



# VSG PPG

## Special Welsh Patient Edition Good News from the PPG

Following our January 2025 PPG Newsletter in which we highlighted the very significant issues regarding referrals of our Welsh patient residents to the Wrexham Maelor Hospital (WMH) and other Welsh health services, we are pleased to advise that we are confident that the position has now been resolved. A huge 'thank you' to those patients and others who swiftly contacted the WMH, local and national Welsh MPs and the Betsy Cadwallader University Health Board (BCUHB). Whilst the Surgery has found this issue almost impossible to reconcile over many months, it would seem that both the 'patient voice' and 'potential voters' have been listened to and action taken.

For information, we have provided ample evidence to the BCUHB of refused referrals of our Welsh patient residents, where categorically that refusal was based on the patient having an English GP. Whilst the BCUHB (*see their statement below*) claim that no policy changes have been made, they now accept that patient referrals have been refused and will ensure this does not happen in the future.

### Statement from Betsy Cadwallader University Health Board

I can confirm that there has not been any change to cross-border referral routes with regards to Welsh residents registered with an English GP, and the Health Board has not made any such instruction regarding this.

Welsh Government policy is that Welsh residents should usually be treated within NHS Wales services where this is feasible, albeit there is some flexibility to take account of local geography, or where individuals require specialist treatments not routinely available in North Wales.

Therefore, please be reassured that GPs in England can continue to refer patients that are Welsh residents to the Health Board, including but not limited to the Wrexham Maelor Hospital.

**Michael Evans, Complaints Manager / Rheolwr Cwynion**, Ffon . Tel 03000 851234, E-bost .  
E-mail [BCU.ComplaintsTeam@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:BCU.ComplaintsTeam@wales.nhs.uk)

As an NHS England Practice, your Village Surgeries Group (VSG) has no contracts with NHS Wales and receives no funding from them. Since the division of the NHS into the devolved nations, Welsh patient residents have had the choice of being referred either to a Welsh or English service. This has always made perfect sense to us in relation to our proximity to the Welsh border. We are delighted that the BCUHB has confirmed that, in future, **ALL** referrals will be accepted from our Practice for our Welsh patient residents. We are equally delighted that this misinformation (*not on our part*) has now been addressed and to the benefit of those of our patients who live across the border. Positively too, the VSG now has a designated contact at the BCUHB to whom we might report any future refusals, should they occur. We trust this will not be the case.

Your Patient Participation Group (PPG) is delighted that common sense has prevailed and we thank you for your immediate support. There are, however, a number of 'cross border' issues which remain. It would be very helpful to have Welsh patient participation at future PPG meetings. These are held monthly and alternate between ZOOM and face-to-face meetings (held in both Tattenhall and Farndon). Please follow the link below for information about the group and the dates of meetings for 2025. We look forward to seeing you. **PPG LINK - PPG**

The patient voice, democracy and common sense have resolved this issue.

Best wishes from your PPG and VSG.

10 January 2025

