

£3m funding provided for new endoscopy and day surgery services at Wrexham Maelor Hospital

The two modular theatres are planned to open in March 2018.

This capital funding, will enable the health board to address infrastructure issues which have led to the closure of two theatres in 2016, and an endoscopy suite earlier this year.

The Health Board have put in place systems to mitigate the current disruption to these services at Wrexham Maelor Hospital. This includes the hire of two mobile theatres for a six month period which the Health Board will fund and will be in place by January 2018. The funding announced today for the two modular theatres will provide new, more robust facilities for the people of Wrexham and the surrounding area for at least the next 10 years.

Health Secretary, Vaughan Gething said:

“Ensuring the people of Wales have access to up-to-date healthcare services in a safe environment is a priority. I’m pleased to announce over £3m worth of funding for Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to take the necessary steps to improve facilities at Wrexham Maelor Hospital.

“Moreover, this will enable health professionals to work efficiently, providing high quality patient care for patients in Wrexham and the surrounding area, and meet the required performance standards.”

Chief Executive of Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, Gary Doherty said:

“We have been working closely with Welsh Government since the closure of the theatres in the Wrexham Maelor Hospital and we are delighted that funding has been awarded to install two new modular theatres for day case surgery. Through the addition of local capital resources we will also install an endoscopy suite.

“We are pleased that we have been able to take swift action to improve this situation. These new facilities will ensure that people in Wrexham and the surrounding area will continue to receive a high quality service going forward.”

Minister pops in to see new welcome homes

After meeting new residents, and representatives from Caerphilly CBC and United Welsh Housing Association, the Minister was shown around the new development of one bedroom apartments and two bed homes.

The Cwrt Yr Orsaf Dan scheme is on the site of the former Bargoed Fire Station and was developed by United Welsh Housing Association in partnership with Caerphilly County Borough Council, and WRW Construction Ltd.

The Welsh Government has provided grant funding of £1.4 million for this scheme which is also providing much-needed smaller properties, for those people in the borough affected by the so-called bedroom tax.

The Minister said:

“Having a decent home in a safe community has been proven to have a positive influence on health and wellbeing and plays an important role in improving life chances.

“Investing public money in building and refurbishing homes also contributes to national and local economies, creating and supporting jobs and training opportunities.

“This is also an excellent example of the benefits of partnership working between Welsh Government, local authorities and RSLs in order to achieve our ambitious affordable homes target. Meeting this target will of course be challenging, but it is one we are determined to meet head on.”

New Accessible Information Standard to ensure people with sensory loss can access information that ‘Makes Sense’.

The Health Secretary has unveiled improvements to the All Wales Sensory Loss Standards, which help ensure people with sensory loss get information about services they can access and understand, as well as any communication support

they need.

From this month, GP surgeries in Wales are being asked to identify and record the information and communication needs of their patients with sensory loss issues. The system will give GP surgery staff the tools they need to meet a patient's needs, such as how to generate letters in large print and add prompts to medical records.

The second phase will ensure that when a GP surgery refers a patient to hospital, their information and communication needs will be automatically sent with the referral, therefore increasing the likelihood of these needs being met.

At present, very little information of this kind is routinely captured and recorded in GP surgeries and hospital departments. This means it can be difficult to safely and effectively share information about a patient's communication needs within and between GP surgeries, hospital departments and other healthcare services.

Sensory loss affects people of all ages and there are more than 600,000 people in Wales with hearing or sight loss or a combination of both. These problems are particularly common in older adults with 70% of the population aged over 70 and over living with hearing loss and 1 in 3 people over the age of 85 living with sight loss in Wales.

In 2014, a survey by Action on Hearing Loss Cymru, RNIB Cymru and Sense Cymru reported that only 1 in 5 people surveyed had been asked by NHS staff about their information and communication needs.

Health Secretary Vaughan Gething said;

“Health inequality is an issue I’m committed to addressing here in Wales, by putting the needs of service users at the heart of how we deliver key public services, including health.

“People with sensory loss are more likely to experience major health conditions, as well as higher levels of mental ill health, therefore they need to be able to access all areas of healthcare, not just ophthalmology and audiology services.

“I’m pleased we are leading on the ‘It Makes Sense’ campaign this year, which allows us to inform and remind health professionals of their legal obligations, to ensure that people with sensory loss are able to address all their health issues as easily as those without sensory loss. All health boards and NHS trusts will be required to implement the Accessible Information Standard.”

Carers Rights Day: Welsh Government unveil new plans to improve the lives of carers

To mark Carers Rights Day, the Minister for Children and Social Care, Huw Irranca-Davies, has reaffirmed the Welsh Government commitment to carers with £1m to address three new national priorities to further improve the support available to carers by focusing on the issues that matter most to them.

There are 370,000 carers in Wales – around 12% of the population. They provide 96% of the care in the communities across Wales and contribute more than £8.1bn to the Welsh economy every year.

In Wales, under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act, which came into force in 2016, carers have an equal right to have their needs assessment as those they care for. If carers have eligible needs, the local authority must meet those needs through a carers support plan.

The three national priorities are:

- Supporting life alongside caring – All carers must have reasonable breaks from their caring role to enable them to maintain their capacity to care, and to have a life beyond caring.
- Identifying and recognising carers – Carers deserve to be recognised and supported so that they can continue to care. It is vital that carers identify themselves as carers.
- Providing information, advice and assistance – It is important that carers receive the right information and advice when they need it and in an appropriate format.

Huw Irranca-Davies said:

“To mark Carers rights day, I want to say thank you to the thousands of unpaid carers of all ages across Wales for their ongoing dedication, contribution and the invaluable difference they make to those they care for, their families, and the wider community.

“We know that making the difference sometimes means a carers’ own health and wellbeing can become neglected and we cannot let this happen.

“The Welsh Government is firmly committed to ensuring the rights of all unpaid carers are enhanced and protected. Our vision for carers in Wales is one where communities foster a carer friendly approach, identifying and supporting carers so that they are not disadvantaged or discriminated as a result of their caring role.

“For every carer, no matter how many hours of care they provide, caring must be a positive experience where carers feel confident in their caring role and supported to maintain a normal life as possible.”

[Journey's End arrives in Wales for premiere](#)

Starring Internationally-recognised actors Sam Claflin, Paul Bettany, Toby Jones and Asa Butterfield and set in 1918 in the trenches on the front line, the film has already held successful screenings at Toronto International Film Festival and the BFI London Film Festival but this will be its first showing in Wales.

Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

“It’s fantastic to see Journey’s End premiering here in Wales, with this showing particularly timely as we mark the centenary of the end of the First World War.

“I’m delighted to have supported the delivery of yet another high end production in Wales, boosting regional economies and local jobs whilst promoting Wales as a fantastic place to work, visit and film in the process.

“The screening reflects what has been an extremely busy and successful year for Wales Screen and our Creative Sector team, with more than £41 million in production spends recorded in Wales – testament to the skills we have on our doorstep and the stature Wales now holds within the Sector.”

Culture Minister, Lord Dafydd Elis Thomas said:

“Wales continues to punch above its weight when it comes to high end TV and film production.

“Recent years have seen Wales become further established in helping deliver dramas and films of the very highest quality, with Sherlock, Doctor Who, Da Vinci’s Demons and Born to Kill, amongst others, all made here in Wales.

“I’m delighted, today, that we are able to add Journey’s End to that list, and look forward to its cinema release in February.”

The screening this evening will offer BAFTA members and invited guests the opportunity to see the film before release. Hannah Raybould, Director BAFTA Cymru said:

“We’re very much looking forward to screening this new feature which was filmed on location and at Pinewood Studios in Wales, offering access to students from local universities. This ties in perfectly with our ethos of celebrating new Welsh content. It will be the culmination of a year of events to inspire the next generation of creative talent interested in working in film and television here in Wales.”