

[National Assembly for Wales](#)
[Health and Social Care Committee](#)

[Inquiry into the availability of bariatric service](#)

Evidence from the Welsh Intensive Care Society – ABS 03

The Welsh Intensive Care Society

Dr. Paul Morgan,
Chair, Welsh Intensive Care Society,
C/O Critical Care Directorate,
Cardiff & Vale UHB,
University Hospital of Wales.

David Rees AM,
Chair, Health and Social Care Committee,
National Assembly for Wales.

17th January, 2014.

Dear Mr. Rees,

From the Critical Care point of view, there's nothing really to say regarding bariatric surgical services in Wales. As far as I know, only Morriston has ever formally provided specialist weight reduction surgery, so I'm presuming they would be equipped to deal with the issues that might arise from providing this surgical service. Were this service to be extended to other hospitals in Wales, then it would become necessary to ensure that there was sufficient appropriate equipment available to enable staff to provide adequate care for these patients. Every Critical Care Unit already has to deal with patients with serious weight problems and there is currently insufficient equipment to enable staff to provide the necessary care safely. From what I can read in the Consultation letter, it doesn't look as if there's to be any consideration of this problem, which is lamentable. Furthermore, the staff who provide this care are insufficiently trained to provide it appropriately and there is a relative lack of expertise in the UK in how to care for these patients.

The growing problem of obesity in the UK is a major challenge to the NHS and will get worse at least in the short term. My understanding is that there is good evidence to weight reduction surgery can be very effective and is also cost-effective. The Welsh Intensive Care Society supports the principle of providing cost-effective health care and so we broadly support plans to expand bariatric surgery across Wales. However, any such expansion must happen in a co-ordinated fashion so that it's not just surgeons, operating theatres and surgical wards that receive extra funding for equipment and training but also ensuring that other hospital departments are able to care properly for such patients.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Paul Morgan.