



Member of Parliament for Preseli Pembrokeshire

Vaughan Gething AM  
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services  
Welsh Government  
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*Dear Vaughan -*

I am writing to you in relation to the announcement by Hywel Dda University Health Board yesterday of its favoured option for restructuring hospital services in West Wales following a three month consultation. You will be aware of the strength of feeling in Pembrokeshire about the potential changes and, specifically, the proposal that A&E should move further east away from the local population centres in the county.

I would like to invite you to meet with me and other local representatives in Pembrokeshire to discuss what happens next in relation to these changes. The Health Board are asking Pembrokeshire people to accept the downgrading of Withybush Hospital with a promise of a new hospital facility to be built somewhere between Narberth and St Clears. Yet there has been no public announcement about what funding is available to deliver such a facility or where precisely it would be built. These are decisions that require the active involvement of Welsh Government.

The fear among people in Pembrokeshire is that there is now a green light for further cuts to services at Withybush but no firm commitment that a new facility will actually be built. If local people are to have any confidence at all in the strategy that the Health Board and Welsh Government are pursuing then there needs to be much clearer information about these next steps.

I am sure you have been informed about the anger and dismay in Pembrokeshire that, yet again, local views have been overlooked when it comes to the downgrading of our hospital services. The Health Board have confirmed that the overwhelming majority of responses to the consultation came from this County. This was precisely because Pembrokeshire had most to lose from all the options that were put forward. 40,000 local people signed the petition against the proposals and it would appear that their voices have been completely ignored.



I hope you will accept this invitation to visit Pembrokeshire and meet with us. This will be an important opportunity for you to hear directly from people who will be affected by the changes and for you to outline the Welsh Government's ultimate intentions for hospital services in West Wales. For twelve years Withybush Hospital has been under a constant shadow of the repeated attempts by previous Ministers to downgrade its status and move vital services east to Carmarthen. This situation has helped to create the very recruitment crisis that we are told is the fundamental reason behind the dramatic changes now being taken forward.

I look forward to hearing from you. I am happy to discuss with your team the venue and format of the meeting, but I hope you will be able to give an early commitment in principle.

Kind regards. *Stephen Crabb*

**Rt Hon Stephen Crabb MP**