



Welsh NHS Confederation
Confederasiwn GIG Cymru

How the health and care workforce are transforming services

June 2024

About us

The Welsh NHS Confederation is the only national membership body representing all the organisations making up the NHS in Wales.

We represent the seven local health boards; three NHS trusts; Health Education and Improvement Wales; and Digital Health and Care Wales. We are part of the NHS Confederation and host NHS Wales Employers.

We support our members by acting as a driving force for positive change through strong representation, facilitating system leadership and our proactive policy, influencing, communications, events and engagement work.

Introduction

The health and care workforce are at the heart of how the NHS and social care deliver care and services to patients and their families. In addition, the NHS is Wales's biggest employer, currently directly employing over 110,000 people. Together with volunteers and unpaid carers, the health and social care workforce impacts the social, cultural, and economic prosperity of Wales.

With rising demand on health and care services, the workforce constantly adapts to meet the needs of the current and future population. Across the NHS, staff help and support the most vulnerable on hospital wards and in the community.

Community health services play a key role in keeping people well at home or closer to home, supporting people to live independently. Swansea Bay University Health Board's Acute Clinical Teams (ACT) provide medical and nursing care for adults in their own homes. Carrying out traditionally-hospital based assessments and investigations, the ACT teams are estimated to have prevented 6,299 hospital admissions since January 2022, saving the health board around £12 million.

Education is central to shaping our future healthcare workforce, as well as increasing employment opportunities across our NHS. Aneurin Bevan University Health Board has been engaging with school aged children to educate them on the variety of healthcare roles and careers, while Health Education Improvement Wales (HEIW) has collaborated on a new flexible nursing degree to help support nursing studies around home life, encouraging people with life experience to join the nursing profession.

This briefing highlights examples of how the health and care workforce are meeting the changing needs of the population across Wales.

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

Supporting the future workforce

- **School aged children educated on variety of healthcare roles and careers**

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) has worked with primary school aged children to educate them on the different roles and careers that deliver health services. The project challenges stereotypes around historical gender misconceptions associated with different roles and uses diverse individuals from the workforce.

The work experience offer at ABUHB has also been refreshed to offer children and young people a chance to experience what working life is like throughout the health board's many sites and departments and to inspire them to consider the NHS for their future careers.

The health board intends to generate a bilingual toolkit that can be used by all schools within the region to showcase the range of roles.

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

Hepatitis C micro-eliminated at HMP Berwyn thanks to rapid test and treat programme

- **Partnership approach aids elimination of Hepatitis C from UK's largest prison with national targets met ahead of schedule**

Hepatitis C has virtually all but been eliminated from HMP Berwyn, the UK's largest prison, following a joint initiative between Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB), Public Health Wales NHS Trust and the charity Hepatitis C Trust.

Known as micro-elimination, 100 per cent of prisoners were offered a test, with 90 per cent tested and 90 per cent of those tested diagnosed with hepatitis C starting treatment. The team have worked over the past few years to educate, raise awareness, and reduce stigma, testing and treating using a streamlined pathway.

The rapid test and treat programme forms part of action plans from Welsh Government and it was first introduced in BCUHB in community clinics in 2019. This became an award-winning outreach project which has helped over 170 people in north Wales, including those experiencing homelessness, to get treated for Hepatitis C.

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

Health board's Apprenticeship Academy enrolls almost 900 people in five years

- **Health board awarded Macro Employer of the Year at Apprenticeship Awards Cymru 2024**

Since 2006, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (CAVUHB) has been supporting various apprenticeships and enhanced its programme by establishing the Apprenticeship Academy in December 2018. Since the creation of the Apprenticeship Academy, nearly 900 people have enrolled, bringing new recruits to the sector.

Building the professional capacity of its current staff whilst recruiting and training a new generation of professionals ensures CAVUHB is planning for the future.

Apprenticeships promote an inclusive approach as the varying levels are matched to banded roles. This gives individuals an opportunity to be matched with the study and training they need according to their skills and abilities.

In the last five years, the health board has enrolled 864 colleagues onto apprenticeship programmes. CAVUHB is proud to be an organisation where opportunities to develop skills and experience can be explored by everyone.

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

A 'lifeline' for homeless people and rough sleepers

- **Homeless community receiving targeted care to meet complex medical needs**

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board has teamed up with homelessness charities to help people get the medical care they need. Many homeless people have issues with substance misuse, mental health, and physical ailments. They need blood tests and health checks, but don't usually access them through the GP.

In partnership with homeless charity The Wallich, nurse specialist Tracy is part of the team that goes out on the breakfast run at 7am in Bridgend town centre to speak with homeless people about their healthcare needs.

The homeless community do not usually engage with healthcare services and so connecting with this community helps to take away the stigma and build an element of trust with health professionals. This service, which has a good connection with GP services, provides homeless people with a lifeline to get their health needs met.

Digital Health and Care Wales

Business Change Support Officer Programme launched

- **Investment in apprenticeships to show improvement in delivery of key digital services**

A new 'Business Change Support Officer' programme, hosted by the Digital Change Delivery Network, was recently launched. The programme will offer successful candidates the opportunity to join Digital Health and Care Wales' Business Change team and undertake professional qualifications and training alongside their role.

Business Change is leading the way for delivering seamless change by supporting teams from the planning stage through to implementation and beyond.

The UK Careers Fair offers candidates opportunities to boost their career or discover diverse career paths. The fair provided Digital Health and Care Wales (DHCW) with an excellent opportunity to promote the programme to a wider audience. The role has already garnered a lot of attention and increased the interest of the number of people wanting to join DHCW.

Health Education and Improvement Wales

New flexible nursing degree in Wales

- **New nursing degree offers flexibility and financial help, helping shape healthcare workforce in Wales**

Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) has worked with Swansea University to introduce a new nursing degree with more flexibility for those who need it. The aim is to address NHS staff shortages and encourage people with life experience to join the nursing profession by opening the door to those who may not be able to commit to studying.

The course features a shorter study week and runs alongside school term times, helping to coordinate nursing placements around student's personal commitments. Its fees are also fully funded through an NHS bursary.

The University believes the course will be ideal for anyone with experience in caring roles looking to take the first step towards a highly rewarding career while juggling family commitments.

Hywel Dda University Health Board

Hywel Dda Nutrition and Dietetics service named top nutritional screeners in Wales

- **Hywel Dda UHB praised for data collection on malnutrition**

For the third year running, Hywel Dda University Health Board's Nutrition and Dietetics service has been praised for its data collection for Malnutrition Awareness Week.

Malnutrition Awareness Week is an annual UK initiative and as part of a national survey, members of the health board's nutrition & dietetic team organised the screening survey on hospital wards and in community settings.

Tom Cooze, one of the dieticians within the Carmarthenshire team, has been named the 'top screener' in Wales by supporting the entry of the Carmarthenshire data.

With such a significant UK-wide survey, the commitment of the health board's three counties to the collection of data means it can help build a better picture of the scale of the problem of malnutrition within the health board's care settings. It can also contribute to providing opportunities for prevention and improvement.

Powys Teaching Health Board

Partnership team win award for helping people access digital healthcare

- **Powys Living Well Service has helped over 80 people access virtual appointments**

Powys Teaching Health Board's (PTHB) Living Well Service supports people experiencing the effects of long-term conditions such as persistent pain, chronic fatigue, or weight management issues.

The teams have been working together for two years, establishing a way for health board staff to directly refer those needing access to digital connectivity to the library service. The Living Well Digital Facilitators focus on helping people to build confidence to connect to online virtual appointments and develop basic digital skills.

The library service provides easy access and support to iPad devices with data connections and Accessibility Powys visit people at home to help them get connected. So far, the scheme has helped over 80 people access virtual appointments they would otherwise have been unable to attend.

Public Health Wales NHS Trust

Newborn Hearing Screening Wales service creates roles within the NHS

- **Service supports skills development and career opportunities for staff**

The Newborn Hearing Screening Wales (NBHSW) service has created entry level roles for clinical service delivery in the NHS and a career structure that promotes excellence in screening delivery, while supporting skills development.

NBHSW screening is offered in the first few hours and days following birth. Those recruited into entry level roles are encouraged to progress beyond mandatory learning to complete level 3 diplomas and transition to screener 1 roles. Screener 1s play a key role in supporting training and mentoring of new staff, which further builds their confidence and develops wider skills.

NBHSW clinical delivery is audiology-led, with screeners at all levels undertaking a wide range of face-to-face clinical, technical, and administrative duties. The service provides a great entry point into an NHS career, with screeners progressing to roles in maternity, nursing, audiology, training and management.

Swansea Bay University Health Board

Service praised for treating patients at home and easing pressure on hospitals

- **Community-based service provides bespoke clinical care, preventing 6,300 hospital admissions, saving around £12 million**

The Acute Clinical Team (ACT) provides medical and nursing care for adults in their own homes, most of whom are older and frail.

The success of the first ACT team in Cimla, which sped up the hospital discharge process, led to a second team based in Bonymaen. The main goal of the latest ACT team in Neath is to provide equitable care across the health board. At times, people do not recover as well in a hospital environment, so this service provides an alternative which can make a difference in recovery times and discharge of patients from hospital.

Since the beginning of January 2022 alone, the two ACT teams are estimated to have prevented 6,299 hospital admissions, making savings to the health board of around £12 million.

Velindre University NHS Trust

Digital degree apprenticeships make a difference at Velindre

- **Scheme helps individuals advance education and careers**

Velindre University NHS Trust is reaping the rewards from apprenticeships. Digital Degree Apprenticeships are important in helping to upskill existing staff, improving their knowledge to bring new perspectives and future-ready skills to the workplace.

The Degree Apprenticeship Programme at the University of Wales Trinity St David offers high quality, fully funded training through partnerships with organisations such as Velindre.

Apprenticeships are an increasingly efficient way for organisations to develop a motivated and skilled workforce, while also granting employees to reach their potential by acquiring experience and qualifications. This practical application of both experience and qualifications contributes to the centre's digital operations.

Also, the financial support offered through apprenticeship schemes help to overcome barriers to education as its apprentices receive a full-time salary with university fees covered.

Welsh Ambulance Services University NHS Trust

Ambulance service supporting newborn babies in the community

- **Ambulance service fleet improves support for newborn babies**

A Cynon Valley mother had an emotional reunion with the ambulance crew who supported the birth of her premature twins.

Catherine Johnson was 29 weeks pregnant when she unexpectedly went into labour at home. A team of 12 paramedics and technicians used specialist training they had undertaken just weeks prior, to care for and safely transport the newborns to hospital.

Every ambulance and response car in the Welsh Ambulance Service fleet now has 'Neo-HeLP' suits on board, designed to prevent hypothermia of newborns.

The trust is one of the first ambulance services in the UK to have equipment to this standard, and with the rollout of the new equipment and an online learning package, they are working hard to provide gold standard care to babies in the community.



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