

Leading King's Counsel appointed to oversee review

A leading KC has been appointed to oversee an Independent Review of Maternity and Neonatal services at Swansea Bay University Health Board.

Margaret Bowron KC, will Chair an independent Oversight Panel that will oversee the Review and provide independent scrutiny of both the recommendations emerging from the Review, and the actions needed to implement the recommendations, against agreed milestones.

Based at 1 Crown Office Row in London, with its preeminent reputation in Health Law, Margaret Bowron is a respected KC with over forty years of experience. She is herself both a specialist in healthcare related legal issues and a trained Mediator. She has considerable experience acting in cases involving birth acquired brain injury.

In the last few years Margaret Bowron has been instructed in a number of group actions including claims involving gynaecologists in the North West and South West of England.

She has very extensive expertise of both the clinical issues involved and the devastating impact on patients when things go wrong and is therefore ideally qualified to act independently without fear or favour, following the evidence in an objective and compassionate way.

Commenting on her appointment, Margaret Bowron said:

"I am very pleased to have been asked to take up the role of Chair of the Oversight Panel that will oversee the Independent Review of Swansea Bay University Health Board's maternity and neonatal services. It is vitally important that these services are trusted by service users and the wider population and I am mindful that there has been much concerned debate of late regarding these services in Swansea Bay.

I will be announcing the membership of the Oversight Panel in the near future and the members will be appointed by me. The Health Board will play no role in those appointments. In addition, the draft Terms of Reference for the Review will be considered by the Oversight Panel and will be amended in order to enable a robust review of the services in a way that allows necessary lessons to be learnt and for there to be confidence that the Health Board can and will deliver safe care in future."

Commenting on Margaret Bowron KC's appointment, Emma Woollett, Chair of Swansea Bay University Health Board said:

"Margaret Bowron KC brings complete independence to this review process and I am grateful to her for taking on this important task. To cement the independence of the process, Margaret has been given complete freedom in terms of appointing the remaining members of the Oversight Panel."

“As a Health Board we are committed to providing the best possible care for our service users and that is certainly the case with our hard working staff in our maternity and neonatal services. I hope this review will enable us to show how our services are safe and meet the needs of service users but we are also determined to learn any lessons that need to be learned and make any improvements that need to be made. Our service users deserve nothing less.”

The clinical review team will start its work as soon as the Terms of Reference have been approved. The review is expected to take a minimum of ten months to complete.

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