Coleg Nyrsio Brenhinol Cymru
Royal College of Nursing Wales

Royal College of Nursing
Ty Maeth
King George V Drive East
Cardiff
CF14 4XZ

Helen Whyley, RN, MA
Executive Director, RCN Wales

Telephone 02920 680703
Email helen.whyley@rcn.org.uk

Carol Shillabeer
Chief Executive
Headquarters, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
Ysbyty Gwynedd
Penrhosgarnedd
Bangor
Gwynedd LL57 2PW

Tuesday 28 January 2025

Dear Carol Shillabeer,

On Thursday 16 January, the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) released a harrowing report exposing the devastating impact of corridor care on patients and healthcare professionals in hospitals in Wales and across the UK.

Following this, on Tuesday 28 January, RCN Wales published a policy report setting out our recommendations for action to end corridor care in Wales. They include classifying treatment in a chair lasting over 24 hours as a Never Event, as well as a national review of NHS Wales capacity followed up by investment targeted where it is needed most.

Corridor care—the practice of treating patients in hallways, chairs, or other inappropriate settings—has become a daily reality for many frontline health care workers. Overcrowded facilities, insufficient resources, and high patient demand have forced nurses and other staff to deliver care in environments that compromise safety, dignity, and quality.

Continued.....

Coleg Nyrsio Brenhinol y Deyrnas Gyfunol/Royal College of Nursing of the United Kingdom
20 Cavendish Square
Lundain/London W1G 0RN
Ffôn/Telephone
+44 (0) 20 7409 3333
RCN Direct 0345 772 6100
rcn.org.uk

Coleg Nyrsio Brenhinol Cymru Swyddfa Gogledd Cymru/ Royal College of Nursing Wales
Ty Maeth, Rhodfa Ddwyreiniol/
Brenin George V/
King George V Drive East
Caerdydd/Cardiff
CF14 4XZ

Llywydd/President
Bejoy Sebastian

Ysgrifennydd Cyffredinol a Phrif Weithredwr/ General Secretary & Chief Executive
Yr Athro/Professor Nicola Ranger

Cyfarwyddwr Gweithredol Coleg Nyrsio Brenhinol Cymru/ Executive Director of RCN Wales
Helen Whyley

Noddwr/Patron
Ei Fawrhydi'r Brenin Siarl III/HM King Charles III

Mae'r RCN yn cynrychioli nrysys a nyrsio, gan hyrwyddo rhagoriaeth mewn arfer a llunio polisiau iechyd

The RCN represents nurses and nursing, promotes excellence in practice and shapes health policies

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
Rydym yn buddsoddi mewn llesiant Arian

Mae'r Coleg Nyrsio Brenhinol yn Goleg Brenhinol a sefydlwyd drwy Siarter Frenhinol ac Undeb Llafur Cofestr Arbennig a sefydlwyd a dan Ddeddf Undebau Llafur (Cydgrynhoi) 1992.

The RCN is a Royal College set up by Royal Charter and a Special Register Trade Union established under the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

Corridor care is happening in your health board. The testimonies below, all from within your health board, show its impact on your nursing staff, RCN members, and patients.

> *"Community hospitals in Betsi used a dining area for patient care – these areas have no piped oxygen or suction."*
>
> *"A lady in her nineties was sent back to the waiting area after being triaged in A&E in Betsi. Not accompanied by any relatives, wheelchair bound, wanted assistance to go to the toilet – accidentally urinated herself and another patient helped her to the toilet."*

One of your health board's core values is "putting patients first". I am sure you agree that this is not the standard of care that your health board aims to deliver.

Nursing staff work tirelessly day and night to provide the highest standard of care for patients. But the normalisation of corridor care severely hinders their ability to do that. RCN Wales members are no longer willing to tolerate this unacceptable situation.

This issue needs urgent action at a Welsh Government level, and I have written to the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care to that end. However, action must also be taken at the health board level as you have a duty, under Section 25A of the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016, to take into account the importance of sensitive nursing care. No amount of skill or effort can make corridor care "sensitive". It is inherently intolerable.

Our recommendations published in today's briefing are clear, achievable actions that can improve transparency and ultimately put an end to corridor care.

Given the severity of RCN Wales's concerns, I am urgently seeking your assurance on the actions Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board is taking to make sure that corridor care is eradicated. Specifically, I would welcome details on the following:

- Staffing level increases where areas are above the planned capacity.
- Compliance with the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 25A and 25B duties.
- Activity on the Welsh Government's 50-Day Challenge and whole-system care pathways.

Continued.....

Coleg Nyrsio Brenhinol y Deyrnas Gyfunol/Royal College of Nursing of the United Kingdom
20 Cavendish Square
Lundain/London W1G 0RN
Ffôn/Telephone
+44 (0) 20 7409 3333
RCN Direct 0345 772 6100
rcn.org.uk

Coleg Nyrsio Brenhinol Cymru Swyddfa Gogledd Cymru/ Royal College of Nursing Wales
Ty Maeth, Rhodfa Ddwyreiniol/
Brenin George V/
King George V Drive East
Caerdydd/Cardiff
CF14 4XZ

Llywydd/President
Bejoy Sebastian

Ysgrifennydd Cyffredinol a Phrif Weithredwr/ General Secretary & Chief Executive
Yr Athro/Professor Nicola Ranger

Cyfarwyddwr Gweithredol Coleg Nyrsio Brenhinol Cymru/ Executive Director of RCN Wales
Helen Whyley

Noddwr/Patron
Ei Fawrhydi'r Brenin Siarl III/HM King Charles III

Mae'r RCN yn cynrychioli nrysys a nyrsio, gan hyrwyddo rhagoriaeth mewn arfer a llunio polisiau iechyd

The RCN represents nurses and nursing, promotes excellence in practice and shapes health policies

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
Rydym yn buddsoddi mewn llesiant Arian

Mae'r Coleg Nyrsio Brenhinol yn Goleg Brenhinol a sefydlwyd drwy Siarter Frenhinol ac Undeb Llafur Cofestr Arbennig a sefydlwyd a dan Ddeddf Undebau Llafur (Cydgrynhoi) 1992.

The RCN is a Royal College set up by Royal Charter and a Special Register Trade Union established under the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

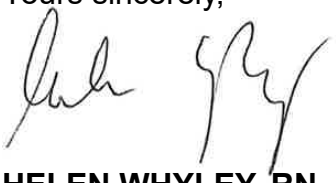
Please provide me with details of all your actions as a matter of urgency.

The lives and safety of patients are at risk.

If you would like to meet with me to discuss this letter, please contact my office as detailed above.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,



HELEN WHYLEY, RN, MA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RCN WALES

Coleg Nyrsio Brenhinol y Deyrnas Gyfunol/Royal College of Nursing of the United Kingdom
20 Cavendish Square
Lundain/London W1G 0RN
Ffôn/Telephone
+44 (0) 20 7409 3333
RCN Direct 0345 772 6100
rcn.org.uk

Coleg Nyrsio Brenhinol Cymru Swyddfa Gogledd Cymru/ Royal College of Nursing Wales
Ty Maeth, Rhodfa Ddwyreiniol/
Brenin George V/
King George V Drive East
Caerdydd/Cardiff
CF14 4XZ

Llywydd/President
Bejoy Sebastian

Ysgrifennydd Cyffredinol a Phrif Weithredwr/ General Secretary & Chief Executive
Yr Athro/Professor Nicola Ranger

Cyfarwyddwr Gweithredol Coleg Nyrsio Brenhinol Cymru/ Executive Director of RCN Wales
Helen Whyley

Noddwr/Patron
Ei Fawrhydi'r Brenin Siarl III/HM King Charles III

Mae'r RCN yn cynrychioli nrysys a nyrsio, gan hyrwyddo rhagoriaeth mewn arfer a llunio polisiau iechyd

The RCN represents nurses and nursing, promotes excellence in practice and shapes health policies

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
Rydym yn buddsoddi mewn llesiant Arian

Mae'r Coleg Nyrsio Brenhinol yn Goleg Brenhinol a sefydlwyd drwy Siarter Frenhinol ac Undeb Llafur Cofestr Arbennig a sefydlwyd a dan Ddeddf Undebau Llafur (Cydgrynhoi) 1992.

The RCN is a Royal College set up by Royal Charter and a Special Register Trade Union established under the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.