



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

POLICY AND STRATEGY, DOCUMENT

Adopting a patient and family-initiated escalation approach (WHC/2024/040)

Letter to health professionals about enabling patients and families to escalate their concerns.

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Details

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Local health boards and Velindre NHS trust.

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For information:

- Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW)
- Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW)
- NHS Wales Executive

Required by:

Immediate.

Senders:

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Enclosures:

None.

Adopting a patient and family-initiated escalation approach

Dear Colleagues,

This Welsh Health Circular sets out our expectations in relation to adopting a patient and family-initiated escalation approach which will enable the patient or their family to call for immediate help and advice if they are worried about instances of deteriorating health. This person-centred approach aligns with our health and care quality standards and is integral to improving safety and health outcomes.

Adopting a patient and family-initiated escalation approach

Following extensive clinical engagement with stakeholders, the NHS Wales Executive has developed a patient and family-initiated escalation (“PFE”) approach for hospital patients.

The patient and family escalation approach in Wales will be named Call 4 Concern. This builds on pilots already undertaken across Wales but owes legacy to the Martha Mills’ family and other families who have championed the importance of listening to families and patients.

Following significant clinical engagement through a Task and Finish Group and

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reaching consensus on the PFE approach with senior NHS leaders and their representatives, the NHS Executive has agreed to support organisations in the development of individual implementation plans. The PFE approach and implementation plan will naturally be different for each organisation, dependant on the spectrum of their services.

We expect organisations to work with the NHS Executive to develop their approach and ensure it enables patients, families and carers to escalate their concerns and provide a fresh pair of eyes to support them and the clinical team in a timely response to those concerns.

We recognise that organisations may take a stepwise implementation approach to reach this goal. Once matured and fully implemented, the system should work across 24-hour period 7 days a week and be accessible to in-patients and their families and carers on all acute sites. This should include neonates, children, adults, pregnant women and birthing people.

The NHS Executive will work with health boards and trusts to implement the agreed approach, providing guidance and strategic support, as well as monitoring progress and providing national updates to Welsh Government. Local updates will be provided through IQPD meetings.

We would like to thank the organisations involved in piloting the Call 4 Concern service, and all stakeholders involved in the development of the patient and family-initiated escalation approach.

This person-centred approach will show that we are listening to patients and their families, with the expectation of improved patient safety and outcomes for the people of Wales.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Sue Tranka

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Chief Nursing Officer, Nurse Director NHS Wales.

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Dirprwy Brif Swyddog Meddygol, Gwasanaethau Iechyd
Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Health Services.

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