



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Betsi Cadwaladr  
University Health Board

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Block 5, Carlton Court, St Asaph Business  
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To GPs, Opticians and Dentists

**Ein cyf / Our ref:** EM/T19E04381

**Eich cyf / Your ref:**

**☎:** 01745 448788 ext 6364

**Gofynnwch am / Ask for:** Philippa Pearce

**E-bost / Email:** Philippa.Pearce@wales.nhs.uk

**Dyddiad / Date:** 28<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Dear Colleague,

### **Referrals from North Wales to the Countess of Chester Hospital**

Further to the recent letters regarding referrals for patients from North Wales to the Countess of Chester Hospital (CoCH).

I am pleased to advise that the cross border funding arrangements have now been resolved at a national level, which has enabled the Health Board to sign another 12 month contract with CoCH to continue our longstanding and successful relationship of cross border working. Consequently, CoCH have written to the Health Board today to advise they will now accept new referrals for Welsh patients.

This means that GPs, Opticians and Dentists in the East Flintshire area (the border practices), can recommence direct referrals into the CoCH with immediate effect. However, please note, as was previously the case, patients from other areas across North Wales should continue to be referred into Health Board services in the first instance

The CoCH are pleased to re-open for referrals in all specialties apart from Oral Maxillo Facial where they have continuing unexpected short-term staffing pressures and have therefore requested that we support them with this, by ensuring that Welsh referrals are not sent to them for a further 3 weeks.

Additionally, the CoCH has also asked the Health Board to advise referrers that they are experiencing very high demand in some specialties and they have provided the following table outlining average waits; although they advise that the wait at individual patient level is dependent upon clinical circumstances and urgency. CoCH are working hard to address capacity issues in the medium to long term but please consider the waits when referring new patients at this time.

<b>Speciality</b>	<b>Average Wait Time</b>
Cardiology	22 weeks
Colorectal Surgery	17 weeks
Dermatology	19 weeks
ENT	20 weeks
Gastroenterology	20 weeks
Gynaecology	22 weeks
Pain Management	16 weeks
Plastic Surgery	19.3 weeks
Respiratory	40 weeks
Urogynaecology	23 weeks
Urology	27 weeks

Please note, any referrals sent to CoCH in the last week have been accepted.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support whilst the temporary closure was in place, we appreciate all the efforts taken in Primary Care to ensure that patients were referred to the most appropriate place for treatment and in managing patients expectations.

If you have any queries with regard to accessing CoCH services, please contact the Contracting Finance Team on 01352 803286 in the first instance.

Yours sincerely



**Evan Moore**  
**Cyfarwyddwr Meddygol Gweithredol**  
**Executive Medical Director**