

Cancer survival rates improving but early detection is key – Vaughan Gething

“Our refreshed cancer delivery plan outlines our ambition to improve outcomes to be among the best in Europe. To do this we must detect more cancers at earlier stages, so that patients can get the most benefit from the treatments available. Our annual report outlines how health boards are reorganising services to achieve this.

“Cwm Taf Health Board has developed a new route for patients who see their GP with non-specific symptoms, integrating primary care and hospital clinicians to work towards a swifter diagnosis.

“Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board has significantly improved its diagnostic services; it is now one of two health organisations in the UK to introduce a digital pathology system. Coupled with Welsh Government investment in scanning technology, waiting times and travel times for patients in North Wales have significantly reduced.

“In Abertawe Bro Morgannwg, patients with a suspicious chest X-Ray are now routinely booked in for a CT scan, removing the delay involved in the GP requesting further investigations.|

“Sadly cancer is affecting increasing numbers of people in Wales. The NHS is responding and treated 8% more people in 2015/16 compared to five years earlier; with 11% more people receiving their treatment within the cancer waiting time target.

“We have increased spending on cancer from £307million in 2011-12 to £409million in 2014-15; we have invested nearly £10million for replacement linear accelerators and allocated £15m in this year’s budgets for improvements in diagnostic technology.

“Cancer survival continues to improve but we know there is more work to do. We are committed to continuing to improve and to deliver the best treatment and care to people with cancer in Wales.”