



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Y Weithrediaeth
Executive

Stakeholder update

January 2025

Croeso!

Welcome to the first NHS Wales Executive stakeholder update of 2025

As we reach the end of January and the evenings begin to draw out, the early signs are arriving that the end of another incredibly challenging winter is coming into view.

As we know, flu, C. diff, Covid 19 plus a range of other respiratory infections challenged us earlier than expected across the UK. Staff throughout the NHS Wales have worked incredibly hard to continue delivering the best possible quality care to patients against a backdrop of some extremely difficult conditions.

The **National Programmes** for urgent and emergency care, primary care, mental health and planned care – in addition to clinical networks – have been supporting health boards all year to implement priorities that have enabled greater resilience over the winter period.

Within urgent and emergency care, each health board has been allocated an extra c£2.7m to deliver local six goals programme plans with a priority focus on urgent care and Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC) to appropriately manage demand away from our Emergency Departments.

Additional resourcing was also put into regional Clinical Support Hubs to double the clinical capacity and extend opening hours to assist Health Boards and Welsh Ambulance Services University NHS Trust in managing peaks in demand between in-hours (GMS) and out-of-hours periods. This will continue until 31 March and now includes the provision of consultant paediatric support at weekends in Cwm Taf Morgannwg, Betsi Cadwaladr and Cardiff and Vale UHBs, which has had a positive impact on both patient care and the urgent primary care system.

Further additional funding has also been made available from the Six Goals National Programme to enhance community falls prevention and response services along with dedicated discharge vehicles to increase hospital flow (pan Wales) in quarter 4. Welsh Ambulance Services University NHS Trust has also recruited 27 extra clinicians to its

Clinical Support Desk to enable safe and resilient services over winter.

Elsewhere, e-triage at Aneurin Bevan and Cardiff and Vale UHBs continues to show positive results with funding allocated for further rollout in Betsi Cadwaladr, Swansea Bay and Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHBs, while a change to the 'SDEC First' model at Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB has seen an improvement in patients getting to the right place, first time with a positive impact on winter resilience.

The NHS Wales Executive has been working to **improve patient flow and reduce delayed discharges**. The 50-day Integrated Care Winter Challenge was launched in November 2024 to accelerate delivery of ten high impact interventions across health and social care. We have worked closely with partners across health and social care to implement this initiative, but this work will continue as we look to significantly reduce the Pathways of Care Delay (POCD) into 2025.

The Strategic Programme for Primary Care has also actively supported the 50-day challenge with additional funding and support going into delivering extra district nursing capacity, specialist palliative care nursing and

readable capacity. District nursing has seen an increase of 49 whole time equivalent posts since November 2023 through this funding to date, with increased capacity and resource at weekends as a result.

Overall, our services within Primary Care (both GMS and out-of-hours) have been more resilient and stable this winter compared with the last few years and there have been fewer practices in heightened escalation or out-of-hours services struggling with workforce pressures.

In **Pharmacy**, an additional £9.9m (6%) has been made available to both support community pharmacies to address immediate pressures, and to maintain momentum on our longer-term ambitions for reform.

The **system resilience planning and response infrastructure** was stood up in September 2024 to enable NHS Wales Executive leads, Welsh Government, NHS organisations and social care colleagues to come together, on a regular basis, to get insight about data modelling and planning assumptions for respiratory complaints, and to support the development of mitigating plans for concurrent risks over winter, for example for dealing with extreme weather and other emergencies.

We are under no illusion over just how tough this winter has been for NHS organisations throughout Wales, with additional challenges associated with the considerable levels of respiratory illnesses seen this year. We are committed to identifying the lessons from this winter from across NHS Wales and using them to help support the planning for future winters.

Across the National Programmes, Clinical Networks and the broader NHS Wales Executive, we are committed to working collaboratively with you into the future, continuing to provide guidance and support towards creating an NHS Wales that is increasingly resilient to the challenges we face not only during winter, but throughout the year.

We hope you find this to be a valuable update. If you would like further information about any of what we have shared, please get in touch.

Kind regards,



Richard Bowen
National Programme Director
**Six Goals for Urgent and
Emergency Care**



Iain Hardcastle
National Director of Planning
Networks and Planning

New publication: Developing a Quality Management System



We have published new guidance to support the delivery of effective quality management systems throughout NHS Wales.

The Developing a Quality Management System paper provides an evidence-based QMS framework and methodology designed for adoption throughout NHS Wales so that we are operating with quality at our core and continuously improving to meet the needs of our populations.

The paper surfaces learning and insights gained during a five-year process of researching, developing and testing a new QMS framework

and methodology, with nationwide stakeholder interviews, thematic analysis of 15 international expert interviews, and a substantial literature review of approximately 500 abstracts, original research papers, and case-study reports having provided the foundations.

The framework and methodology offer a route to delivering effective quality management systems as directed by the Duty of Quality, placing appropriate focus on quality control, quality planning, quality improvement and quality assurance.

The paper pre-emptes the forthcoming phase of the Safe Care Partnership, which will include further support and resources to facilitate the delivery of effective quality management systems through NHS Wales, in addition to specific support surrounding the deconditioning and acute deterioration agendas.

You can read the [Developing a Quality Management System paper here](#).

For further information or support please contact NHSWHC.Qualityandsafety@wales.nhs.uk

Cancer Recovery Programme and Strategic Cancer Network

The Strategic Cancer Network worked collaboratively with organisations across NHS Wales and within the NHS Wales Executive to assess delivery against the Cancer Improvement Plan. Good engagement with the process allowed for a comprehensive report to be submitted to Welsh Government to provide assurance on progress to date. A further iteration is scheduled for April 2025 and the outcomes of the second assessment will inform the priority areas for the Strategic Cancer Network to support NHS Wales.

The Strategic Programme Plan for the National Cancer Recovery Programme was ratified in November 2024, which incorporates actions and next steps informed by a series of cancer workshops and ministerial summits, and following a period of consultation with stakeholders.

Meanwhile, 17 successful applications for Cancer Recovery Transformation Funding have been issued immediate funding, with a further 18 applications asked to draft and submit Phase 2 business cases for consideration at an integrated panel in March 2025.

The applications for both phases were reviewed and prioritised in collaboration with the Strategic Cancer Network, the National Diagnostics Programme, Clinical Implementation Networks, Performance and Assurance as well as Health Education and Improvement Wales.

With suspected cancer demand continuing to increase across Wales alongside expanding treatment activity volumes, the challenge of improving performance against the 62-day target for the Suspected Cancer Pathway continues to grow. An initial focus has been requested across five cancer pathways; Urology, Breast, Gynaecology, Lower GI and Skin.

The National Cancer Recovery Programme's focus is on taking a collaborative approach across these pathways by supporting cancer services to optimise capacity and deliver sustainable service models through the sharing of good practice and models of delivery, engagement in system-wide working and pathway transformation by adopting the latest innovative ways of working, and to improve cancer intelligence to support monitoring and delivery.

Dr Hasan Haboubi, Consultant Gastroenterologist from Cardiff and Vale UHB, has joined the Cancer Recovery

Programme as Upper GI Clinical Implementation Lead in December.

Luminal gastrointestinal cancers are an area of focus for the National Cancer Recovery Programme due to the challenges posed by accessing timely diagnostics to comply to the suspected cancer pathway. Hasan will have a central role in transforming future service models in this area, and will innovate and champion best practice.

Wales Mental Health Leadership Exchange

This spring, the Wales Mental Health Leadership Exchange will bring together leaders from across the Welsh health and care system as part of a series of activity that supports information sharing and innovation.

The event will be a first of its kind in Wales and a valuable opportunity to:

- Celebrate the contributions of colleagues that are making strides in improving mental health and wellbeing support and services for their population.
- Connect with colleagues across NHS Wales, sharing knowledge and developing networks for peer support.
- Champion the value of lived experience and co-production in service planning.
- Inspire, inform and empower participants to drive the delivery of seamless mental health services.
- Invest in professional development with protected time to enhance skills and knowledge around evidence-based practice and research.



A series of knowledge exchanges on specific topics will take place online and at various sites across Wales, each hosted by a team or organisation. As part of the knowledge exchanges, participants will share expertise, information and insights between individuals and organisations to foster greater collaboration, learning and innovation.

Insights from all the knowledge exchanges will be presented at a conference in April. The conference will include networking opportunities, keynote speeches, workshops and an innovation showcase.

[Find out more about the Wales Mental Health Leadership Exchange.](#)

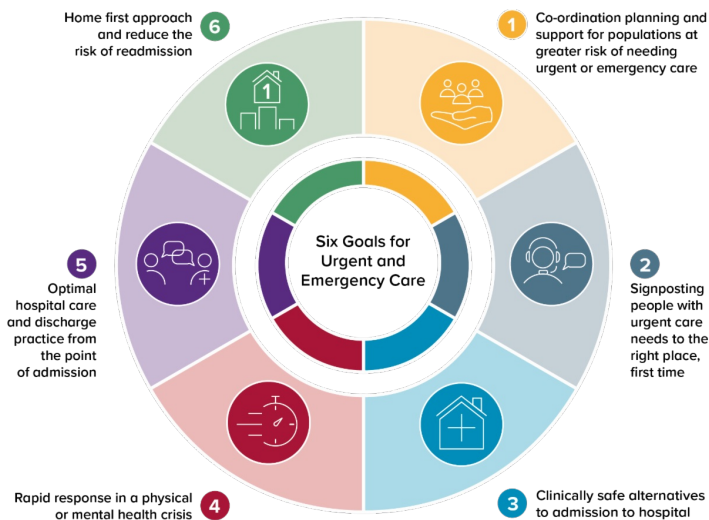
Preventing Deconditioning programme getting underway

Further to December's update, the Six Goals National Programme and Quality, Safety and Improvement Directorate have invited executives and other key colleagues to a Preventing Deconditioning webinar in February.

The webinar will introduce the national approach that we will be taking with organisations throughout NHS Wales to reduce the significant impact that deconditioning is imposing on our organisations and those in our care.

Preventing Deconditioning will bring together a cohort of projects that will be undertaken by teams in organisations throughout NHS Wales to identify and test improvements that can be implemented to prevent aspects of deconditioning. The work will identify sustainable improvements that will in turn be implemented across Wales.

The process for identifying suitable projects will open immediately following the session. Participation will include membership of the Safe Care Partnership, which will provide coaching and support introducing quality management approaches to elevate participating teams' work.



Women's Health Plan

Produced by Dr Helen Munro and her team at the Strategic Clinical Network for Women's Health, the first ever Women's Health Plan for Wales was published in December, setting out a 10-year vision to improve healthcare services for women.

Research shows that while women live longer than men, they live fewer years free from disability and wait longer for pain relief. Many women report having their symptoms dismissed.

The plan is based on feedback from more than 4,000 women across Wales about how health services can ensure that women are listened to, and their health needs understood.

First Minister Eluned Morgan and Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing, Sarah Murphy joined women at a Women Connect First 'Let's Age Well' exercise class in Cardiff to launch the plan.

This was followed by the formal presentation of the plan to Members of the Senedd and a photocall with members of the Women's Health Coalition who contributed to the plan's development.



Engaging with us

Since our last update, we have had excellent uptake of the opportunity to engage with us, which will inform various areas of work.

The valuable conversations that colleagues across NHS Wales have been

having as part of the engagement activity have been challenging and



productive, with views gathered from colleagues representing a broad spectrum of professions and roles across NHS organisations throughout Wales.

There is still an opportunity to contribute your thoughts, and we are particularly interested to gather further views from nurses and allied health professionals. A small number of anonymous interview slots with an independent research team remain available.

[You can enquire about the interviews here.](#)

Our short survey, which should take approximately 15 minutes to complete, also remains open. You can [complete the survey here](#).



If you would like us to focus on a particular topic in a future edition, then please get in touch and let us know.

NHSWales.Executive.Contact@wales.nhs.uk

If you just opted in, you're consenting to receive marketing emails from: NHS Wales Executive, 1st Floor, River House, Ynys Bridge Court, Gwaelod y Garth, , , Cardiff, CF15 9SS. You can revoke your consent to receive emails at any time by using the SafeUnsubscribe® link, found at the bottom of every email. [Emails are serviced by Constant Contact](#)