Access to GP surgeries continues to improve

The number of GP practices in Wales offering early evening appointments increased over the last year new figures published today show.

Figures for 2012 indicate that 94 per cent of GP practices now offer appointments between 5.00pm and 6.30pm at least two week nights per week with almost two in three practices (63 per cent) offering appointments between 5.00pm and 6.30pm five days a week.

Increasing access to GPs is a key commitment in the Welsh Government’s Programme for Government.

Today’s figures show:

* over two thirds (68%) of GP practices are open between 8am and 6.30pm or within an hour of these times, five days per week;

* the percentage of practices which were closed for half a day on one or more week days has decreased from 19% in 2011 to 11% in 2012;

* almost two thirds (63%) of GP practices offer appointments between 5.00pm and 6.30pm five days per week;

* 11% of practices offered appointments after 18:30 on at least one week night per week;

* 14% of practices offered appointments before 08:30 on at least two week mornings per week;

* The number of practices not offering any appointments between 5.00pm and 6.30pm has decreased (6 per cent of practices in 2011 down to 5 per cent of practices in 2012).

Lesley Griffiths said:

"""The Welsh Government is committed to introducing more accessible GP services so working people are able to access local GP services at a time more convenient to them."""
“GPs in Wales are working hard to ensure they meet the needs of patients within their local area.

"Today’s figures show more people are now able to see their doctor at a time more suitable to them. It is encouraging that the number of practices which do not offer any appointments between 5.00pm and 6.30pm continues to fall.

"We understand there is still more to be done to deliver our commitment and we will continue work to ensure access to GP services fully meet the needs of people across Wales.

"From April 2013, the focus will be on extended opening and access to appointments after 6.30pm."

The statistics are available here: