

Bodoli anghenion pobl sy'n
agored i niwed sy'n wynebu
heriau bywyd cymhleth

Meeting the needs of
vulnerable people facing
complex life challenges

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To:

HM Assistant Coroner, Kate Robinson

North Wales (East and Central) Coroner

Dear Madam,

**Response of Adferiad Recovery Ltd to the Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths
Inquest touching on the death of Emily Anne Corfield**

We write with reference to your Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths ("**the Regulation 28 Report**") dated 14 July 2023 concerning the inquest touching on the death of Ms Emily Anne Corfield.

On behalf of Adferiad Recovery Ltd ("**Adferiad**"), may I express our deepest condolences to Ms Corfield's family and friends.

May we assure you and the family that the matters set out herein have been carefully and thoroughly considered by Adferiad's senior management team which, we trust, reflects our commitment to place the health and wellbeing of our patients at the heart of everything we do.

Adferiad is a charity and we are funded through various projects by Betsi Cadwallder University Health Board ("**the Health Board**") and the Welsh Government. We are a therapeutic support service and the service in question provides non clinical help and support for people with mental health, substance use, addiction and other complex needs. We are not a crisis service. Our Counselling and Motivation for Addiction Service provides free therapy for those requiring specialist substance misuse psychological

Mae Adferiad Recovery yn
sefydliad corfforedig elusennol
ac wedi cofrestru yng
Nghymru a Lloegr

Adferiad Recovery is
a charitable incorporated
organisation registered in
England and Wales

interventions including: counselling; cognitive behaviour therapy; and access to recovery groups. Our therapists are qualified counsellors with additional training in substance misuse and recovery. Individuals can be referred to us by other health and care providers/professionals and/or they can self-refer.

We set out below our Response to the Matters of Concern insofar as they relate to Adferiad. For ease of reference, the relevant Matters of Concern appear below in blue type and Adferiad's Response is in black type.

1. Matter of Concern 1:

Firstly, evidence was heard during the Inquest that Emily had self-referred on a number of occasions for support to Adferiad (formerly Cais). It could not be established whether or not Emily had received written correspondence from them relating to appointments and/or offer of support as correspondence was not retained by Adferiad. Emily was on occasion closed to the service for not having responded to correspondence. The system at the time was that communicating with service users was in writing only.

It appears that more recently, policies and procedures have been established to ensure that correspondence relating to those who require support and / or contact the service is now retained though these were not provided at the Inquest. Without clear and thorough policies and procedures relating to all contact with service users or those who seek support, the organisation will not be able to adequately monitor the support processes.

2. Response to Matter of Concern 1:

Following a referral to Adferiad, a patient will be placed on our waiting list for an assessment.

Thereafter, at the material time:

2.1 *Our practice was to send hard copy letters to our patients to confirm:*

2.1.1 *They had been placed on the service's waiting list for an appointment;*

or

2.1.2 *They remained on the service's waiting list but an appointment was not as yet available (letter sent 6 weeks post referral). This letter would*

also ask the patient to confirm within 10 days if they wished to remain on the service's waiting list; or

2.1.3 *The time and date of their appointment.*

2.2 *A hard copy of these letters was not retained on the patient's file, but the date on which they were posted to the patient was recorded electronically on the relevant electronic patient file.*

At the inquest, Adferiad's [REDACTED] gave evidence that a new, better system and procedure is now in place, whereby all correspondence is kept electronically on a database, and all calls are logged. The system is the Adferiad Information Management System and is accompanied by the Aims User Guide. All staff have received training on this new system and are aware of Adferiad's requirements. Accordingly, Adferiad's current practice is that: every letter sent to a patient is scanned and stored electronically on our IT system; and every call made to/received from a patient is recorded electronically. In addition, concerning the monitoring of support, the new system, amongst other things, allows a "red flag" to be displayed for those patients who are considered to be a risk to themselves or others, has the option to add viewable risk management plans, records signposting that has taken place and has an internal referral system to refer patients directly to another service. Further, if a patient leaves the service, staff need to input the exit date, reason and other relevant information. Adferiad is updating its service specification to incorporate these requirements. The updated service specification will be implemented and rolled out to all staff by the end of September 2023.

Adferiad had understood from correspondence received from the Coroner's Office on 23 March 2023 that no further documentation was required, and Adferiad was not an Interested Person. Nevertheless, Adferiad understands that matter can arise during the course of the inquest, and it is regrettable that the documentary evidence was not before the court. Adferiad is committed to extending full co-operation to coronial investigations and inquests.

3. *Matter of Concern 2:*

Secondly, it was indicated that due to resource restrictions that communication cannot be by telephone with those requiring support / service users (in writing only) and the waiting time for

support sessions / counselling is long. This will have a detrimental impact and deaths may occur if the treatment and support is not afforded in a timely manner.

4. Response to Matter of Concern 2:

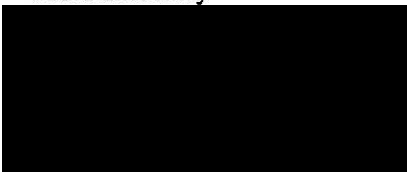
At the material time, our administrators were responsible for sending out the abovementioned letters to patients. They did not, however, make routine calls to patients as this would require a different skill set given that in our experience, when patients are spoken to on the telephone, they often seek therapeutic engagement. Our administrators are not therapists and using our therapists to make routine telephone calls would add pressure to the service in the context of current resources and consequently, add to service waiting times.

Adferiad is, however, currently in the process of seeking a range of updated automated communication routes for the service (such as a text reminder service) and as we proceed with this initiative, we will, of course, continue to have regard to your concern. However, we are unable to guarantee that patients will act on appointments; and/or respond to our telephone calls, messages, visits, or other forms of communication.

We acknowledge your concerns regarding our service's waiting times but , funding decisions concerning the service are matters for the Health Board and/or Welsh Government.

We trust that this Response provides assurance that action is being taken by Adferiad to address the matters raised by HM Coroner.

Yours sincerely



Chief Executive