

£20million to support Welsh NHS and partners this winter

Funding of £16m will be allocated to Local Health Boards to support delivery of actions featured in local integrated winter delivery plans alongside the ambulance service, Local Authority and third sector partners.

This money will help people to access care closer to home, ensure there is sufficient available hospital capacity and to help people to leave hospital for home when they are ready.

The remaining £4m will fund nationally agreed priorities for the winter period. This funding will be targeted at:

- Extending GP access into evenings and weekends, as well as bank holidays in some areas, to help people access care closer to home
- Supporting older people who have fallen and are not injured to remain in their homes or care homes
- Increasing the number of paramedics and nurses in the ambulance clinical contact centres to provide advice over the phone and help prevent unnecessary journeys to hospital
- Increasing capacity in Emergency Departments to support patient flow and to help resettle older, frail people at home following assessment in the department
- Spreading good practice across Wales from an award winning Welsh Ambulance Service pilot to use highly skilled paramedics to help keep people at home
- Supporting the 'My Winter Health Plan' initiative to help clinicians who visit people at home understand more about their long term conditions and prevent admission to hospital where alternative care would better meet their needs.

The funding announced today is on top of the £5 million announced last week to help relieve pressure on critical care units and the £10 million announced for delivering sustainable social services.

Vaughan Gething said:

"Last winter was one of the most difficult the NHS has faced in several years.

"Blizzard and freezing conditions, more people using GP and emergency care services, increased admissions to hospitals for older people with complex conditions together with the largest number of flu cases since the pandemic in 2009 meant our NHS was under unprecedented pressure.

"It's testament to our excellent staff across the NHS, social services and third sector at every level, that the vast majority of

patients received timely and high quality care. There's always more that can be done to ensure that the Welsh NHS and local authorities are ready for whatever winter brings. Considering staff well-being is a part of that.

"We have learned from our experiences of previous winters and the £20million I've announced today will support NHS Wales and its partners to enhance delivery of the whole health and care system in the coming months.

"I have made the decision to allocate this funding earlier than in previous years to ensure local health and care teams are as prepared as they can be for the winter to come."