



Senedd Members and Welsh MPs

12 December 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 Health Board Lung Cancer Nurse Specialist has reached the final of the Chwarae Teg Womenspire Awards 2022 for Inspirational women in the category for *Woman in Health and Care*. A Welsh award, this nomination has been given for her outstanding contribution, as a specialist in lung cancer. The individual has worked as a Macmillan Lung Cancer Nurse Specialist at the University Health Board since 2003 and supported the Gwent Trace & Protect service during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The **South Wales Health & Care Awards** last month congratulated ABUHB staff who won seven categories. The winners included the Outstanding Achievement Award for one of the Health Board's long serving Registered Nurses who has worked in NHS Wales for 52 years, 49 of which was spent in the Emergency Department. Other winners were in the categories of the Mental Health Award; Contribution to Covid-19 response; Healthcare team; Excellence in Nursing Award; GP of the Year; and GP Practice of the Year.

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

A new Interventional Radiology suite at Wrexham Maelor hospital will help reduce the number of scans that patients need to improve patient diagnostics. Part of a multi-million-pound equipment replacement programme, which has been funded by Welsh Government, the new equipment allows BCUHB to carry out radiology services across North Wales, and includes X-ray rooms, scanners and ultrasound machines.

The first Gynaecology patients received robotic assisted surgery under an innovative national programme earlier this month. Prior to the first cases taking place, the theatre team took part in extensive training to develop the core robotic skills needed to use the system. Towards the end of 2022, robotic surgery will be offered to selected Urological cancer patients at the Health Board.

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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.

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

A major and exciting new clinical initiative, **Britain's first SWAN (syndrome without a name) Clinic**, has opened at the University Hospital of Wales. The clinic offers hope to children and adults with syndromes so rare they don't have a name or diagnosis for their complex condition (which affect around 175,000 people across Wales). This is a significant health problem with the majority of patients having to wait an average of four years for a diagnosis.

The SWAN Clinic will initially run as a pilot for two years, having received £430,000 funding from Welsh Government and will aim to shorten the time patients wait for a diagnosis, improve medical knowledge and access to specialist care and foster new research.

The outcome of the **Tracheostomy SBRI challenge** which was run between April 2021 and April 2022 by the Dragon's Heart Institute, UHB staff, Cardiff Capital Region and the SBRI Centre of Excellence has gained backing from the National Tracheostomy Safety Project.

The challenge was to develop an innovative way of delivering tracheostomy training to healthcare staff that did not rely on face-to-face training and could begin to address the training backlog which resulted from the pandemic activity. The programme centres on realistic bedside simulations that recreate high-pressure situations where decisive action needs to be taken quickly and competently. The VR programme is fully portable and, no matter where the training takes place, users experience the sights and sounds of a hospital setting which can be customised according to their needs. The solutions developed were tested with staff in hospital settings across Wales with 97% of learners trialled reporting that they felt that this training method had the potential to positively impact patient and team safety and quality.

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

Prince Charles Hospital welcomed its first cohort of seven **Project SEARCH** interns. This programme sees young people with autism and/or learning difficulties gain real-life work experience combined with training in employability and independent-living skills to make successful transitions to productive adult lives. The interns will each complete an 11-month placement with three rotations through departments in the hospital.

Time to Change Wales Pledge to support staff in reducing mental health stigma in the workplace. Aimed at shaping future mental health training for healthcare staff, the UHB has worked in collaboration with Time to Change Wales and Swansea Bay University Health Board to pilot a 'live' online module to equip staff to improve the lived experiences and outcomes for individuals affected by mental health, by better identifying how, and where, experiences of mental health stigma can happen in healthcare settings.

Over 300 clinical and non-clinical staff members have completed the module and following evaluation, Welsh Government have agreed to provide funding for the module to be provided across NHS Wales.

Digital Health and Care Wales

Electronic summaries for GPs - a function of Choose Pharmacy – are now live across Wales. eSummaries allow community pharmacists in Wales to send summaries of a patient's Choose Pharmacy consultation to the patient's GP electronically, in a secure, confidential, rapid, timely and traceable manner – making sure the GP is up-to-date with the patient's treatment, advice and consultation outcomes in a community pharmacy setting.

Choose Pharmacy offers patients a range of defined NHS clinical services available at the community pharmacy, reducing demand on GPs and A&E and recognising the contribution pharmacists can make in improving the health and care of their local communities. Choose Pharmacy also integrates with the NHS Wales network, giving community Pharmacists access to the medication details within the patients Welsh GP record, helping them to make informed decisions.

The Looked After Children project has been shortlisted in two categories of the Healthcare Excellence Through Technology's [Unexpected Innovation Awards](#), an annual celebration of the very best in experimental design, collaboration, and leadership in digital healthcare in the UK. Looked After Children is a national project sponsored by Welsh Government to develop a digital design that will underpin the clinical and care process for Looked After Children. It also aims to develop national information standards that will facilitate the sharing of information between practitioners and organisations.

Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW)

Funded by Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW), Bangor University's **midwifery course has been ranked top in the UK** in the prestigious 2022 National Student Survey (NSS), achieving an overall satisfaction score of 96 per cent. [HEIW-funded midwifery course is best in the UK - HEIW \(nhs.wales\)](#)

A HEIW Improvement Prize 2021/22, has been given to a Swansea GP for her quality improvement project entitled Direct oral anti-coagulant (DOAC). The project focuses on improving the monitoring, education and multi-professional management of DOACs within the community primary care setting and has had a direct impact on patient safety. [HEIW Improvement Prize 2021/22 - HEIW \(nhs.wales\)](#)

Hywel Dda University Health Board

The Community Development Outreach Team has been selected as a case study to be used in the **NHS Charities Together 75th birthday celebrations**, and will be included as part of the NHS Charities Together Historical Stories Project.

The Play Teams at Glangwilli, Bronglais and Withybush hospitals have been recognised as runners up of Play Team of the Year at this year's Starlight's Health Play Awards.

NHS Wales Health Collaborative

The **Wales Cancer Network** worked with BBC Cymru Wales to produce news [content](#) for online, radio, social and television on rapid diagnostic centres as part of Wales becoming the first part of the UK to roll-out centres that can help diagnose people with cancer in days.

WCN briefed and arranged an interview with various team members in North Wales. The interviews in English and Welsh covered cancer and non-cancer diagnosis. On the day of transmission, this was the top story on all BBC Cymru Wales outlets throughout the day.

NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership

The 2nd annual NWSSP **Health and Well-Being Conference** took place with a range of speakers and activities on the agenda including yoga, nutrition, financial well-being, physical fitness and coping with stress. Over 300 staff attended.

A lease for the **Headway Charity** (Cardiff and SE Wales branch) to move location to UHW Llandough, for its new headquarters, was completed. Headway is a UK-wide charity that works to improve life after brain injury by providing vital support and information services,

which of course will complement the NHS aftercare received by patients, whilst supporting their carers. The lease is of the former postgraduate research building (left vacant for years) at the site; the building has been renovated with the installation of ramps, disabled parking spaces, IT infrastructure and is ready to accept patients.

Powys Teaching Health Board

As COVID-19 cases in the community continue to rise, vaccinators within the Health Board have **devised and delivered a rapid booster vaccine programme of out-reach vaccinations** for vulnerable older adult residents of care homes, domiciliary care and in-patients throughout the county.

In the first ten days the team completed more than 81% of all COVID-19 vaccines for this group, covering a range of remote settings throughout the 2,000 square miles of the county of Powys.

Working with local Equestrian facilities has transformed the lives of a small cohort of mental health service users by using Equestrian Therapy. This approach is part of measures to support mental health therapies, and evaluation reports from the project have been extremely positive showing confidence building, physical health, mental health and an overall feeling of wellbeing.

Swansea Bay University Health Board

A sight-saving service in Morriston Hospital is available to more patients than ever. Corneal cross-linking is the only treatment for keratoconus, where the cornea bulges into a cone shape and makes it difficult to see. The single-visit procedure involves using a machine that focuses UV rays onto the cornea, along with eye drop medication. These combine to make chemical bonds on the cornea to strengthen it and prevent any further misshaping. Five years ago, a service for adults became available at a hub in Singleton Hospital, the first of its kind in Wales. This meant patients no longer needed to travel to England, or pay privately, for the procedure.

Following Health Technology Wales approval, the service was extended to children as young as 11 last year and is also now being used to support adults and children with disabilities, learning difficulties and conditions such as Down's syndrome.

Researchers at Morriston Hospital have made a breakthrough in understanding one of the most damaging consequences of COVID-19 using Welsh Government Ser Cymru funding. The researchers have confirmed significant findings in how the virus alters the body's blood clotting process, and so discovered why current treatments can fail, sometimes leading to organ failure. The findings have been presented at the International Symposium for Intensive Care and Emergency Medicine in Brussels and have been published in a specialist journal, with more publications set to follow. Further studies are planned to determine which specific mechanisms promote abnormal clotting in acute diseases such as COVID-19 using new pioneering techniques on clotting to further validate the findings.

Velindre University NHS Trust

Oncologists at Velindre University NHS Trust and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust, Taunton win prestigious international award at this year's European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO) Congress.

Welsh Blood Service has become the official sponsor of the Tier 2 League Cup for the 2022/23 season. In partnership with JD Cymru Leagues the competition now be known as the Welsh Blood Service League Cup.

The Welsh Blood Service partnered with the JD Cymru Leagues and Genero Adran Leagues in 2020 to encourage domestic football fans to donate blood. The Blood Sweat and Cheers campaign has already potentially saved the lives of over 2,000 adults since launching and clubs across the leagues and the partnership is making a real difference across the country. www.wbs.wales/football.

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