Helping welsh patients breathe more easily

Patients suffering from long-term chronic conditions like cystic fibrosis and emphysema will be able to breathe more easily thanks to new home oxygen therapy services unveiled by Dr Brian Gibbons today (Tuesday, 7 June).

Air Products has won the contract in Wales to supply home oxygen therapy equipment, including smaller, lightweight cylinders and more efficient oxygen concentrators, to assist patients’ breathing. They will also provide 24-hour support on how best to use the equipment.

The new equipment allows patients to better manage their conditions, meaning they are more likely to be able to stay at home and less likely to have to go to hospital.

The new contract means that the home oxygen service is available from one single provider, rather than the current fragmented service and for the first time the latest oxygen technologies, including new portable equipment, will be available giving people more freedom and independence.

Dr Gibbons said: "Having breathing difficulties can be upsetting and cause a great deal of stress for patients. The new service will ensure that patients have more choice and access to the latest equipment that meets their individual oxygen needs to help improve their quality of life.

"We want patients to have the confidence and support to manage their symptoms at home. This is where they want to be. A better home oxygen service will also help to reduce emergency admission to hospitals.

"The proposed changes aim to improve the system to better meet patient needs and we expect that the new service will be available by the end of the year."

Notes:

Air Products has won the contract for supplying this service in Wales following a competitive tendering process run by the Department of Health on behalf of Wales and England.

The new service supports clinical best practice and has been developed in consultation with clinicians and patients.

The new service will help patients at home control their symptoms and support hospital discharge. Expert advice and support will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

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