



Senedd Members and Welsh MPs

3 May 2022

Dear Colleagues

As I did last month I would like to share with you a number of case studies from NHS organisations on what they are proud of. These are shared at our monthly NHS Wales Leadership Board.

Below are the highlights and attached is further information about each area from February.

- **Aneurin Bevan's** head nurse for Safeguarding and Public Protection had an article published based on her research on Covid-19 lockdowns and the rise in child exploitation. The article recognises that, when used well, the World Wide Web can be a safe place for teaching and for children to maintain some socialisation by keeping in touch with their peers at a time where isolation existed. On the flip side, it can be used for child exploitation. The article gives advice to professionals on how to support young people to understand the risks.
- **Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board's** community pharmacies are embracing modern technology to enable people to collect prescriptions 24 hours a day. Patients who register for the service receive a text message with a unique PIN, which can be used to securely collect their prescription from a locker on the outside of the store, 24 hours a day.
- **Cardiff and Vale University Health Board's** Primary Care Optometry and Secondary Care Glaucoma teams, along with Gareth Bulpin, National Architect Eye Care Digitisation NHS Wales, have been awarded this year's Excellence in Glaucoma Care award for their work to improve eye care for patients across Wales. This new system allowed patients to choose an appointment more suited to them in terms of time and location. It also enabled improved patient waiting times.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Gohebiaeth.Eluned.Morgan@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Eluned.Morgan@gov.wales

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.

- **Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board's** teams have been working together on creating a new and exciting Long Covid programme for the public. The patient led website gives a great deal of information and help that works like an app to guide people to any queries or questions they may have. The website gives the recovery guidance in a form that is accessible for sufferers, it will include guidance such as 'How can I support my colleagues returning to work' or 'what support is available' for example.
- **Digital Health and Care Wales** have won a UK digital impact award. The digital system behind the COVID-19 vaccination roll out in Wales, the Welsh Immunisation System (WIS), has been presented with the People's Choice Award for its impact during the pandemic at a ceremony in London. The Welsh Immunisation System, which was built in just 16 weeks by a team of software developers at DHCW, works by integrating scheduling with the recording of COVID-19 vaccinations across Wales, within a single application. Key aspects of the product's success have been centralising appointments for mass vaccination centres, sending appointment letters, and two-way SMS texts, ensuring Wales has a successful vaccination programme.
- **Health Education and Improvement Wales** have signed the Armed Forces Covenant Pledge. The Armed Forces Covenant (AFC) is the nation's commitment to those who have proudly protected our nation with honour, courage and commitment. It pledges that together we acknowledge and understand that those who have fought for our country, and their families, should be treated fairly and respectfully in the communities, economy and society they serve with their lives.
- **Hywel Dda University Health Board** has opened a brand-new clinical research centre at Carmarthen's Glangwili Hospital, providing patients access to new research opportunities to patients in west Wales. This new dedicated space will reduce the pressures on other departments within the hospital and makes Carmarthenshire a more attractive site to conduct potentially life-changing research. This centre will offer patients the opportunity to participate in clinical trials that offer earlier access to the very latest treatments and therapies.
- **NHS Wales Health Collaborative** Radiology Informatics System Procurement (RISP) Programme has continued with its timely progress reaching another key milestone, the longlisting of suppliers to deliver the new radiology informatics systems. The contract notice with all the relevant procurement documentation was published in December, ahead of plan, with the evaluation results producing a long list of five suppliers, which was approved at the February RISP Programme Board on 23 February 2022.
- **NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership** has shipped medical supplies including ventilators, bandages and face masked to support the people of Ukraine.
- **Powys Teaching Board's** new state of the art health and wellbeing campus in Newtown has taken a significant step forward following endorsement from the Welsh Government. Early plans for the Newtown campus include looking at relocating Newtown's health provision into a Rural Regional Diagnostics and Treatment Centre, along with an Integrated Health and Care Centre (including social care and third sector provision), a Health and Care Academy, short term supported housing, library and information services as well as shared community space.

- **Public Health Wales** retains its place in the Stonewall 100 Employers list, rising from 100 to 64th place in the rankings. Four hundred organisations take part in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index (WEI) which is a benchmarking tool for employers to measure their progress on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender inclusion in the workplace.
- **Swansea Bay** has launched a highly specialised lung cancer treatment which will offer huge benefits to suitable patients at Swansea Bay's Singleton Hospital. For the first time it will offer Stereotactic Ablative Radiotherapy, or SABR. This is a specialist technique to cure early lung tumours and is more effective than standard radiotherapy for early stage lung cancers.

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

Promoting Excellence: What NHS Wales is proud of – March 2022

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

1. Research Team – COVID Trials

Since the Health Board's Research team has returned from redeployment in response to the pandemic, they have entered the year with a renewed energy to continue recruitment to existing and new trials. This reflection provides a celebratory update on the work that the team have undertaken which contributes to battle against Covid-19.

The **Recovery RS trial** looked at patients with acute hypoxemic respiratory failure due to Covid-19 and was run with the support of the Research Delivery team. The results of this trial were published and co-authored by Dr Sarah Fairbairn, a respiratory consultant at the Health Board. The randomised controlled trial found an initial strategy of CPAP, compared with conventional oxygen therapy, significantly reduced the composite outcome of tracheal intubation or mortality within 30 days.



Our ITU team at the Grange University Hospital are currently the second highest recruiter to the **UK-ROX research trial** in the UK. The trial, led by Dr Tamas Szakmany and research nurse Shinee

Cherian, is evaluating the clinical and cost-effectiveness of a conservative approach to oxygen therapy for invasively ventilated adults in intensive care. So far, we have recruited 196 patients since July 2021. Tamas Szakmany, Principal Investigator for the study said: "It's nice to see that you can make research part of the normal care outside of large academic centres."

We are proud to be the first site in the UK to open the international Janssen commercial study **PSABIOND** for patients with psoriatic arthritis. The study assesses the success of current biologic treatments. The lead doctor at site is Dr Eleri Thomas, and the whole rheumatology team are on board to support the referral of patients. We are aiming to also recruit the first patient in the UK to the study.

The research team continue to find ways to be able to support research throughout the Health Board. One method that has provided success to help clinical staff do this is the introduction of our Principal Investigator (PI) workshops. These workshops provide information on the role and expectations of the PI, how to provide oversight of studies and how to implement networks to give continued support. Due to the success, we plan to continue hosting these workshops every month.

The PI workshops have been delivered by research nurse Emma Heron (pictured).



The Health Board is proud to be committed to research and looks forward to seeing our Research team continue to grow.

2. Published article on COVID-19 lockdowns and the rise in child exploitation

The Health Board is proud to share that our Lead Nurse for Safeguarding and Public Protection, Fiona Bullock, has had an article published this week in the British Journal of Nursing.

The article is in relation to a piece of research that Fiona conducted in 2019 regarding 'Online Child Sexual Exploitation, Grooming and Law'. Following her research being published, Fiona was recently asked to comment on the impacts of Covid-19 on Child Sexual Exploitation and sharing of sexual images online.



In 2021, Ofcom reported that nearly all children aged 5 to 15 went online in 2020 as their education was sought through IT to maintain contact. It was reported that just over half of those children posted or shared their own content.

Fiona's article recognises that, when used well, the world wide web can be a safe place for teaching and for children to maintain some socialisation by keeping in touch with their peers at a time where isolation existed. On the flip side, it can be an obscure, shadowy portal where all types of predators loom, to groom and exploit children.

Fiona gives information about the rise in exploitation and, importantly, how professionals can support young people to understand the risks.

Fiona's article can be found here:



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Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

1. North Wales community pharmacies introduce 24/7 prescription collection service - Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (nhs.wales)

Community pharmacies in North Wales are embracing modern technology to enable people to collect prescriptions 24 hours a day. Boots Pharmacy in Abergele is among the first in the region to introduce an automated prescription locker service.

Patients who register for the service receive a text message with a unique PIN, which can be used to securely collect their prescription from a locker on the outside of the store, 24 hours a day. The machines, funded with support from the Welsh Government, have also been introduced at Fferyllwyr Llyn pharmacies in Dwyfor. They are expected to be introduced at a number of other pharmacies in the near future.

The store in Abergele is the first of Boots' UK pharmacies to introduce an external automated prescription locker service.

Adam Mackridge Strategic Lead for Community Pharmacy at Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, said: "This is a great example of how community pharmacies are expanding the range of services available and the ease at which people can access them.

"This sort of innovation not only provides more convenience for patients but helps to free up staff in the pharmacy to help patients with their health problems.

"We're encouraging more people with minor illnesses or conditions to take advantage of the free, expert advice provided at their local community pharmacy, which can usually be accessed more quickly than other services.

"All pharmacies in North Wales are currently able to provide free expert advice and guidance on treating common conditions and their symptoms, often without the need for an appointment, offering a quick and convenient alternative to seeking support from a GP surgery."

2. Capsule Endoscopy introduced at Ysbyty Gwynedd - Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (nhs.wales)

A tiny camera, encapsulated in a pill, is now being used at Ysbyty Gwynedd to help diagnose abnormalities in the small bowel. Capsule Endoscopy was first introduced in the Health Board at Wrexham Maelor Hospital prior to the start of the pandemic.

Capsule Endoscopy is ideal for investigating obscure Gastrointestinal bleeding (GI) in patients and those who may have inflammation in the bowel from conditions such as Coeliac disease.

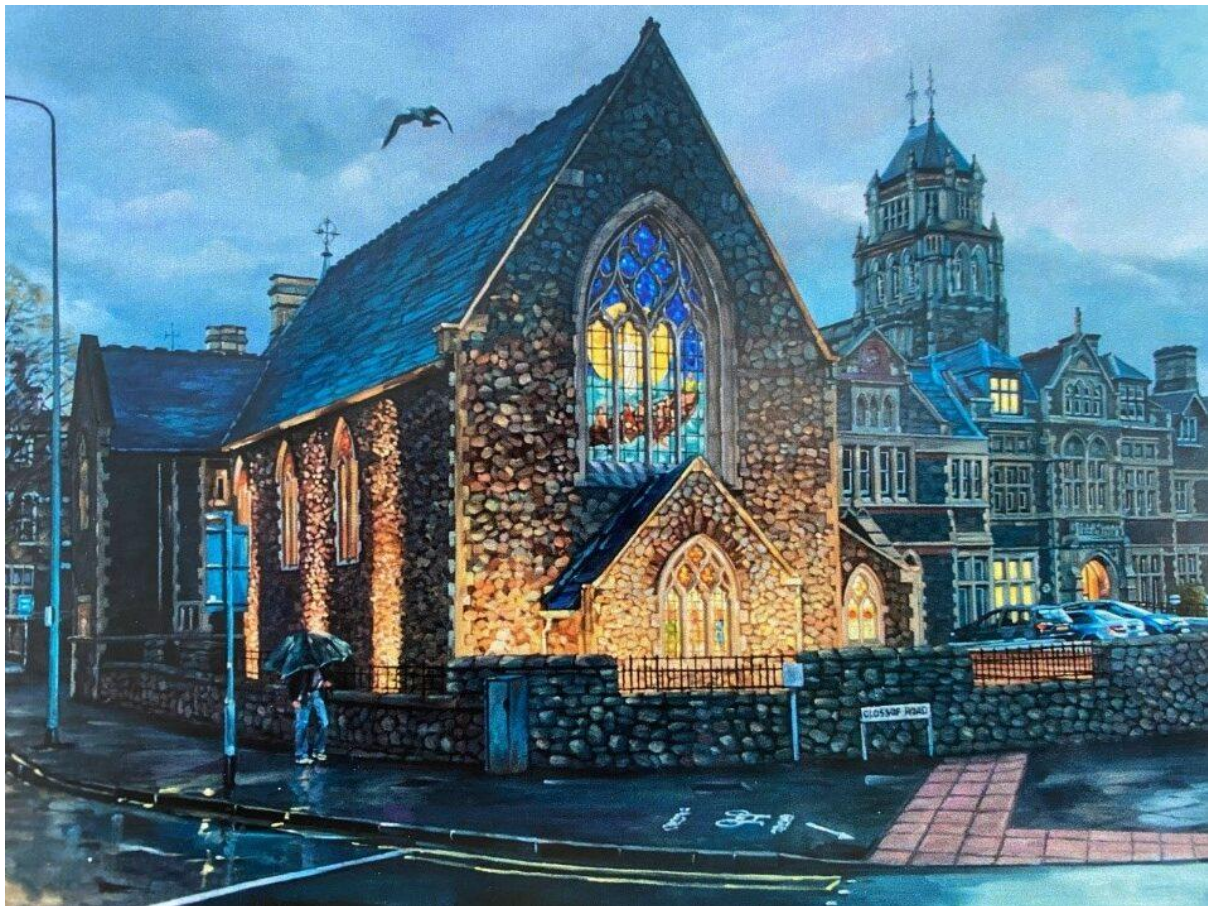
The capsule, which is the size of a large vitamin pill, is swallowed by the patient, who is then free to go back to work or home. On its journey through the oesophagus,

stomach, and small intestine it takes around 100,000 images, which are then transmitted to a data recorder on a belt.

Around eight hours after swallowing the pill, the patient returns to the Endoscopy Department where the belt is removed and the images downloaded and reviewed by a clinical endoscopist.

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

1. Capel i Bawb: Official Opening 17 March 2022



Cardiff and Vale Regional Partnership Board will be hosting the official opening of the former Chapel at CRI, now named 'Capel i Bawb'. Thanks to capital funding from the Welsh Government Integrated Care Fund (ICF) and Cardiff Council and a partnership between Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and Cardiff Council, the iconic, grade II listed building, is now home to health and wellbeing information and advice centre, a new library, meeting spaces, IT suite and an Aroma Café.

Eluned Morgan MS, Minister for Health and Social Services who will be officially opening Capel i Bawb commented ““The beautifully refurbished Capel i Bawb project respects the buildings history whilst giving it new life and a sustainable future. I am delighted that the Welsh Governments ICF capital programme was able to be part of this collaborative project”.”

Cath Doman, Director of Health and Social Care Integration at the RPB, said “We have been delighted to breath new life into Capel i Bawb. It is a fantastic example of how

partners can work together to bring services to communities and make sure we make full use of every space we can – you can borrow a book, catch up with friends over a cuppa and get support and advice all in the stunning and sympathetically renovated Capel.”

Charles Janczewski, Chair to Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, added “Capel i Bawb is part of our long-term plan to bring services into communities and will be a key part of the development of Cardiff Royal Infirmary. We know that it is better to try to help people live well and recover after illness or injury and this space will be able to host a range of support. It’s also a great place to visit while people are at Cardiff Royal Infirmary. I hope people will enjoy seeing the transformation that has taken place.”

Cabinet Member for Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, Cllr Susan Elsmore, said: “The stunning transformation of the old chapel has created a vibrant health and wellbeing facility for local residents and visitors to CRI, and the partnership approach to delivering the scheme has been key to its success.

“Capel i Bawb will provide a valuable resource where patients, service users, carers and the local community can be signposted to relevant and easily accessible information and advice, social learning

“The potential of this new place to support and empower people to manage their own health and wellbeing is very exciting.”

Capel i Bawb celebrated it’s centenary in 2021 and a specially commissioned painting by Malcolm Murphy will be displayed at the opening. This painting was funded thanks to the Arts for Health and Wellbeing Programme funded by the Cardiff and Vale Health Charity.

Thanks to all of the partners involved in helping breathe life into this historic building which many local people hold dear and which will enhance and support the lives and wellbeing of some of our most disadvantaged communities in our city.



2. Collaborative work to improve eye care services wins Glaucoma UK's Excellence in Glaucoma Care award 2022



The Health Board's Primary Care Optometry and Secondary Care Glaucoma teams, along with Gareth Bulpin, National Architect Eye Care Digitisation NHS Wales, have been awarded this year's Excellence in Glaucoma Care award for their work to improve eye care for patients across Wales.

The Excellence in Glaucoma Care Award was designed to celebrate the innovative work being done in glaucoma care. Our teams were nominated on their efforts to improve eye care for patients across Wales by collaborating primary and secondary health care and maximising the use of digital advancements.

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (UHB) and Gareth Bulpin responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by developing a new Electronic Patient Record (EPR) and electronic referral system for eye care in Wales, the first national system of its kind.

This new system allowed patients to choose an appointment more suited to them in terms of time and location. It also enabled improved patient waiting times.

Gareth Bulpin, National Architect Eye Care Digitisation NHS Wales at Cardiff and Vale UHB said: "This is by far the best award to win and means the most. Our work has significantly impacted on the outcomes of patients and, by improving treatment timelines, has prevented those with more complex cases from developing more serious conditions or even sight loss. We are looking forward to seeing the additional benefits we can bring over the next year."

From April 2020 to-date the number of patients being seen on time has continued to increase and is currently 69.1%.

As well as improving patient experiences, the initiatives have also helped to release consultant capacity and clinic space, enabling them to focus on treating complex patients that need urgent care.

3. A little extra something: Florence Nightingale Foundation Scholarship

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board are honoured to announce the fantastic news that three of our very talented nursing and midwifery colleagues Jane Murphy, Lisa Franklin and Maryanne Bray have been selected for the prestigious Florence Nightingale Foundation Scholarship.

Florence Nightingale Foundation scholarships offer nurses and midwives developmental opportunities in order to improve patient care, to extend their knowledge and skills, to improve innovation in practice and to lead in the digital transformation of the NHS at a regional and national level.

Many congratulations to Jane Murphy, Lisa Franklin and Maryanne Bray on this truly incredible and well-deserved achievement.

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

1. New state-of-the-art MR Scanner at POW

An MRI scanner at Princess of Wales Hospital is the first in Wales, and the second NHS hospital in the UK, to receive an upgrade, which provides greater comfort for patients and superior image quality.

The AIR™ Recon DL package is a pioneering, deep learning-based reconstruction algorithm applied to the raw scan data to improve Signal to Noise Ratio (SNR) and image sharpness.

Sharon Donovan, Interim Head of Radiography said: “We are proud to be leading the way in introducing this new technology at Princess of Wales Hospital. As well as significantly improving the comfort for our patients the new scanner will greatly reduce the time it takes to perform a scan. This means that we will be able to see more patients earlier, and that is really important.”

The team at Princess of Wales is also the first in the UK to install a TELEMED projector system. Ceiling tiles above the scanner have been swapped for illuminated panels made up of blue sky, cherry blossom and sunshine to help patients relax.

Sharon explained: “This system brings great benefit to patients, particularly those suffering with claustrophobia and also our young paediatric patients.”

2. Long Covid Programme

CTM UHB Teams have been working together on creating a new and exciting Long Covid programme for the public. The recovery project is a great new resource developed by the patients of the Long Covid support group here at CTM.

The patient led website gives a great deal of information and help that works like an app to guide people to any queries or questions they may have. The website is an idea to take the recovery guidance in a form that is accessible for sufferers, it will include guidance such as 'How can I support my colleagues returning to work' or 'what support is available' for example.

The process of the website being patient led means that they are able to assist with the information and guidance that they would like to have available, which supports what content it will include.

We have had a great response from long Covid patients for their own personal stories, which will also be included on the website.

The website is an exciting new tool, we hope to launch very soon.

Digital Health and Care Wales

1. Welsh Immunisation System wins UK digital impact award

The digital system behind the COVID-19 vaccination roll out in Wales, the Welsh Immunisation System (WIS), has been presented with the People's Choice Award for its impact during the pandemic at a ceremony in London.

The Digital Leaders Impact Awards celebrate the digital technology innovations that improve people's lives or deliver positive social impact. The People's Choice Award is presented to the most popular of all finalists in every category and is decided via a public vote.

The Welsh Immunisation System, which was built in just 16 weeks by a team of software developers at DHCW, works by integrating scheduling with the recording of COVID-19 vaccinations across Wales, within a single application. Key aspects of the product's success have been centralising appointments for mass vaccination centres, sending appointment letters, and two-way SMS texts, ensuring Wales has a successful vaccination programme.

It competed with 36 other national contenders in the People's Choice Award category, including NHS Covid Pass, the UK Cabinet Office, Riverford Organic Farmers and the BT Green Tech Innovation Platform.

Anne Marie Cunningham, Associate Medical Director at DHCW, accepted the award on behalf of the WIS team at a ceremony in London last week. She said: “This is not just for our team and not just our organisation, but it’s for everyone involved in immunisation across the whole of the NHS. It’s been one of the major success stories out of the whole of the pandemic. Once you get vaccinated, your chances of dying of COVID-19 reduce by 80%. We were part of that, and we’re really proud to be part of that.”

Since it was rolled out in December 2020, the Welsh Immunisation System has supported the administering of nearly 7 million COVID-19 vaccinations across Wales and has sent out more than 14 million SMS messages and nearly 6 million letters about vaccine appointments.

2. Broadband upgrade celebrated at rural practice

The upgrade of broadband services to GP practices in North Wales has been celebrated with a visit to a remote practice by Secretary of State for Wales, Simon Hart. The MP visited Caerffynnon Surgery in Dolgellau and saw first-hand how the introduction of lightning-fast full fibre broadband has made such a positive difference to services at the practice.

Practice Manager Sarah Tibbetts said activities such as virtual consultations would not have been possible without the broadband upgrade, which was managed by Digital Health and Care Wales, “We are so rural here” she said, “I honestly don’t know how we would have coped during the pandemic as we depended so much on our IT and digital services.”

Digital Health and Care Wales (DHCW) started work on upgrading practices from 10MG to 80-100MG download speeds in January 2020, and when the pandemic struck the work became even more urgent.

By March 2022, 111 practices, which is nearly all practices in North Wales, had been upgraded. The work was completed at no cost to the practices thanks to UK Government DCMS, and Welsh Government funding. Practices in Cardiff and West Wales have also been upgraded, and work is planned to be completed across all Wales’ GP practices by the end of 2022.

Health Education and Improvement Wales

1. HEIW proudly signs the Armed Forces Covenant Pledge

The Armed Forces Covenant (AFC) is the nation’s commitment to those who have proudly protected our nation with honour, courage and commitment. It pledges that together we acknowledge and understand that those who have fought for our country, and their families, should be treated fairly and respectfully in the communities, economy and society they serve with their lives.

It focuses on helping and supporting members of the armed forces community to have the same access to government, commercial services and products as any other citizen, including:

- education and family well being
- having a home
- starting a new career
- access to healthcare
- financial assistance
- discounted services

By signing the covenant, HEIW commit to:

- developing policies that encourage reserve service
- Actively recruit and support employment of veterans and service spouses/partners
- Offering parttime and flexible working patterns to reservists, military partners and spouses
- Offer a guaranteed interview scheme (subject to candidate meeting the minimum essential criteria as set out in the personal specification)

HEIW demonstrates its intention to support the Armed Forces community and provides the opportunity to be recognised by the Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) award.

Our next steps include applying for the Employee Recognition Scheme Bronze award, developing our policies to reflect our commitment and supporting Armed Forces Day on 25 June 2022.

<https://heiw.nhs.wales/news/heiw-proudly-signs-the-armed-forces-covenant-pledge/>

2. Digital capability framework for healthcare in Wales pilot

Developing digital capability is about more than building a digitally ready workforce. It's true that we all need to use IT systems in the workplace, and that digital health technologies are transforming the way we deliver our services to improve the quality of patient care. More importantly, we know digital participation is linked to better outcomes, for everyone, including improved health and longer life expectancy, decreased loneliness and social isolation, and better access to jobs and education. Our *Digital Capability Framework for Healthcare in Wales* is a practical, interactive tool, for individuals, and teams, to better understand the skills, behaviours, and attitudes required to thrive in a digital world. You have an opportunity to reflect on your digital capabilities and self-assess, using our interactive tool, to identify your strengths and areas for development.

This pilot is open now until 31 March, and everyone working in healthcare is welcome to participate, and to provide feedback on this resource.

We have an initial draft version of the digital capability framework now available for you to explore and provide feedback on:

<https://rise.articulate.com/share/Tz2Nw3VQlvNCVuHvqRS6ksCzjHju90mS>.

This programme of work is an iterative development and implementation so your input at every stage is valued and appreciated. The outputs from this pilot will directly inform the next version of the framework.

As it is a pilot, and not the final version, there are some limitations. It is best viewed on a computer or laptop, we are not storing results, and we are not providing personalised feedback. In the next version we aim to have these features. For now, we are keen to hear your thoughts on the tool, and on the wording of the framework.

Also, if you know of any relevant resources, online or face-to-face, that would be useful to include, then please get in touch, or add them to the comments section at the end of the feedback form and we will include them in the next version.

If you have any issues or questions, please contact me directly: Lee.Ballantyne@wales.nhs.uk

Hywel Dda University Health Board

1. Roof mounted photovoltaic panels for Bronglais Hospital

New roof mounted photovoltaic (PV) panels have been installed at Bronglais Hospital in Aberystwyth, as a part of Hywel Dda University Health Board's ongoing commitment to decarbonisation.

The panels have been installed on the front house at the hospital and will eventually generate approximately 3% of the site's use. This is expected to lead to annual carbon savings of 33.39tCo2e.

The panels will generate electricity, which will be fed into the main hospital supply, and thereby reduce the health board's reliance on purchasing grid generated electricity.

In addition to the panels, the hospital is currently undergoing a process to replace traditional light bulbs with LED bulbs in Blocks 1, 2 and 3. This rollout will be completed by the end of March 2022 and is expected to result in annual carbon savings of 9.76tCo2e, and annual costs savings of £5,872.

In the past few years, the health board has implemented a [range of initiatives \(opens in a new tab\)](#) to reduce our carbon footprint. One such method has been the installation of roof mounted PV panels across seven sites between 2019-22. This includes Amman Valley Hospital, Bro Cerwyn, Bronglais Hospital residences, Milford Haven Health Centre, Pembroke Dock Health Centre, and Llandovery and Cardigan Integrated Care Centres. The panels are estimated to save approximately 419,165 Kwh of electricity and £40,000 per annum in energy costs. Annual carbon savings from these projects are expected to be approximately 106 tCO₂e.

Paul Williams, head of property performance at Hywel Dda University Health Board, said: “We have always been committed to decarbonisation at our facilities, which is evidenced in the range of energy efficiency, low carbon projects that the health board has delivered over the years.

“The PV panels and LED lights at Bronglais Hospital are further examples of the steps we’re taking to tackle the Climate Emergency, which was declared by the Welsh Government in 2019, by tapping on alternate, renewable energy sources.

“Our work however doesn’t end here. Over the next few months, we will continue to share our progress on a variety of planned initiatives to reduce our impact on the environment.”

In 2019, the Welsh Government declared a Climate Emergency. It has a long-term target to reduce all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050, and an ambition for the [Public Sector to lead the way and be net zero by 2030 \(opens in a new tab\)](#)

2. New life changing research opportunities for patients in west Wales

A brand-new clinical research centre has opened at Carmarthen’s Glangwili Hospital, providing access to new research opportunities to patients in west Wales.

This new dedicated space will reduce the pressures on other departments within the hospital and makes Carmarthenshire a more attractive site to conduct potentially life-changing research. This centre will offer patients the opportunity to participate in clinical trials that offer earlier access to the very latest treatments and therapies.

The £250,000 investment has seen the development of bespoke clinical rooms to treat and monitor patients and a multifunctional lab space with state-of-the-art facilities to enable sample processing independently from other busy departments.

Opening the research centre was Hywel Dda University Health Board’s Chief Executive Officer, Steve Moore, and Chair, Maria Battle, who were joined by the research team.

Leighton Phillips, Director of Research and Innovation at Hywel Dda University Health Board, said: “During the past two years our research efforts have rightly focused on the urgent public health studies developing treatments and the impact of COVID-19. This new clinical research centre will allow us to continue with our research into key areas such as orthopaedics, oncology and fertility.

“We’re so grateful for the support and investment from Health and Care Research Wales and the health board to develop and future-proof research in Wales and the team has gone above and beyond in supporting our growth in this area.

“Research is another element of a patients care and for some people we see them every month for 10 years so to have a new space to conduct that research is really important as this research could improve or even save not only their lives but for those in the future.”

Director of Support and Delivery Centre at Health and Care Research Wales, Dr Nicola Williams said: “We have several clinical research centres across Wales which means we are able to provide as many opportunities as possible for Welsh people to participate in research in their local area. Having dedicated space for people taking part in research means we can offer more research opportunities to more people, without impacting on other clinical services”.

NHS Wales Health Collaborative

1. RISP continues its successful delivery

The Radiology Informatics System Procurement (RISP) Programme has continued with its timely progress reaching another key milestone, the longlisting of suppliers to deliver the new radiology informatics systems.

The contract notice with all the relevant procurement documentation was published in December, ahead of plan, with the evaluation results producing a long list of five suppliers, which was approved at the February RISP Programme Board on 23 February 2022.

An Invitation to Participate in Dialogue (ITPD) document was published on 24 February, the aim of which is to produce a short list of up to 3 bidders to invite to dialogue and subsequently to tender, to provide a solution that will enhance and support the future provision of imaging services in NHS Wales.

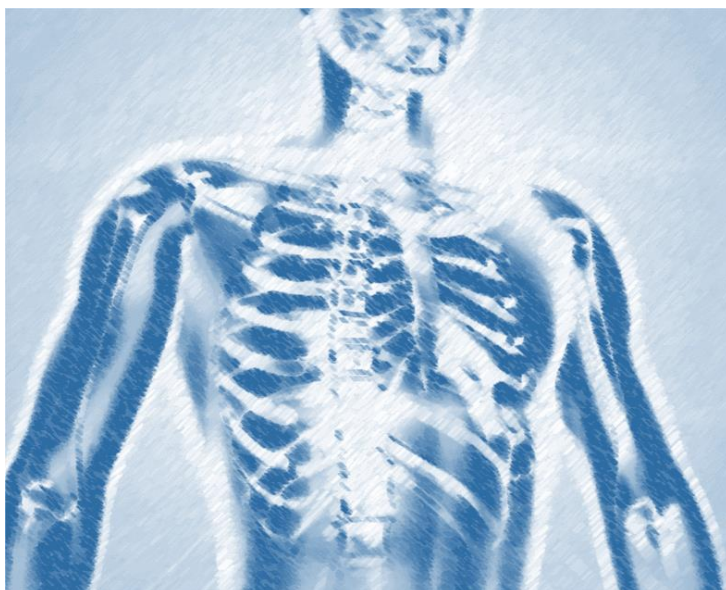
Lynne Burrows, the RISP Senior Programme Lead said *“The programme is on plan and continuing to push forward at pace, with all key projects having been established. Much of the focus in this tranche is on the procurement which is due to complete April 2023. But in addition, projects have been established to progress business change which include standardisation and benefits management planned to continue and develop throughout the entirety of the Programme and beyond”*.

Benefits that RISP will bring include:

- Improved patient safety, with an electronic auditable trail from request to results acknowledgement. (for example, NPSA 16 2007¹ and HSIB² reports on failures to acknowledge and follow-up on radiological imaging reports)
- Reduced risk of repeat examinations and inappropriate radiation dosage.
- Effective and efficient MDT meetings supporting cross health board boundary workings and streamlining patient care.
- Improved imaging workflow, enabling timely delivery of service, and the ultimate output of an imaging examination, a report available to the clinical referrer anywhere.
- Enable cross-site and health board reporting to facilitate service transformation and support the work of the Imaging Essential Services Group.

¹ [NPSA 16 2007](#)

² [HSIB Failures in communication or follow-up of unexpected significant radiological findings](#)



RISP will continue to engage and work with the Radiology service, Digital Health and Care Wales and the wider NHS, to modernise and transform imaging services in Wales.

2. Welsh Clinical Portal (WCP) Result Notification

In a joint collaboration between the **National Endoscopy Programme (NEP)** and **Digital Health and Care Wales (DHCW)** a recent update was applied to the Welsh Clinical Portal (WCP) at Hywel Dda University Health Board.

Welsh Clinical Portal is an application that is available to health professionals to access to digital patient records across hospitals and health boards in Wales.

The update enabled health professionals the ability to access patient endoscopy and bronchoscopy test results all within Welsh Clinical Portal. The benefit of this work will enable Health Boards the ability to receive instantaneous patient updates within a single digital health record whilst omitting the use and time constraints of using multiple systems.

This is the second Health Board in Wales that have patient endoscopy and bronchoscopy test results enabled within WCP – the first being Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board in May 2021.

3. Powys Endoscopy Management System Go-Live

Under the above collaboration, Medilogik Endoscopy Management System recently went live at Powys Teaching Health Board. This change has enabled Powys endoscopy teams (including admins) the ability to link identifiers for patient lists and clinics into the Medilogik management application. Powys are now the first Health Board in Wales to utilise a cloud instance of the Medilogik Endoscopy Management System.

This change has benefited the endoscopy department as a whole and subsequently allowed Powys to move away from their legacy product.

The project was run end-to-end in 46 days (from initiation to delivery) which is a testament to all the hard work undertaken to achieve a technically complex piece of work in such short timescales.

NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership

1. Wales sends medical supplies to support Ukraine via NWSSP's regional distribution centre

The first shipment of medical supplies including ventilators, bandages and face masks is being despatched from Wales today (Friday 11 March 2022) to support the people of Ukraine via NWSSP's IP5 regional distribution centre.

The medical supplies left Wales this morning and will be flown to Poland, then onto Ukraine.

First Minister Mark Drakeford said:

"Wales stands in solidarity with Ukraine and its people. Wales' links with Ukraine are long and deep, and we are ready to offer any practical support and humanitarian assistance that we can."

"The best way for the people of Wales to support Ukraine is to give money to the Disaster Emergency Committee, so supplies can be bought as near to their need as possible."

"However, we have been working with partners to identify medical supplies that are urgently needed. We have further medical supplies ready to go to Ukraine. If we can help the people of Ukraine in any way, we will."

Welsh Government has already made £4m available for the Disaster Emergency Committee to provide support in Ukraine where it is needed most.



2. NWSSP Primary Care Services launch innovative Pharmacy Extended Services Dashboard

NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) in conjunction with Welsh Government have developed a digital dashboard that describes availability, activity, and outcomes of national enhanced services in community pharmacy.

The [Pharmacy Extended Services Dashboard](#) provides data visualisations of information obtained from claims for payment over a rolling 24-month period. Data is available at pharmacy, cluster and Health Board level and will be refreshed on the 1st working day of each month.

The published Extended Services statistics are based on information obtained from claims submitted to NWSSP for payment in accordance with the provisions Pharmaceutical Services (Advanced and Enhanced Services) (Wales) Directions.

Andrew Evans (Chief Pharmaceutical Officer, Welsh Government);

“Community pharmacies should be the first point of contact for NHS care. More community pharmacies in Wales are providing clinical services than ever before. The contractual reforms we have recently agreed will mean all pharmacies can provide a full range of clinical services from April, improving access for patients and taking pressure off other parts of the NHS.

Enabling pharmacists and pharmacy teams to reflect on their own and other pharmacies’ service outcomes is an essential component of improving the quality of care. Routine access to this data for pharmacists, healthcare professionals and

patients will facilitate a genuinely data driven approach to community pharmacies delivering the best outcomes for the citizens of Wales.”

Andrew Evans (Director, Primary Care Services, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership);

“Clusters are central to the plan for sustainable primary care services, and it is essential that they are able to have easy access to intelligence which can both inform service planning and help monitor performance. The Pharmacy Services Dashboard has been designed to do just that. It represents an important step in making primary care data held within NWSSP available in a way that is instantly usable to both those who plan and those who deliver services.

We are delighted that we have been able to develop this tool to support the recently announced contractual reforms for pharmacies, and it represents a significant step in the ongoing NWSSP programme of intelligence support for all primary care contract professions.”

Powys Teaching Health Board



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Your stories of innovation and improvement in Powys

North Powys Wellbeing Programme funds new in-county eye care clinics

Eye care patients who need Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT) scans in North Powys are now able to have them in-county thanks to funding from the North Powys Wellbeing Programme.

Previously, patients in the north of the county had to travel to district general hospitals outside the county for access to digital ophthalmic scanning. Now there are regular clinics taking place in Llanidloes and Welshpool hospitals which offer this facility.

Judith Jamieson is Senior Nurse Manager for Outpatients Development with Powys Teaching Health Board: “Traditionally in this part of the county our patients would require onward referral to Shrewsbury or Aberystwyth for this diagnostic scan by the Consultant in Ophthalmology. This results in several visits to different hospital sites, possible delay in diagnosis and commencement of treatment regimes.

“The introduction of this facility in county has enabled the provision of one-stop appointments for our patients in North Powys, bringing care closer to home,” she added.

Clair Rea is one of the new staff members – joining the health board as Ophthalmic Scientific Practitioner. She explained: “If the UK follows the experiences of other Western countries, we expect the demand for eye care services over the next 20 years to increase by 16% for conditions such as glaucoma, 47% for age related macular degeneration, 50% for conditions such as cataract, and up to 80% for diabetic retinopathy. So, it’s really positive that we can provide this new service – it’s better for patients, is more efficient for the health service and it will help reduce carbon emissions, too.”

The North Powys Wellbeing Programme’s ambition is to transform health and wellbeing services in this part of the county. While it is developing plans for a multi-agency health and wellbeing campus in Newtown, it is also financially supporting a range of initiatives across North Powys – such as this one – which can make real improvements quickly.

Carys Williams is Clinical Change Manager with the programme team. She added: “We are also looking to introduce similar scanning facilities at the campus in Newtown which, subject to funding being available, should be open in late 2026. We are already seeing the fruits of this current investment, though. Already dozens of patients have had their OCT scans in Llanidloes and Welshpool. This is a major part of our vision - to deliver as many services as possible in our hospitals here in north Powys.”

More information about the programme can be found at www.powyswellbeing.wales.



Photo: The team running the Welshpool clinics (from left) – Judith Jamieson (seated), Linda Aldridge, Nicki Corrin, Clair Rea and Nicola Cooke (seated)

Contact: John Thomas, Engagement and Communications Specialist, North Powys Wellbeing Programme – john.thomas21@wales.nhs.uk



Delivering a Healthy, Caring Powys

23 March 2022

Your stories of innovation and improvement in Powys

Approval for Newtown health and wellbeing campus business case welcomed

A new state of the art health and wellbeing campus in Newtown has taken a significant step forward following endorsement from Welsh Government.

A Programme Business Case (PBC) had earlier been submitted to Welsh Government by the North Powys Wellbeing (NPWB) Programme highlighting the benefits of bringing together health and wellbeing services onto a single site adjacent to Park Street in Newtown. Endorsement for this business case was announced by First Minister Mark Drakeford MS in the Senedd on March 15th who noted the important milestone in the project.

The North Powys Wellbeing (NPWB) Programme is a flagship programme of the Powys Regional Partnership Board, comprising Powys County Council, Powys Teaching Health Board, PAVO and other key partners.

Hayley Thomas, Powys Teaching Health Board's Deputy Chief Executive is a joint Senior Responsible Officer for the NPWB Programme: "We're delighted that the Welsh Government has considered our early ideas for this exciting and innovative new development. Whilst we have been waiting for a decision, we have also made progress in developing the second stage business case – the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) – and these plans are to be considered by the health board later this month. If this is signed off, then this will be submitted to Welsh Government."

Early plans for the Newtown campus include looking at relocating Newtown's health provision into a Rural Regional Diagnostics and Treatment Centre, along with an Integrated Health and Care Centre (including social care and third sector provision), a Health and Care Academy, short term supported housing, library and information services as well as shared community space.

The provision of a small amount of accommodation for students attending the academy, new recruits to health and care jobs as well as locum health specialists is also being considered. A replacement school for Ysgol Calon y Dderwen is also being developed under Powys County Council's Transforming Education programme with both programme teams working closely together.

Ali Bulman is Powys County Council's Executive Director for People and Organisation Development, the Director of Social Services and is also a Senior Responsible Officer for the programme. "This is tremendous news and we're delighted that we've had this support from Welsh Government.

"However, we are still at an early stage and, subject to our SOC also gaining support, there are still two further business case stages we need to go through. If all of the business cases are supported by Welsh Government, we will be aiming to open in late 2026, although the school redevelopment is expected to be ready in the previous autumn."

The campus plan is part of a wider vision to improve access to health and wellbeing services through a new and innovative 'Integrated Model of Care and Wellbeing in Powys'. The aims of the vision are to ensure people in Powys receive joined up seamless care and support at the right time, in the right place that meets their needs in the home, community, or across Powys.

To find out more about the Integrated Model of Care and Wellbeing in Powys and proposals for the Newtown campus visit www.powyswellbeing.wales.



Contact: John Thomas, Engagement and Communications Specialist, North Powys Wellbeing Programme – john.thomas21@wales.nhs.uk

Public Health Wales

1. Public Health Wales retains a place in the Stonewall Top 100 Employers list, rising from 100 to 64th place in the rankings.

Four hundred organisations take part in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index (WEI) which is a benchmarking tool for employers to measure their progress on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender inclusion in the workplace.

I am delighted to say that we retained a place in the Stonewall Top 100 Employers list this year, rising from 100 to 64th place in the rankings.

In addition to this, we were thrilled to be awarded *Gold Employer* status by Stonewall, which is further acknowledgement of the progress we have made towards the inclusion of our wonderful LGBTQ+ people. Stonewall has also confirmed that we have ranked sixth in the Healthcare sector across the UK.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is a priority for Public Health Wales and we look forward to receiving full feedback from Stonewall to understand where we can continue to be an excellent employer for LGBTQ+ staff.

Although the Workplace Equality Index looks at how inclusive we are for LGBT+ staff, undertaking work to make the improvements for example policy reviews, awareness raising and involving all of our under-represented groups in the conversations around organisational changes, enable us to improve equality and inclusion across all protected characteristics so that we can continue to strive to be a more inclusive employer.

2. Public Health Wales Pathogen Genomics Unit (PenGU) reaches 200k

Public Health Wales' Pathogen Genomics Unit (PenGU) released its first SARS CoV-2 sequence on the 6 March 2020. It was the first diagnostic laboratory to be part of the COG-UK network as well as being one of the first laboratories in the COG-UK network. As the pandemic progressed, the need for information about the virus also increased. Following ongoing Welsh Government investment in both equipment and staff, by October 2021 PenGU had sequenced and submitted to COG-UK, 100,000 SARS CoV-2 genomes.

It only took a further four months before PenGU had sequenced and submitted to COG-UK, **200,000 SARS CoV-2 genomes**. Not only a fantastic achievement by a relatively small, but highly skilled and dedicated team, but also testament to what can be achieved with the right investment in people, equipment planning and leadership. Wales is a global competitor in the field of pathogen genomics.

Swansea Bay University Health Board

1. Cutting-edge lung cancer treatment to be available in Swansea for the first time

A highly specialised lung cancer treatment offering huge benefits to suitable patients will be launched at Swansea Bay's Singleton Hospital this spring.



The hospital is home to the Southwest Wales Cancer Centre, which has already pioneered a series of cutting-edge approaches to treatments.

L-r: Punya Nair, SABR lead radiographer; Nia O'Rourke, imaging specialist radiographer; Russell Banner, consultant clinical oncologist; Rebecca Hunter, Ct SABR lead radiographer; Adam Selby, clinical scientist; Elizabeth Hawkes, deputy radiotherapy service manager

Now, for the first time, it will be able to offer Stereotactic Ablative Radiotherapy, or SABR.

This is a specialist technique to cure early lung tumours and is more effective than standard radiotherapy for early stage lung cancers.

Suitable patients from the Swansea Bay and Hywel Dda health board areas previously had to travel to Velindre Hospital in Cardiff for it.

Now, thanks to ongoing investment in high-tech equipment and funding from the Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee (WHSSC), the first patients from the region are expected to undergo SABR at Singleton within the next few months.

Dr Ceri Powell, consultant clinical oncologist treating patients with lung cancer across South Wales, said: **“The precision and accuracy of the SABR technique allows a safer lower dose to be delivered to normal tissue surrounding the tumour.**

“This means potentially curative treatment can be offered to some patients who otherwise would not be able to have treatment for their lung cancer due to their other medical illnesses.

“For other patients it gives a better chance of curing their cancer with fewer side effects than conventional radiotherapy.”

As well as avoiding the need for much longer journeys to Cardiff, the availability of SABR means the number of radiotherapy sessions for suitable patients will be between just three and eight, rather than the 20 using conventional radiotherapy.



Dr Ryan Lewis (*left*), Swansea Bay's Head of Radiotherapy Physics said: **“SABR has been around for around 10 years but up until very recently it has only been done in relatively few centres in the UK.**

“It's a very specialised service previously seeing a very small number of patients a year, probably fewer than 200 in the UK.”

Before most cancer surgery was paused across the UK at the start of the pandemic, a technology review concluded it would be possible to extend SABR to more centres across the country.

Dr Lewis said the review found the outcome for patients using SABR was as good as for those who had undergone surgery but was less invasive and with a quicker recovery time.

Singleton Hospital was already able to offer many other forms of highly specialised cancer treatments, following multi-million-pound investments in equipment, software and staff expertise over the last five years.

Last year, for example, it became the UK leader in the use of Intensity-Modulated Radiotherapy (IMRT).

For the majority of cancers this is considered the best and most effective form of modern radiotherapy available.

It directs a higher dose of radiation more closely at the tumour while simultaneously sparing surrounding tissue.

The Southwest Wales Cancer Centre has also trialled and implemented a revolutionary new approach to treating breast cancer, reducing the treatment from 15 days to just five.

Dr Lewis said the Cancer Centre had worked closely with WHSSC, once it had identified Singleton Hospital as a centre that could deliver the new SABR service, and with Velindre Hospital as a mentoring partner to ensure it met the necessary quality standards.



He said: **“It’s a more technically advanced version of everything we were already doing effectively.**

“SABR involves much bigger doses, much faster, and you have to be much more careful when you’re using it.”

Dr Lewis said that, because SABR is so specialised, he anticipated between 25 and 30 patients a year would receive it at Singleton.

“We could not have done this without some of the new infrastructure we’ve had, the new machines, some of the new techniques,” he added.

Pictured: Dr Ceri Powell and Dr Russell Banner

Dr Russell Banner, South West Wales Cancer Centre Radiotherapy Clinical Lead, said **“With the introduction of SABR, we can justifiably claim to be a fully capable, highly specialised radiotherapy centre making the latest state-of-the-art techniques available to the population of South West Wales.”**

Dr Powell added: **“We anticipate that offering SABR treatment in Swansea will improve outcomes by allowing even greater access to this well-tolerated curative treatment closer to patients’ homes, providing equity of access across South Wales.”**

2. Minister visits Morriston Hospital's high performing solar farm



Caption: Des Keighan, Swansea Bay UHB Assistant Director, Estate, Swansea Bay UHB Chair, Emma Woollett, Scott Lutton, from Vital Energi and Welsh Government Minister for Climate Change, Julie James, at the Morriston Hospital solar farm.

The energy crisis means the UK’s first direct wired solar farm developed to power a hospital will generate far greater savings than could have been predicted. It went live in October last year and is expected to produce a fifth of Morriston Hospital’s energy consumption every year.

Even during the winter months there have been days when it has generated enough to power the entire hospital – and on occasions with electricity to spare to export to the National Grid. This is despite only operating during the shortest days of the year.

The £5.7m solar farm was built thanks to a loan scheme set up by the Welsh Government to decarbonise the public sector by 2030, and is repayable on an invest to save basis. It is estimated that the hospital has already saved an estimated £120,000 in electricity bills since it was switched on in November, and is projected to save 1000 tonnes of carbon and £500,000 per year in bills when fully operational. It has already produced 30,000 kWh surplus energy that’s been sold back to the energy grid at a profit to the hospital.

Visiting the 4MW project on Brynwhillach Farm, which is linked to Morriston by a 3km private wire, Minister for Climate Change Julie James said:

“We want our energy to come from community owned and locally run renewable energy sources in Wales. This will ensure our supply is resilient, reliable and reasonable for both our planet and our pockets.

“We have bold ambitions to decarbonise the public sector by 2030. Morriston Hospital - which depends not only on the powers of its staff, but also the energy hungry machines to keep their patients alive and well - have blazed the trail in their switch to renewables, which makes sense both financially and to the health of the people of Wales.

“Our addiction to fossil fuels is proving harmful, volatile and no longer viable. In Wales we will continue to accelerate our investment in renewable energy and energy efficient measures such as those adopted at Morriston hospital, and call on the UK Government to support a socially just transition to Net Zero as we respond to the climate emergency.

“The IPCC have rung the clarion call for our planet, now we must listen and respond to the science.”

Chair of Swansea University Health Board, Emma Woollett, said:

“I am delighted that the solar farm’s performance has already exceeded our initial expectations. The health board’s aim is to reduce its carbon footprint and maximise opportunities to use renewable energy sources.

“The solar farm will play an important part in achieving that aim, but there is also an additional benefit in terms of cost savings. It is not only lowering our electricity costs every day, but on some days covering 100% of our electricity needs.

“With the current volatile situation with energy prices, this really shows that the investment and the long-term thinking on behalf of the health board has paid off.”

Since being switched on, the 10,000-panel solar farm has produced enough energy to power 190 three-bedroom houses for a year, or to boil almost 200,000 kettles.

The four-megawatt farm was anticipated to reduce the hospital’s electricity bill by around £500,000 a year. But with world energy prices spiralling, the actual savings could be almost double that figure.

A few years back, Swansea Bay University Health Board was awarded £13.6 million, on an invest-to-save basis, to bring down its energy costs and reduce its carbon footprint by around 5,000 tonnes a year. The money was awarded through Re:Fit, a national programme, supported by the Welsh Government. Following an extensive selection process, the health board selected Vital Energi as its partner.

Phase one, a range of energy conservation measures at Morriston and Singleton hospitals and other health board premises, was completed last year at a cost of £7.7 million. The solar farm, developed on a 14-hectare site at a cost of £5.9 million, comprised the second phase.

Swansea Bay's Assistant Director of Operations, Des Keighan, said the hospital previously used around 20 gigawatts of electricity a year.

"The first phase of energy saving measures reduced the hospital energy demand to 16 gigawatts a year," he said.

"The solar farm will reduce the need to import energy from the grid by a further four gigawatts over the course of a year.

"It was expected that over the winter months the solar farm would contribute electricity, but that the hospital would still need to continue to buy power from the grid every day. What has come as a pleasant surprise is that for a total of 50 hours, the hospital has been entirely powered by the solar farm, and nearly 30,000 kilowatts sold back to the National Grid. This is despite the fact that the solar farm hasn't been operating continually over the winter.

"It has still been undergoing tests and fine-tuning and is not due to be completely finished until the end of March. So, this additional performance has been even more of a bonus."

Since October, the solar farm has produced 598,000 kWh (kilowatts an hour) of energy. That is enough to:

- Power 190 three-bedroom houses for a year;
- Boil 196,333 kettles;
- Power 4,496 55-inch TVs or 196 washing machines for a year;
- Drive a Tesla Model Y car 2,103,571 miles.

But it doesn't end there. Factor in the first phase energy saving measures and the overall drop in electricity demand from October until February at Morriston is nearly 1.5 million kilowatts. That is sufficient to:

- Power 484 three-bedroom houses for a year;
- Boil 500,000 kettles, power 11,450 TVs or 500 washing machines for a year;
- Drive the same Tesla car 5,357,143 miles.

Mr Keighan said the value of the savings was also expected to be considerably higher than expected because the world situation meant energy prices were increasingly so rapidly.

"When this started, electrical prices were around 13p per kilowatt hour (kWh) from the Grid," he said.

"This morning it was 25p per kWh. That's not far off doubled, with prices expected to increase over the coming weeks.

"We want to extend the solar farm by installing another 1MW of solar panelling and also install 2MWh battery for storage

“We get two to three pence per kW if we export. And at the moment electricity from the Grid is costing us around 25p a KWh and from April that could be as high as 50p. So using it ourselves makes far more sense and we are trying to secure funding for that, and we hope that will be the next stage.”

Additionally, the solar farm will save around 1,000 tonnes of carbon a year, on top of the 4,000 tonnes saved by the first phase.

Captions below: The Chair and Minister view the solar farm; a wider view of the solar farm, and the substation at Morryston Hospital which takes the feed from the solar farm.



