# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board New Chief Executive Appointment** |
| **DATE** | **19 August** |
| **BY** | **Vaughan Gething MS, Minister for Health and Social Services** |

I am pleased to inform you that the Chair of Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board will confirm today the appointment of Jo Whitehead as its new Chief Executive following a competitive recruitment process. Jo Whitehead grew up in North Wales and demonstrated during the process a strong understanding of the health and social care challenges for the region and a clear sense as to how they should be addressed.

She will join Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board on the 1 January from her current role as Chief Executive of Mackay Hospital and Health Service in Queensland and has a wealth of experience in healthcare in both the UK and Australia.

Simon Dean, the Interim Chief Executive, will return to his role as Deputy Chief Executive of NHS Wales from 1st September. He has provided strong leadership during the past seven months whilst the health board responded with rapid and decisive action to COVID-19. As the NHS plans and prepares for the winter challenges it is imperative he returns to his national role. I wish to thank him personally for extending his time with the health board by a further two months than originally agreed and for setting the foundations for developing an ambitious approach to developing sustainable services in line with the vision set out in A Healthier Wales.

Gill Harris, the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Nursing, will take over as Acting Chief Executive and accountable officer for four months from the 1 September. She will play a key role in aiding transition and working with Jo Whitehead who will be engaging with the Chair, the Board and the Executive Team before she officially starts. The Chair and the Board are confident that Gill Harris, supported by her colleagues, will lead the organisation well during the next four months and strategically support the incoming Chief Executive on future plans and direction. This demonstrates strengthened confidence in the senior leadership within the health board, to build upon, as it drives forward a more transformative approach to support improved outcomes.

This statement is being issued during recess in order to keep members informed. I will be making a further statement when the Senedd returns on the proposed strategic approach for the future alongside more immediate improvements in the most challenging areas.