



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Betsi Cadwaladr
University Health Board

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Ein cyf / Our ref:

Eich cyf / Your ref:

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Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Helen Brown

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Dyddiad / Date: 16th January 2018

Dear Dr Jessup

A happy new year to you.

Thank you for your letter dated 12th January 2018 highlighting the LNC's concerns regarding the obstetric care available to patients in the East Area of North Wales.

As you are aware the Health Board has invested heavily in maternity services over the past few years in order to support safe sustainable local services and is committed to having three obstetric units as a minimum in North Wales. We currently offer a full range of birth settings and care pathways to suit women and their families and as such the service is in the top 22% of all Trusts and Boards within the UK that offers this full range. As such the Board acknowledges the Women's Strategy, to support sustainable high quality services, in actively promoting the services and choices available to women in North Wales. To note this range of high quality services continues to attract women into North Wales for their care with commissioners from England and within Wales seeking further capacity from us.

Whilst there is active promotion of local services by all staff in maternity services, I can absolutely confirm that there has been no outright ban on women living in North Wales giving birth outside of the Health Board, we are simply, as you suggested in your letter, encouraging women to use the excellent facilities we provide. I believe that my colleague Mr Nigel Lee, Secondary Care Director, emphasised this approach when he met and briefed our colleague, Dr Gareth Bowdler, on this matter.

If however, a woman requests to birth outside of North Wales we do ask them to complete a simple form outlining the reason why. This system also provides the service with valuable feedback on how we, as a Health Board, can continue to improve on our services. I stress this is not part of the IPFR process. All requests to be cared for and birth outside of North Wales are considered by clinicians within the Women's Directorate. Women who are under specialist care for pre-existing conditions with another provider are most definitely supported to continue their care with their team in their chosen birth place. Similarly women detailing reasons such as living closer to the Countess of Chester, for example, and or wanting to be cared for by a previous provider have been supported in their request.



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I believe that you have had previous communications with the service and that Fiona Giraud, Director of Midwifery and Women's Services, is working with your secretary to arrange a date for you to meet to clarify the situation from an operational perspective.

In the meantime, please accept my assurance that there is no blanket ban on BCU patients giving birth outside of North Wales and that the information provided clarifies the Board's position. Again, may I thank you for your continued support in promoting local services where appropriate.

Best wishes and kind regards

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Morag Olsen'.

Morag Olsen
Chief Operating Officer

CC: *Peter Higson*
Gary Doherty
Fiona Giraud