

Vaughan Gething AC/AM  
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gwasanaethau  
Cymdeithasol  
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Assembly Members  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

27 February 2018

Dear colleague,

A number of you have raised questions regarding the procurement process for GP systems in Wales that was announced on Monday 29 January 2018. I am writing to all Members to set out the process and decisions made. Most of the correspondence has focussed on EMIS being unsuccessful in their bid to continue to provide GP system services in Wales. Since the Alcatel mandatory standstill period has expired further details can now be made available to set out the rationale for the contract award decision.

The process was led by NHS Wales Informatics Service (NWIS) on behalf of Health Boards. It was undertaken through two structures to reach a decision about the preferred bidders.

The General Medical Services (GMS) Information Management & Technology (IM&T) Programme Board oversaw the procurement. The Programme Board has a membership that includes the General Practitioners Committee (GPC) Wales, Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP), Practice Managers and the Welsh Government.

A subgroup of the Programme Board (Project Executive Committee), on which GPC Wales are also represented, had delegated responsibility to deliver the project. The Committee is chaired by the Director of Primary and Community Care for Cwm Taf University Health Board, Alan Lawrie.

The Project Executive Committee made recommendations to the Programme Board to make the final decision. This decision was then taken to the Velindre NHS Trust Board for agreement.

In respect of the decision reached, NWIS has been very clear that this was not based on cost. A broad range of measures were considered for the scoring of the procurement and EMIS Health Ltd provided a response which fell far short of the tendering requirements. I attach a copy of the joint letter from NWIS, GPC Wales and the Programme Board which has been issued to all EMIS practices setting out the rationale for the decision.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I trust this is helpful and demonstrates the rigour which was delivered around the procurement to ensure the best value for the public purse together with a strong commitment and ability to meet General Medical Service (GMS) requirements, the wider Primary Care agenda and further integration with the NHS Wales' digital services.

If practices within your constituencies have further questions regarding the procurement, I encourage you to speak to NWIS via [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Vaughan Gething AC/AM**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services

To: GP practices using EMIS computer systems

9 February 2018

Dear Colleague

### **GMS Systems Framework Contract Procurement**

Following on from our letter dated 29<sup>th</sup> January 2018 we are writing to you with more information about the decision regarding EMIS Health Ltd.

We recognise that changing supplier is a very significant undertaking and it is disappointing that EMIS Health Ltd submitted a response that fell far short of the requirements despite considerable dialogue at every stage explaining why their proposed changes to the NHS Wales requirements would not be acceptable. This position was not consistent with the responses from Vision (InPractice Systems Ltd) and Microtest Ltd, who were appointed onto the Framework.

The procurement evaluation focussed on ensuring that each supplier offered a system that met the minimum functional requirements, in addition to the wider support, service levels, integration with the Welsh technical platform, affordability, value for money and very importantly the acceptance of risk. These requirements reflect the current GP Practice needs as well as commitment to meet future developments. The requirements that EMIS Health Ltd did not commit to meet are broadly those which they are already signed up to within their current contract with NHS Wales.

Please be assured that NHS Wales offered every opportunity to all suppliers to meet the published requirements. This included awareness of the likely consequences of not fully meeting the requirements and not agreeing to the standard terms and conditions, which are used extensively across the UK for major IT contracts.

In broad terms the changes EMIS Health Ltd requested would, in the judgement of the GMS IM & T Programme Board's Procurement Executive Committee, have left no significant levers to remedy system failures and malfunctions in an appropriate timescale leading to unacceptable risk transfer, both financial and professional, to practices (and NHS Wales).

In addition, at a time when Welsh Government and the BMA are looking at a possibly radical revision of the GMS contract, EMIS Health Ltd were unwilling to sign up to any mandatory system changes required to support any such new contract. This was clearly unacceptable in terms of strategic changes to make the GMS contract fit for the future. Lastly a number of key add-ons including full DocMan functionality would have been at extra cost to the practice rather than included as per the agreed requirements.

Cumulatively, there were too many areas where EMIS Health Ltd only partially met the requirements or made too many changes to the contract drafting, which had a detrimental effect on, or increased the risk position of, NHS Wales. Further information is available in the accompanying Frequently Asked Questions. However, key areas of concern related to:

- EMIS Health Ltd would not commit to the required service levels and resolution of system problems
- EMIS Health Ltd reserved the right to charge extra and defer delivery of a number of core functional requirements
- EMIS Health Ltd reserved the right to reject requests for any future changes in the system
- EMIS Health Ltd imposed restrictions on NHS Wales' ability to manage the supplier to deliver the required availability and performance

At this stage we want to provide further reassurance that resources will be available throughout the transition period to help each practice change supplier. We will also consider the impact of any third party software compatibility issues to try and mitigate any disadvantage to practices.

A Stakeholder Reference Group will be established to help develop the support package and agree the best mechanisms to help practices through the migration process. If you are interested in participating in this group or have any further queries regarding the procurement please email [\[REDACTED\]](#)

Yours sincerely

Alan Lawrie



Chair, GMS IM & T Programme  
Board

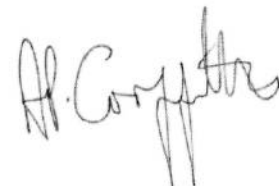
Director of Primary Community and  
Mental Health, Cwm Taf Health  
Board

Dr Charlotte Jones



Chair, GPC Wales

Andrew Griffiths



Director  
NHS Wales Informatics Service