

**Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services**

**Delivery Assurance Group**

**(NEPTS DAG)**

**Minutes/Action(s)**

**Friday 24th April 2020**

**10:30am to 12:00pm**

**Attendees (Via Audio Conference):**

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| James Rodaway (JR) – NCCU | Jonathan Jones (JDJ) – NCCU |
| Debra Fry (DF) – NCCU | Mark Harris (MH) – WAST |
| Hugh Bennett (HB) – WAST | Gareth Skye (GS) – HDUHB |
| Andrew Walsh (AW) – ABUHB | Geraint Farr (GF) – BCUHB |
| Gillian Milne (GM) – BCUHB | Aaron Evans (AE) – WAST |
| Joanne Rees-Thomas (JRT) – WAST | Arwyn Thomas (AT) – WAST |
| Melanie Wilkey (MW) – CVUHB | Joanne Jones (JJ) – SBUHB |
| Joseph Lewis (JL) – WAST | Susan Spence (SS) – WHSSC |
| Olivia Barnes (OB) – WAST | Jeff o Sullivan (JS) – Velindre |
| Lyndon Powell (LP) - WAST |  |
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**Apologies Received:**

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| Steve Bonser (SB) – ABUHB | Julie Keegan (JK) – CTMUHB |
| Wayne Lewis (WL) - CTMUHB |  |
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**Acronyms:**

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| ABUHB | Aneurin Bevan University Health Board |
| BCUHB | Betsi Cadwaladr University Health BOard |
| CTMUHB | Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board |
| CVUHB | Cardiff and Vale University Health Board |
| HDUHB | Hywel Dda University Health Board |
| NEPTS DAG | Non-emergency patient transport service Delivery and Assurance Group |
| NCCU | National Collaborative Commissioning Unit |
| PTHB | Powys Teaching Health Board |
| SBUHB | Swansea Bay University Health Board |
| WAST | Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust |
| WHSSC | Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee |

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| **Item** | **Agenda** | **Actions / Comments** | **Further comments** | **Attachments** |
| **1.** | **Welcome, Introductions & Apologies**  (Chair) welcomed all to the meeting and all present introduced themselves. Apologies received from staff listed above. | | | |
| **COVID-19 NCCU** | | | | |
| **2.** | **NCCU updates to include:**  a) Update on current position  b) Welsh Government Guidance | JR expressed his thanks to all Health Board & WAST colleagues during this busy and extraordinary time. There is a strong wiliness to work together collaboratively to address any challenges and support the new way of working.  NCCU (Chris Moreton) is working closely with colleagues in the FDU in relation to monitoring Health Board returns (finance expenditure) alongside Health Board Gold Plans during the pandemic, which are progressing at a fast pace.  Guidance from Welsh Government (Attachment 1) was discussed confirming WAST will coordinate all non-emergency patient transport across Wales under the plurality model during the COVID-19 emergency response and to ensure there is capacity to support the patient movement requirements (for further details see Attachment 2).  No issues or concerns raised around the guidance provided by Welsh Government. However it was requested that if there were any concerns by Health Boards to please feedback through the DAG forum and we can collaboratively work through any concerns and issues you may have with WAST, NCCU & planning colleagues. |  | ***Attachment 1 – HB Letter***    ***Attachment 2 – Patient Transport Requirements*** |
| **COVID-19 WAST** | | | | |
| **3.** | **WAST updates to include:**  a) Changes over the last few weeks  b) Update on current position | MH also expressed his thanks to all Health Board & WAST colleagues.  Overall activity has reduced (This time last year 39,000 journeys, this year 19,000) which is a significant change to the way NEPTS operates. Priorities centred around supporting Discharge & Transfers, Renal & Oncology and priority Outpatients.  One notable concern is the loss of the volunteer cars drivers (Last Year 20%, currently working at 6%) due to being in the high risk / vulnerable category. Loss in some areas from around 40-60 volunteers down to single figures, which is causing some slight issue.  Overall performance is strong and maintaining:   * Outward Journeys 🡩 12% * Overall Discharges 🡫 2% * Renal (arriving < 30 mins) 🡩 4% * Renal outward journeys (leaving < 30 mins after appointment) 🡩 9% * Oncology (arriving < 30 mins) 🡩 6% * Oncology (leaving <30 mins after appointment) 🡩 20%   Key updates from NEPTS include:   * NEPTS staff (including Renal Hub) have been redeployed to support in different roles e.g. Logistics around PPE to ensure all staff and providers have the necessary equipment. * NEPTS staff have been trained in Level 3 PPE (on top of the Level 2 training already received) * New Covid-19 procedures developed to support * New rosters being introduced and changes made to the Bed desk to deal with the increase in the number of transfers (to include field hospitals) to manage capacity. * Day to day linking with Military planners * 14% staff currently off work:   + 7% shielding for 12 weeks   + 7% symptoms and/or self-isolating * Decision to extend Renal reimbursement scheme with immediate effect to patients with own transport. Currently 150 patients have taken this up which is helping to reduce the strain on the system. SS also expressed thanks on behalf of the renal network r.e reimbursement and said that the Reimbursement scheme to be reviewed post covid-19 to ensure equity but also to consider other groups moving forward. * Additional / spare capacity will be used to support Renal & Oncology patients and the rest will go directly to the field hospitals as they go live. * Uncertainty around health boards returning to ‘business as usual’ and what this will look like in terms of Social Distancing. **ACTION: Health Boards to link directly with WAST Colleagues on a regular basis** * Agreement with St Johns to continue support, including support for field hospitals. * WAST exploring options for Community support vehicles   Covid-19 has had a significant impact on vehicles:   * Number of vehicles have now been fitted with Perspex screens (additional 35 scheduled over the next few weeks) * Double Crews – no more than 2 person(s) * Car – no more than 1 person * Suspected Covid – only travel by ambulance (no more than 1 person) * In the process of obtaining newly commissioned vehicles, but also keeping the decommissioned vehicles (still in full working order) to fall back on should capacity increase.   Changes to bookings  During these unprecedented times, there will be a temporary change to the booking procedures. All bookings will continue to be taken, with no blockage / impact to patients. However all bookings will be confirmed 3 days prior to travel for all bookings to ensure the right resources are available. This change is for outpatient appointments only and will not affect discharges and transfers. **ACTION: MH to write out to Health Boards to confirm changes.**  PPE  MH confirmed that the guidelines are clear that all staff should wear Level 2 PPE and renal patients should be offered level 2. At present there are no issues around availability of PPE but if staff are concerned please raise with your WAST Colleagues. | DAG members were asked to consider all information discussed and share back with Health Board Colleagues. NEPTS Transport looks very different to how it looked beginning of the year but with continued collaboration we can continue to meet demand, understand where we are and how to support those who need it most. **ACTION: MH to share slide pack containing all changes** |  |
| **COVID-19 Health Board** | | | | |
| **4.** | **Health Board updates to include:** a) Surge Hospitals  b) Current plans | Aneurin Bevan   * Postponement of the early opening of GUH due to sufficient capacity across the current system. * Currently working towards trying to move towards ‘Business as Usual’ * Decontamination areas set up across hospital sites, including Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr (YYF)   Betsi Cadwaladr   * Relooking at numbers due to modelling changes * Still forecasting use of field hospitals, but current capacity is good at all 3 sites * Facilities set up at all field hospital sites, including decontamination areas   Cardiff & Vale   * Dragon Heart hospital to start taking patients w/c 27th April although currently sufficient capacity across the system. * Concerns around what ‘Business as usual’ will look like when things get back to normal. MW expressed the need for early engagement to support. * Joint consensus to reflect on the new arrangements and what incentives will be taken forward into the ‘new world’   Cwm Taf Morgannwg No representation – apologies sent from JK and WL  Hywel Dda   * 9 field hospitals available * Currently good capacity across the system (55% occupancy) * Llanelli will open as planned but the rest are on hold until future discussions take place and monitoring of the situation   Powys  No representation  Swansea Bay   * 2 field hospitals available   + LLandarcy to open 4/5/2020   + Bay – no confirmed date * Occupancy good across the hospital sites * ‘Business as Usual’ – Aim to start exploring opening surgical and normal activity, no confirmed date as yet   Velindre   * Drop in overall activity * Outpatients repatriated – all centred * Radiotherapy fairly static * Increased inpatient capacity (30 beds to 47 beds) * Acute oncology capacity * Moving towards ‘Business as Usual’ depends on Health Board Plans but remains fairly fluid | JR wishes to thank all Health Boards (and WAST) colleagues in the collaborative approach and ensuring everything is be open and transparent |  |
| **AOB** | | | | |
| **5.** | **Scheduled Meetings** | Joint consensus from DAG members to hold more regular meetings during the current pandemic to share information and to discuss any concerns / issues they may have. Proposed fortnightly meetings for 1 hour via skype / audio conference with agenda to include surge hospitals and ‘Business as usual’ plans. **ACTION: JDJ & DF to arrange** | DAG members encouraged to raise any concerns or issues through the DAG forum. |  |
| **Next Meeting** | | | | |
| **Tuesday 12th May – 10:30 til 11:30**  **Virtual – NEPTS DAG**  **Agenda and Conference Details to follow.** | | | | |