



Senedd Members and Welsh MPs

3 October 2022

Dear Colleagues

I would like to share with you again a number of case studies from NHS organisations on what they are proud of. These are collated as part of our monthly NHS Wales Leadership Board. Please find below the highlights from each organisation.

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

A new team has been making positive strides towards improving care after death by integrating bereavement and mortuary teams. The team are involved in every hospital death throughout the health board, working alongside clinicians, to produce a clear and streamlined “care after death” process. The service provides one point of contact for families and hospital staff ensuring timely, sensitive, and delicate attention is provided. The service recently featured in the South Wales Argus and highlighted feedback from families as to the positive impact the service had for them at such an emotional time:

[Aneurin Bevan health board Care After Death team leads the way | South Wales Argus](#)

A recruitment programme for international registered nurses has successfully appointed **50 nurses** through an All-Wales national campaign embracing a Once for Wales approach. In collaboration with Welsh Government and NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership, the programme played a key part in staffing planning, to reduce vacancies and ensure high quality, safe patient care.

18 nurses are already working in acute hospitals with 21 in community hospitals. The next cohort of 6 are arriving at the end of September, with the final cohort of 5 due in October.

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

A new stroke rehabilitation unit to help boost the recovery of stroke patients has opened at Ysbyty Eryri in Caernarfon. This is the first of three new rehabilitation centres across North Wales for patients who no longer need specialist stroke treatment at an acute hospital, but still require stroke rehabilitation that cannot be delivered at home. The centre is supported by a full range of multidisciplinary specialist staff, in order to ensure patients have the best chance of a good recovery from their stroke, and the unit also has a dedicated 12-bedded inpatient Stroke Ward.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

A new Children's Charter has been developed to support children and young people to ensure they have a voice on areas that matter to them. The Health Board, in partnership with organisations and councils across North Wales, held a series of events and engagement sessions for young people to help create the new Charter. The Charter sets out standards that organisations work to in order to make sure children and young people are treated fairly and have a voice. The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Neurodevelopment Services are leading the development of the Charter and have so far engaged with around 2,400 children and young people.

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

First patients undergo robotic assisted surgery in Wales under innovative national programme. The National Robotic Assisted Surgery Programme was introduced by the Welsh Government to improve outcomes for cancer patients by increasing the number of patients across Wales who have access to less-invasive, minimal access surgery (MAS). MAS offers well-recognised benefits to the patients, when compared to open surgery, including reduced pain, scarring and recovery time. Ten colorectal patients have now received successful robotic-assisted surgery with the CMR Versius surgical robot.

A Welsh Pharmacy Award for developments in female health was awarded. The award was received in recognition of the development of Endometriosis Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) for each Health Board in Wales. This work started in 2018, when Welsh Government commissioned a Task and Finish Group to assess the service provision and provide access to care for all girls and women with endometriosis in Wales. This work has led to a CNS being placed in each Health Board across Wales.

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

The Speech and Language team worked with local schools post COVID to support pupils with a stammer difficulty. The pandemic has had a huge impact on the wellbeing and mental health of students who have previously struggled with speech and language difficulties, particularly those with a stammer. The Team recently worked with five primary schools in the area to support their students to receive clinic and online based sessions, as well as one to one support. After the therapy sessions all pupils presented to their classes on 'Helping Pupils who Stammer' demonstrating their understanding of stammering and communicative confidence.

Community Leaders recently came together to discuss next steps on building healthier communities across Bridgend, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil. Between January and July 2022, a series of community engagement events in collaboration with community leaders were held and provided an opportunity to speak with local people about their local priorities and how they can best work together to meet those needs. The events identified a number of key themes:

- Community
- Long term illness
- Ageing
- Healthy Behaviours
- Patient Experience
- Work Life Balance

Community leaders are working with Health Board decision makers to determine how the results of these events are turned into short and long term actions that improve the health and wellbeing of people across CTM, improve service delivery and create more opportunity for collaboration and co-production.

Digital Health and Care Wales

Digital Health and Care Wales has been shortlisted for two UK IT Industry Awards. One is in the category of 'Organisational Excellence, Best Place to Work in IT' recognising organisations providing the best employment and career opportunities for IT professionals as well as demonstrating a positive commitment to diversity and inclusion; and the other, in the 'Personal Excellence' category, recognising the work of our Service Desk Lead in developing the DHCW Service Desk which supports NHS healthcare providers in Wales. Judges will announce the award winners later this month.

Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW)

Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) launches a new flexible portfolio training programme for medical trainees. The programme provides a unique opportunity for medical trainees to develop their interests in postgraduate medical education and sustainable healthcare alongside their clinical training.

There are five fellowship positions available. Two fellowships within the field of Postgraduate Medical Education; and three fellowships within the field of Sustainable Healthcare. <https://heiw.nhs.wales/news/a-new-way-to-train-for-medics-in-wales/>

HEIW is offering bilingual apprenticeships to its employees. This apprenticeship programme has responded to the demand from staff wanting to have the opportunity to undertake their learning and study through the medium of Welsh or bilingually, and currently has supported two apprentices who are learning bilingually (one totally through the medium of Welsh) There are plans to recruit more this year. <https://heiw.nhs.wales/news/heiw-is-offering-bilingual-apprenticeships-to-its-employees/>

Hywel Dda University Health Board

As part of the University Health Board's continued commitment to **decarbonisation and environmental sustainability**, Glanwgili and Prince Philip Hospitals have stopped using Desflurane as an anaesthetic gas because of its greenhouse gas emissions.

In August, the Health Board launched a pilot service in Carmarthenshire, for the **Lung Cancer Symptom Assessment Line (LUMEN)**, aimed at smokers and non-smokers. Funded by Moondance Cancer Initiative, the Phonenumber service hopes to give the public a new access point for Lung Cancer diagnosis, allowing anyone who meets the criteria to speak to a nurse directly to discuss their symptoms and be booked in to have a chest X-Ray. If successful it is hoped that the pilot will be extended to both Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion and have the potential to increase early diagnosis for those with symptoms of lung cancer. <https://hduhb.nhs.wales/news/press-releases/new-lung-cancer-symptom-assessment-line-lumen-pilot-to-launch-in-carmarthenshire>.

NHS Wales Health Collaborative

Last month the **Welsh Health Circular on National Optimal Pathways for Cancer** was published. It outlines the 21 cancer pathways which have been developed by the Wales Cancer Network through the Cancer Site Groups, with representation from all NHS bodies involved in those pathways. In addition to the 21 cancer pathways, the Wales Cancer Network has developed a Vague Symptom Pathway. This reflects the introduction of vague symptom Rapid Diagnosis Clinics (RDCs) across Wales.

Wales and the Wales Cancer Network are leading the UK with this development. For the first time all GPs in Wales will be able to refer patients with serious but non-specific symptoms for urgent assessment. This development and service will support vulnerable patients, who often struggled to access the right service and as a result, previously had poor outcomes. To view the 2022 Welsh Health Circular [click here](#).

NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership

A multidisciplinary team consisting of a number of NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) services, alongside Health Board partners, have been shortlisted in the category for **Digital Finance Project of the Year by Public Finance Awards** for their innovative workforce and finance solution.

Held annually, the Public Finance Awards recognise the people, products and services that demonstrate excellence and originality within public finance with the winners announced at a ceremony which will be held on 29 November.

Powys Teaching Health Board

The **Bach a lach (Small and Healthy) Award** is a Powys-only project to help upskill pre-school and school staff in a range of skills linked to the National Healthy Schools Award. Bach a lach believes that every child has the right to have access to activities that will help them to develop to their full potential as healthy and happy individuals. In order to help to ensure that this happens the HB are providing practitioners with a range of training opportunities, skills, knowledge and supportive resources covering subjects such as cooking and nutrition.

In the last financial year, the team delivered 46 training sessions to over 100 staff from pre-schools & schools across the whole of Powys with all training aligned with the New Curriculum for Wales helping teachers to map it into their Development Plans.

Public Health Wales

A Eurohealthnet article profiling Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) hub approaches within Education systems. The article entitled "*Piloting an approach to act upon Adverse Childhood Experiences and Trauma in Education Systems*", charts the work undertaken initially in schools and then extended to the Further Education and Higher education sectors. It presents a toolkit coproduced to support institutions and those that work with them. [Making education systems sensitive to Adverse Childhood Experiences \(eurohealthnet-magazine.eu\)](https://eurohealthnet-magazine.eu)

The first Screening Centre on a high street in Mountain Ash has opened. The service brings together services for three national programmes: diabetic eye, abdominal aortic aneurysm and newborn hearing screening. It has been designed with public accessibility and the health on the high street concept in mind making it easier for people to attend screening appointments; and the opportunity to be more flexible with times and days of screening appointments. It is also hoped that the increased number of people coming to the high street for screening will have the added benefit of boosting local businesses. It is hoped this new model can be the blueprint for the future of screening in Wales.

Swansea Bay University Health Board

A new service to help relieve irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) symptoms is now available to patients at GP practices across Swansea Bay.

The service, run by the Health Board's IBS lead dietitian, provides specialist advice to people diagnosed with the condition. Once each person's food intolerance has been discovered, they are helped to personalise their diet to help them find a balance that works for them. The aims to reduce the amount of unnecessary invasive investigations, as well as visits to the GP.

Nurses are working to visit patients across Swansea to help keep people healthy and at home and out of hospital. Covering eight GP practices in the western area of Swansea, the nurses carry out regular reviews of people with chronic conditions, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma, diabetes and heart failure, with the aim of preventing hospital admissions and treatment delays.

Velindre University NHS Trust

A study for the collection of apheresis platelets in platelet additive solution commences. At the Welsh Blood Service, platelet concentrates from volunteer apheresis donors are currently collected and stored in the donor's own plasma.

The Component Development and Research Laboratory (CDRL) team are carrying out a study using an alternative method which involves collecting and storing the platelets in a medium made up of about 35% of the donor's plasma and 65% of an artificial platelet additive solution (PAS). Studies point to cold-stored platelets being more effective at stopping bleeding in trauma patients, with other potential benefits being an increase in the shelf life of the units and a reduced risk of bacterial contamination in the units. The team are currently evaluating the study.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. E. Morgan'.

Eluned Morgan AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services