

DonnaOckenden

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Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) has reported that a number of "significant challenges" remain since being placed in special measures two and a half years ago. Earlier in January 2018 a progress report was presented at a BCUHB Board meeting. The report: Special Measures End of Phase 3 Overview outlines the progress made between December 2016 and November 2017.

It refers to the expected improvement milestones issued in January 2016 by the then Deputy Minister for Health. The report states that "Overall, in reviewing progress made across each phase since the health board was placed in special measures, up to the end of phase three, the task and finish group believes that some progress has been made, though significant challenges still remain. In terms of progress, the areas of greatest transformation since 2015 are under the leadership, governance, maternity services, primary care and engagement themes"

Other improvements made include: reducing the number of interim roles of senior positions and a reduction in the need to take on locum doctors in maternity services, medical staff vacancy rate has reduced significantly and midwifery students have been re-introduced into Glan Clwyd Hospital.

A new strategy for mental health services - Together for Mental Health - has been implemented by the Welsh Government. It is part of their 10 year strategy to improve mental health and well-being. BCUHB say they recognise the "significant" scale of the ongoing challenge in improving mental health services across North Wales.

The report goes on to say: "In respect of the health board's input into the wider governance review of older people's mental health services led by Donna Ockenden, and the Health and Social Care Advisory Service (HASCAS) it is acknowledged that both the review and investigations have taken longer than originally envisaged."

A Welsh Government spokesman said: "Progress has been made in some key areas under special measures but more is needed. Our focus is on taking action, investing and putting in place measures to ensure the improvements needed are addressed for the benefit of people in North Wales."