of 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 2015 and 31 March 2016 in relation to Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust.

The outcomes we seek to influence through this activity 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.

2. Overview

During the year, HIW did not conduct any inspections of the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (WAST). However, our health board inspection in Hywel Dda University Health Board covered unscheduled care at Withybush, Glangwili and Bronglais general hospitals and there were observations relating to WAST.

3. Key Themes

During the course of the inspection in Section 2, the following information was gathered relating to WAST:

- Of those patients who had arrived via ambulance at one of the hospitals and completed our patient questionnaires, all six gave positive feedback regarding their experience with the ambulance service.
- Areas of good practice in Withybush General Hospital whereby there was a dedicated ambulance to transfer children to appropriate neighbouring hospitals in a timely manner (due to no paediatric department at Withybush). There was also a dedicated area for ambulances in general to set down and transfer patients to a trolley whilst they were waiting to see a member of clinical staff.

4. Follow Up and Immediate Assurance

No follow up or immediate assurance letters were issued to the trust.

5. Governance and Accountability

The governance arrangements for NHS Wales are set out within *Safe Care, Compassionate Care – A National Governance Framework to enable high quality Care in NHS Wales*¹. Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust is responsible for the quality and safety of services it provides and commissions.

WAST's vision is 'A leading ambulance service providing the best possible care through a skilled, professional and healthy workforce'.

Annually, each health board and trust in Wales is required, by Welsh Government, to complete a self-assessment of their position in relation to the Governance and Accountability module of Healthcare Standards for Wales, scoring their maturity on a scale of 1-5.

¹ *Safe Care, Compassionate Care – A National Governance Framework to enable high quality Care in NHS Wales* describes roles and responsibilities and what needs to be in place to seek and provide assurance about the quality and safety of health care services
<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/888/Appendix%20Item%206%20Safe%20Care%20Compassionate%20Care.pdf>

To strengthen WAST Board's engagement in, and ownership of, the module; an online questionnaire was used to gather Board members' views anonymously. The self assessment conducted and submitted to HIW by WAST for 2014-15 indicated the following:

Under all three themes: 'Setting the Direction', 'Enabling Delivery' and 'Delivering Results, Achieving Excellence', the trust believed that they had demonstrated level 3 maturity – 'the trust is developing plans and processes and can demonstrate progress with some of our key areas for improvement'. These scores were unchanged from 2013-14, however the trust believed that improvements had been made in a number of important areas.

In the self-assessment, the trust highlighted that it had developed a three year Medium Term Integrated Business Plan (2015-18) for approval by Welsh Government and also had expanded and re-shaped their leadership and management structure to deliver their vision and strategy, but acknowledged that the structure would need to be embedded. The trust also highlighted that it is establishing a robust performance management framework to ensure the delivery of all elements of the three year plan. The trust noted that results from the online questionnaire, although favourable, indicated that there is still some progress to be made.

In addition, statements from the Wales Audit Office Annual Report 2015 for WAST concluded "The Trust has made progress in addressing key weaknesses in its governance arrangements, and performance in key areas is improving, however, fundamental gaps in the governance structure remain. The Trust has plans in place to address this."

6. Engagement

During the year, the Relationship Manager presented HIW's annual report for WAST at their Board Development Day on 18 June 2015.

The Relationship Manager attended WAST's Quality, Patient Experience and Safety meeting on 3 December 2015 and also met with WAST's Quality, Clinical Practice & Improvement Lead on 10 June and 3 December 2015. She met up with their new Director of Quality, Safety and Patient Experience on 10 March 2016.

On all occasions, the trust has responded to requests for meetings and various documents, positively and promptly. These meetings have formed part of the ongoing liaison with the trust.

During September 2015, HIW also responded to WAST's consultation on their draft Quality Improvement Strategy.

HIW's Relationship Manager and Wales Audit Office Performance Audit Lead met and corresponded during the year to share relevant information held by both organisations.

7. Inspection Activity

Health Board inspections at hospital Emergency Departments where interactions with WAST observed

1. Hywel Dda (Withybush, Glangwili, Bronglais)	11 and 12 August 2015
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