



Short Case Study

Increased GP Support

Hywel Dda University Health Board

GPs working within the Hywel Dda University Health Board recognised they would need to adapt the way in which they collaborated with Community Hospitals during the pandemic. There was already a good, highly trusting relationship between the Community Hospitals and local GP practices which enabled flexibility and increase in support.

Prior to the pandemic, GPs were contracted by the Health Board to do a ward round and then return to their practice. During the pandemic this support increased. They came for the ward round at 8am, and they stayed until 5pm to support hospital staff. They would check-in on and hand over to night staff to see if they needed anything. This meant the night staff could talk to someone who knew the patients instead of having to speak to the out of hours service.

When Covid struck, the five GPs in the practice sat down together and decided they would do what they could to provide additional support to Llandoverly Hospital. The decision was for two of the younger, fitter GPs without any underlying health conditions to separate from the rest of the practice and work from the hospital. One GP lived in a caravan in the driveway of his home to enable this.

They spent whole days at the hospital, looking after patients and developed the best care plans possible in the absence of ventilators, and with bottled rather than 'on tap' oxygen.

The GP practice collaborated with the Community Hospitals to try and protect their patients by pushing for pre-transfer testing for patients transferred from the main hospital. It took a long time for this process to be implemented, but now it is part of Health Board policy as a means of providing protection.

Benefits for patients

- Enhanced GP support enabled best possible care to be provided to patients

Benefits for staff

- Hospital staff and GPs all worked together to keep everything as safe as possible and a real trusting relationship was built
- The experience was harrowing but has bonded the team and community further

Benefits for the Trust

- Flexibility to support the wider health and social care system

Next steps

- Build on the enhanced working relationship

What we have learnt

- The Community Hospital is a much-loved part of the community
- Supporting Community Hospitals required staff sacrifices reflective of those seen in acute sites

Contact



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