

Health Secretary responds to Tawel Fan report

Responding to the independent Health and Social Care Advisory Service (HASCAS) report published today (3 May), Mr Gething said whilst it did not substantiate previous claims of institutional abuse or neglect on the Tawel Fan ward, the report highlights failings of governance which have compromised care.

He said:

“This report is the result of a very extensive and thorough investigation into the care and treatment provided to patients on the Tawel Fan Ward of the Ablett Unit at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd.

“Whilst the report does provide the very important reassurance that they could not substantiate previous claims of institutional abuse or neglect, it does reinforce wider failings within the health board. It highlights the need for more rapid attention to secure improvements across a range of areas, whilst recognising that some of that work is already underway. Overall the report makes it very clear there is still some way for the health board to go and this will require further focused oversight under the special measures arrangements.”

The Health Secretary urged caution about jumping to conclusions about the apparent contradiction in the conclusions of the HASCAS investigation and some earlier reports.

“The HASCAS investigation had a much wider remit and unlike the previous report, was able to access a comprehensive set of documentation, including clinical records, and draw in specific mental health expertise,” he said.

Mr Gething added:

“This is a very substantial report that warrants further careful reading and consideration. I will be discussing the report with the health board and responding more fully in due course.

“Whilst this will be very difficult day for both families and staff of BCU who were involved or affected by the investigation, I would hope that these HASCAS findings can act as a catalyst to the lifting of a dark shadow that has extended over mental health services in North Wales for a number of years.”