

South Wales Spinal Network Issues Log

Sponsor:	SRO	Complied by:	ODN
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Please do not adjust the formatting / layout of this log

Remember! An issue is a relevant event that has happened, was not planned, and requires management action

Issue ID	Severity- Moderate, Major, Critical	Description & Impact of Issue	Mitigating Response	Issue Owner (Organisation)	Est. Resolution Date	Escalation required?	Comments & Updates
SWSN.001	Critical	Delayed access to MRI scan has led to delays in diagnosing and treating patients with Cauda Equina Syndrome in South East Wales, which in turn has resulted in suboptimal / poor outcomes for patients. Inadequate provision and convoluted clinical pathways for CES.	All Health Boards should ensure that there is 24/7 access to MRI scanning available for patients with suspected Cauda Equina. Agreement between local radiology and ED services for streamlined emergency fast tracked MRI pathways.	Spinal Network			15/08/2023- ABUHB, C&VUHB, SBUHB have provided assurance to the Network Implementation Board of 24/7 MRI provision within the Health Board. HDUHB & CTMUHB will be providing an update at the next Network Implementation Board 05/09. 05/03/2024 - MRI scanning will continue to be discussed in Network Board until issue resolved. 24/09/2024- CTM to CAV pathway is only applicable to CES. Further solution required. 19/11/2024 - Ongoing issues surrounding 24/7 MRI provision in HDUHB and CTMUHB. 03/12/2024 - SH highlighted that the clinical pathways aren't as convoluted any longer and the delayed access to MRI is documented within the risk register. FB shared that there is still a degree of this risk in the South-East. 18/11/2025- DH shared that radiology team are working a plan through to accommodate within CTM, without need for commissioned service from C&V.
SWSN.004	Minor	Delays in repatriating patients with CES impacts on capacity for admitting elective patients.	All Health Boards should ensure that there are beds available to repatriate patients following investigation / surgery	Spinal Network			15/08/2023- SWSN P02 Spinal Hubs Repatriation Policy has been finalised and circulated to organisations for embedding and circulation ahead of launch in September 2023 05/03/2024 - There is a repatriation policy within the network. Post code related issues will be addressed by the ODN however nothing has been submitted since SWSN go live. Neurosurgeons from C&V and SB will provide input to advise whether this should remain a moderate issue. 19/11/2024 - Post code issues clarified and repatriation policy is live. Remove issue. 03/12/2024- Relatively rare. Patients are brought across for review and assessment, if they don't require an acute operation, will be repatriated. There is still local ambiguity within the primary care pathway regarding Bridgend patients being referred to SBUHB for elective care as some CMATS services are delivered in SBUHB. Issue reduced to minor. 18/11/2025- Issue removed from issues log.
SWSN.006	Moderate	Inability to provide timely clinical opinions to enable swift transfers on a consistent basis due to availability of effective clinical referral information.	Providers to develop digital systems with standardised data sets and ability to auto-forward referrals to network for monitoring purposes. Training and education continual programme.	Spinal Network			15/08/2023- SWSN developing a digital referral form that will launch when the Network launches in September 2023 05/03/2024 - SBUHB have carried out a trial for the digital referral form. 19/11/2024 - Clarification required around the ring fenced bed from C&VUHB and SBUHB. 18/11/2025- Network to develop training & education programme.
SWSN.009	Major	Psychological support for patients with Spinal Cord Injury & CES for patients and the family as per BOAST Guidelines.	Provide for Psychology input to patients. Detail provided in SID 11.	Spinal Network			19/11/2024 - Email Dr Swaroop Shanbhag. Awaiting response. 18/11/2025- Escalate to SWSN governance group +/- board for discussion with UHL representatives.
SWSN.010	Moderate	Regular GIRFT review of the service to benchmark the service with other hospital around the country ie mainly in England.	Invite GRIFT team for review of services across South Wales	Spinal Network			05/03/2024 - There hasn't been a GIRFT review to date. 19/11/2024 - Plan for GIRFT review 2025. 18/11/2025- Escalate to SWSN board for discussion.

SWSN.011	Major	Limited training and knowledge to assess spinal patients appropriately in primary care resulting in delays in the patient pathway which can result in suboptimal / poor outcomes for patients.	Improved sign posting and guidance on the management of patients with spinal pathologies needs to be provided to primary care .	Spinal Network			15/08/2023- Plans to appoint T&E Lead. Vacancy currently with Vacancy Control Panel for approval. Also the developments of front of elective pathway clinical guideline will support this issue. 19/11/2024 - There is no funding for a T&E lead. 18/11/2025- ODN to re-review T&E funding. Escalated to DAG. Severity has increased.
SWSN.015	Moderate	Lack of capacity to provide high quality education for lifelong SCI care - the lack of an education programme for staff is putting patients at risk of complications and extending hospital stays. Lack of adequate care may lead to skin breakdown, bowel and bladder complications and Autonomic dysreflexia	To have a formal education programme in place for SCI Care	Spinal Network			15/08/2023- Plans to appoint T&E Lead. Vacancy currently with Vacancy Control Panel for approval. 19/11/2024 - There is no funding for a T&E lead.
SWSN.018	Minor	Inadequate provision and convoluted clinical pathways for CES.	Agreement between local radiology and ED services for streamlined emergency fast tracked MRI pathways.	Spinal Network			15/08/2023- ODN has established a working group with radiology colleagues from each organisation to streamline emergency fast track MRI pathways. 28/11/2023- Clinical guidelines signed off at Network Board. Health Boards to implement locally. 05/03/2024 - FB addressed that there are still issues for patients being referred into SE Wales. A survey of the pathway is in process. 19/11/2024 - Awaiting outcome from CES Audit carries out by SWSN QI&R Lead. Proposed date March 2025. 03/12/2024 - Issue downgraded to minor and will be considered for removal once the CES CG is fully embedded and understood within the SWTN.
SWSN.019	Minor	The service does not have access to a commissioned designated interventional neuroradiology service for spinal angiograms and embolisation of spinal AV fistulas/malformations.	Designation of provider for Swansea Bay UHB underpinned by formal commissioning arrangement required for interventional neuroradiology to ensure timely diagnosis and management of ad fistulas / malformations.	Spinal Network			19/11/2024 - All cases involving vascular tumours to be discussed on a case by case basis with cardiff spines. Issue reduced to minor.
SWSN.020	Minor	Lack of SBUHB Spinal surgical access to, and integration with, emergency interventional Neuroradiology for Spinal embolisation prior to MSCC surgery for hypervascular spinal column tumours.	Designation of provider for Swansea Bay UHB underpinned by formal commissioning arrangements required for interventional neuroradiology and subsequent spinal surgery. This may involve commissioning the full pathway in 1 provider (IR an surgery) or just IR. If the latter , it must be supported by robust WAST/ transfer protocols. Agreement on hypervascular clinical guideline	Spinal Network			19/11/2024 - All cases involving vascular tumours to be discussed on a case by case basis with cardiff spines. Issue reduced to minor.
SWSN.023	Moderate	The service receives referrals of variable quality with inconsistent information	Develop and implement a standardised electronic referral form for South West Wales.	Spinal Network			15/08/2023- SWSN developing a digital referral form that will launch when the Network launches in September 2023 19/11/2024 - Awaiting trial of digital referral form in cardiff. Issue reduced to moderate.
SWSN.024	Moderate	Lack of adherence by the network to MTN secondary transfer pathways	MTN have developed a working plan to address this incl. improving pathway awareness, communication and adherence to principles of automatic acceptance	Spinal Network			15/08/2023- SWSN ODN engaging with South Wales Trauma Network to ensure both SWTN CG14 and SWSN CG02 align. 19/11/2024 - There is alignment of the pathways. Ongoing engagement with the major trauma service around the patient cohort from a governance perspective. Issue reduced to moderate.
SWSN.026	Major	There is ambiguity regarding which speciality is responsible for management of infection e.g.. Psoas abscess. Medics vs Ortho vs spinal.	CRG review	Spinal Network			05/03/2024 - A guideline will be drafted in 2024. Awaiting CG.
SWSN.027	Moderate	There is a lack of standardised use of StarT back screening tool- due to IT inadequacies, and a lack of physiotherapy resource to implement.	enhance IT systems and physio resource for CMATS	Spinal Network			05/03/2024 - This is within the Front of Pathway document. 19/11/2024 - SH provide an update.
SWSN.029	Moderate	Patients in a specialist SCI centre should have access to speech and language therapy - especially for higher level SCI with swallow difficulties or complications post tracheostomy.	Requirement of addition of Speech and Language therapy sessions	Spinal Network			15/08/2023- SWSN to engage with WSCIIRC to look at what resources available, against what resources are required. 19/11/2024 - Email Dr Swaroop Shanbhag. Awaiting response.

SWSN.030	Moderate	SCI patients need regular urology input for cystoscopy, assessment of bladder management - most SCI patients have bladder issues, and timely surgery for SPC etc. to reduce risk of UTI, renal impairment, improve pt experience.	Need for a fully commissioned Urology service	Spinal Network			19/11/2024 - Email Dr Swaroop Shanbhag. Awaiting response.
SWSN.031	Moderate	Since commencement of MTN, the ODN has noted lack of ASIA charting being performed routinely in SWW for pts with Neurological deficit.	Cascade training to allied health in SWW, WWG in particular where there will need to be formally resourced and commissioned spinal area/ ward.	Spinal Network			15/08/2023- SWSN ODN engaging with South Wales Trauma Network to look at how completion of ASIA charts can be monitored. 19/11/2024 - Update from NV.
SWSN.032	Moderate	Lack of consistent spinal outreach from the SCIC (Rookwood) to neighbouring HBs within 5 working days of request – this is therapy and nursing support and is a MTN quality indicator which we are not meeting.	pick up as part of broader outreach as part of spinal service development.	Spinal Network			15/08/2023- SWSN to engage with WSCIRC along with involvement into the All-Wales Rehabilitation Network. 19/11/2024 - Email Dr Swaroop Shanbhag. Awaiting response.
SWSN.033	Major	Variability of communication at the point of trauma spinal referrals, governance and accountability	develop e-referral systems	Spinal Network			15/08/2023- SWSN developing a digital referral form that will launch when the Network launches in September 2023. 19/11/2024 - Awaiting trial of digital referral form in cardiff. Issue reduced to moderate.
SWSN.034	Moderate	Inability to undertake rapid transfers on a consistent basis due to bed availability.	Demand and capacity exercise to be undertaken within each organisation	Spinal Network			19/11/2024 - Contact Antonio around ring fenced bed for spines.
SWSN.035	Moderate	Inability to undertake rapid transfers on a consistent basis due to theatre and staff availability.	Demand and capacity exercise to be undertaken within each organisation	Spinal Network			19/11/2024 - Contact Antonio around ring fenced bed for spines.
SWSN.036	Moderate	Delayed access to MRI scan has led to delays in diagnosing and treating patients with Cauda Equina Syndrome in South West Wales, which in turn has resulted in suboptimal / poor outcomes for patients. Inadequate provision and convoluted clinical pathways for CES.	SWW now have an active pathway for out of hours MRI scanning.	Spinal Network			18/11/2025- The ODN will continue to monitor the issue and will reflect the severity as appropriate.