

NHS Wales responds to busiest January on record

NHS Wales Chief Executive, Andrew Goodall, said:

“Our latest figures show that last month was the busiest ever January on record for our A&E Departments. A&E attendance by those aged 85 and over, was the second highest ever for any month on record. Flu has also had an impact on capacity across our system with the highest rates for six years.

During this busy time, our NHS and social care staff have continued to deliver emergency and planned care with compassion and professionalism. I would like to thank them for their exceptional commitment and hard work during this extremely challenging period.

Despite the increased workload, their second highest month of activity on record, the Welsh ambulance service maintained its record of meeting the national target for responding to red calls in every month since the new response model began.

We have worked closely with health boards and partners to develop plans for the winter period, and invested an extra £60m to deliver emergency care and ensure planned care can continue. Despite increased pressure, the number of people having to wait more than 36 weeks for treatment actually decreased at the end of December and we expect to see reductions in waiting times up to the end of March. More cancer patients were treated within the target time in January to December 2017 than in any previous year.

We continue to invest in social services to support our healthcare system and despite the exceptional demand the numbers of Delayed Transfers of Care were the third lowest December on record. This month, the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services announced an additional £10m for social services to support people in their homes and communities and relieve pressure on the NHS.

We will continue to respond to areas of performance that need to be improved but despite record levels of demand on service, our staff have provided a resilient and professional response to support patients this winter.”