



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Caerdydd a'r Fro
Cardiff and Vale
University Health Board

Cardiff & Vale University Health Board Annual Equality Report 2023-2024

This document is available in Welsh and on request in a range of accessible formats and languages.

Please email EquityAnd.Inclusion@wales.nhs.uk

Contents

Introduction & Background

Outcome 1: People are and feel respected

Outcome 2: We communicate and engage with people in ways that meet their needs

Outcome 3: More people receive care and access services that meet their individual requirements

Outcome 4: Gender and any other protected characteristic pay Gaps are eliminated

Conclusion & Vision for 2024-2025

Introduction and Background

The Cardiff & Vale UHB Annual Equality Report 2023-2024 provides an overview of the progress we have made in delivering planned outcomes as set out in our [Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024](#). To learn more about our work, we recommend reading the Cardiff & Vale UHB Annual Report 2023-2024 and [Shaping Our Future Wellbeing 2023-2035](#).

Cardiff & Vale UHB is responsible for the care of over 500,000 people living throughout Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. In 2023-2024 we employed 17,862 members of staff across the organisation.

Our work aims to support everyone to ensure that they are treated fairly and with respect, and we work within several different legislative requirements including the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010. The Public Sector Equality Duty places a statutory Duty on Cardiff & Vale UHB to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Health Board aims to discharge this duty through delivering on our Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024. Our Plan sets out our equality objectives to support the delivery of our strategic aims. Our Annual Report describes our work towards implementing the objectives during 2023-2024. This includes highlighting achievements and identifying areas where further work needs to be done.

Our objectives were developed through engagement with patients, staff, partners, equality organisations, and other stakeholders in partnership with Wales Public Body Equality Partnership.

The four outcomes set out in our Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 are:

1. People are and feel respected, this includes patients, carers and family members as well as staff and volunteers.
2. We communicate and engage with people in ways that meet their needs.
3. More people receive care and access services that meet their individual requirements, including those from socio-economic communities.
4. Gender and any other protected characteristic pay gaps are eliminated.

These outcomes are aligned to our [Shaping our Future Wellbeing Strategy](#) (<https://cavuhb.nhs.wales/about-us/our-mission-vision/shaping-our-future-wellbeing-strategy/>) and the [Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015](#) (<https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-10/well-being-future-generations-wales-act-2015-the-essentials-2021.pdf>) .

In the following section, we reflect upon the work undertaken in Cardiff & Vale UHB to deliver the four outcomes set in our Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024.

Outcome 1: People are and feel respected

Promoting Cardiff & Vale UHB as a great place to work

Over the past year, the People Resourcing Team has worked tirelessly to promote the Health Board as a great place to work, engaging with diverse groups within our communities. In alignment with the Future Generations Act, we have focused on increasing awareness of UHB (University Health Board) careers and recruiting talent from underrepresented groups and areas of deprivation across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.

A Widening Access Framework has been developed and socialised within each Clinical Board to promote the range of activities that the department delivers.

Partnering with Cardiff Commitment and Careers Wales, we have promoted NHS roles to young people by attending 29 school and college events and delivering virtual presentations to over 5,000 pupils, many from areas of deprivation. These engagements showcased the diverse career opportunities within the NHS, planting the seeds for future workforce aspirations.



Digital Stories

The Patient Experience Team uses Digital Stories to empower individuals to share their experiences of not only the care we provide, but also of working within our organisation. The link below is a digital story from a colleague highlighting the difficulties faced by those with hearing impairment in our workforce.

The Digital Story lead has been attending One Voice staff network, the Health Board's staff network for colleagues from ethnically diverse communities, meetings to encourage staff to share their stories where they feel comfortable in doing so.

Staff Networks

The Head of Equity and Inclusion meets bi-monthly with the chairs of the Health Board's staff networks to better understand the experiences of staff.

Access Ability Staff Network



The Health Board's Access Ability Staff Network, which was launched in January 2021, supports members of staff living with a disability, impairment or long-term health condition. Access Ability is a lived-experience network for CAVUHB staff to come together and talk about their experiences at work, and other barriers that impact their day-to-day lives.

LGBTQ+ Staff Network



Our LGBTQ+ Staff Network continues to help our staff create a more inclusive and diverse organisation. The network provides staff with the opportunity of social interaction, peer support and assisting in raising awareness of equality. The network supported the Health Board in promoting LGBTQ+ awareness events, including Pride Month and Trans Day of Remembrance.

One Voice Staff Network



Our OneVoice Staff Network is an employee group for colleagues from ethnically diverse communities. The Network aims to raise awareness of the lived experiences of people from ethnically diverse communities, provide peer-to-peer support, and to work with the Health Board in our journey to becoming an anti-racist organisation. The Health Board has launched a SharePoint page for the OneVoice Staff Network to encourage colleagues to join the network and to raise awareness of the network's work.

The One Voice Staff Network were integral to the shaping of the Health Board's anti-racist action plan to ensure the experiences of staff were captured as part of the

planning. One of the key actions in the plan is the 'Winning Hearts and Minds' action, which looks to engage with our diverse workforce to better understand their experiences and capture the 'why' work around the importance of anti-racism.

Rhwyd-iaith Staff Network



Rhwyd-iaith is our staff network for Welsh language users of all capabilities. Launched in 2022, Rhwyd-iaith is a group where people can gain the confidence to use their Welsh in the workplace and at home, to build connections between colleagues, and raise awareness of the importance of Welsh language in healthcare. Providing excellent quality patient care is the Health Board's priority and using Welsh in the workplace can support with that.

Launch of 'My Health Passport'



In November 2024, the Health Board launched the 'My Health Passport', a key initiative designed to support disabled colleagues and those with long-term health conditions in having open and constructive conversations with their line managers about their condition and workplace adjustments.

The passport serves as a portable record of agreed adjustments and can move with the individual if they change teams, helping to ensure continuity of support and easing conversations with new managers.

The launch event was attended by Jane Hutt AM, who expressed her enthusiasm for understanding the real-world impact of the passport. Initial feedback from staff has been overwhelmingly positive, highlighting its practical benefits in fostering an inclusive and supportive workplace.

The 'My Health Passport' was developed in collaboration with the AccessAbility Staff Network and Trade Union Partners, ensuring that the voices and experiences of those it aims to support were at the heart of its creation.

Celebrating South Asian Heritage Month



In August 2023, the Health Board hosted a South Asian Heritage Month celebratory event, providing a platform for colleagues to share their experiences and heritage. The event served as an opportunity to foster inclusion, amplify diverse voices, and celebrate the contributions of South Asian staff within the organisation.

Senior leaders, including the Chair of the Board, Chief Executive, and Director of People & Culture, attended in support of the event, reinforcing the Health Board's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

By recognising and valuing cultural heritage, this event contributed to a more inclusive workplace where all staff feel seen, heard, and celebrated.

Inclusion Calendar 2024



During 2024 we saw the Health Board launch its third organisational 'Inclusion Calendar'. The document provides a selection of key dates and events that reflect the diverse local population of our staff, service users, and stakeholders. The calendar helps us to ensure that important events and meetings are not scheduled when key

sections of the workforce of patients may not be able to attend, as well as providing opportunities to celebrate and raise awareness.

National Action Plans

The Health Board continues to drive equity and inclusion through targeted action plans that address systemic barriers and promote a more inclusive workplace and healthcare environment.

Anti-Racist Action Plan



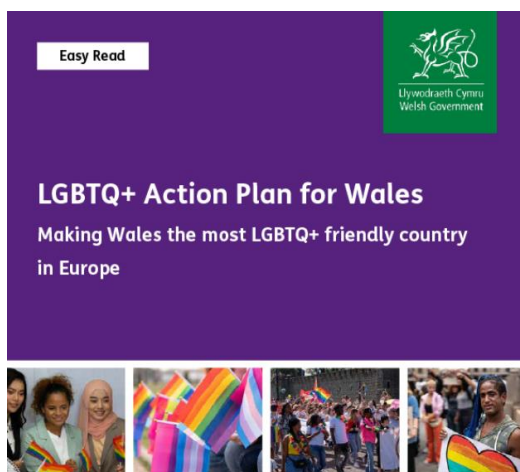
The Health Board's Anti-Racist Action Plan has been reviewed, with discussions held between action leads and key stakeholders to accelerate progress. This includes:

- Communicating updates through the Communications & Engagement Team to ensure transparency and engagement.
- Embedding anti-racist awareness into existing training programmes within Education, Culture, and Organisational Development.
- Collaborating with the People Analytics Team to prepare for the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES), with reporting set for April 2024.

The Health Board has also supported Diverse Cymru workshops, reviewing NHS Wales policies and procedures through an anti-racist lens. The Inclusion Ambassador Programme continues to equip senior leaders with tools and knowledge to champion anti-racism.

Additionally, during Black History Month, the Health Board celebrated a Black icon each day throughout October, sharing their stories on the Equity & Inclusion SharePoint site. This initiative provided staff with the opportunity to learn more about Black history, contributions, and diverse experiences, reinforcing the organisation's commitment to education and awareness.

LGBTQ+ Action Plan



Building on this momentum, the Health Board has begun shaping a local LGBTQ+ Action Plan for the organisation. Key stakeholders—including the LGBTQ+ staff network and the Welsh Gender Service—have been engaged to establish a Task and Finish Group to develop the plan.

The plan will mirror the structure of the national LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales, ensuring alignment with wider strategic objectives while addressing local priorities. This initiative reflects the Health Board’s commitment to fostering an inclusive culture for LGBTQ+ staff, patients, and service users.

Equity and Inclusion Summit 2023

In October 2023, Cardiff & Vale UHB held an Equity & Inclusion Summit, bringing together the Senior Leadership Board, including members of our Executive Team and senior leaders from across the organisation. The summit provided a vital opportunity to explore national priorities in equity and inclusion, inform our organisational strategy, and identify ways to embed these principles into our culture, ensuring they are experienced by all our people.

The event aimed to create a space for meaningful discussion, reflection, and collaboration, allowing leaders to examine how equity and inclusion can be woven into everyday practices, policies, and decision-making. Attendees engaged in thought-provoking discussions about the challenges and opportunities in creating an equitable workplace and improving outcomes for both staff and service users.

Keynote speakers included Professor Anton Emmanuel, who provided insight into the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) and the critical role of data in driving change, and Dr Lisa Cordery-Bruce, who shared her expertise on shaping the Welsh Government’s LGBTQ+ Action Plan. Their contributions enriched discussions and reinforced the importance of a data-driven, intersectional approach to equity and inclusion.

The summit also facilitated interactive sessions where leaders could explore tangible steps to promote inclusivity, share best practices, and develop action plans to drive meaningful change. By addressing structural barriers and fostering an environment of

accountability, the summit strengthened our commitment to embedding equity and inclusion in all aspects of Cardiff & Vale UHB's operations.

The event underscored our commitment to fostering a truly inclusive environment where every individual feels valued, respected, and supported to thrive. The insights and strategies generated at the summit will serve as a foundation for our continued efforts in building a more equitable health board for all.

Employment Initiatives

DFN Project Search



Our pre-employment programme is designed to support individuals with learning disabilities and/or autism in developing the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed for permanent employment. Through tailored learning and hands-on experience, the programme provides a structured pathway into the workforce.

Since its launch, the programme has achieved significant success:

- Year 1: 85% of interns secured employment
- Year 2: 67% gained employment
- Year 3: 16 interns participated

By providing meaningful opportunities and workplace support, the programme continues to break down barriers to employment, helping individuals to build sustainable careers and contribute their talents to the workforce.

Supporting Care Experienced Individuals into Employment



The department successfully secured a HEIW grant to deliver a Widening Access Programme aimed at supporting care experienced individuals into employment within the NHS. This initiative, developed in partnership with Cardiff Commitment, Vale of Glamorgan Council, Cardiff and Vale College, and Into Work Services, is designed to break down barriers, provide tailored support, and track outcomes to ensure long-term success.

Several initiatives are currently underway to support care experienced individuals up to the age of 25, with two individuals already securing placements in Cyber Security and Cellular Pathology. By offering structured pathways into healthcare careers, the programme helps care experienced young people build skills, confidence, and sustainable employment opportunities within the NHS.

Career Taster Sessions

Over the past year, three Career Taster Sessions have been delivered within Pharmacy, providing Year 12 students with an insight into the role of a Hospital Pharmacist. Organised in collaboration with Cardiff Commitment, Careers Wales, and Vale of Glamorgan schools, these half-day sessions have proven to be a successful model, with plans to expand them into other healthcare areas.

Each session gave students a comprehensive overview of the profession, helping them explore career pathways within the NHS. A group of 15 students participated, with many expressing a strong interest in pursuing Pharmacy as a career following their experience.

By offering first-hand exposure to NHS careers, these sessions are playing a key role in engaging and inspiring the next generation of healthcare professionals.

Work with the Department of Work and Pensions

The People Resourcing Team has partnered with the Department for Work and Pensions to promote career opportunities within the Health Board to individuals who have experienced long-term unemployment. This collaboration has provided valuable pathways into employment through hands-on experience and direct engagement.

As part of this initiative, a series of work placement taster sessions have been introduced, allowing participants to experience the Health Board as an employee. In addition, tailored taster sessions and guided tours have been organised with the Catering and Housekeeping departments, giving individuals a first-hand insight into these roles before applying.

By offering practical exposure and support, this initiative helps to remove barriers to employment, build confidence, and encourage more individuals to take their first steps towards a career in healthcare.

Expanding Recruitment and Workforce Diversity



Over the past year, the recruitment team has actively engaged with communities across Cardiff and the Vale, participating in 41 recruitment events to promote NHS entry-level roles, such as housekeeping and catering. To make the process more accessible, attendees could apply immediately using paper application forms.

In addition, the team organised two major UHB recruitment events at the Hilton Hotel, bringing together a wide range of Health Board departments and attracting over 1,000 participants. These inclusive events have played a key role in strengthening connections with the local community, particularly underrepresented groups.

To support career awareness and inspire the next generation of healthcare professionals, two pharmacy taster sessions were delivered to 30 students from diverse schools across Cardiff. This included participants from The Brilliant Club, which helps students from less advantaged backgrounds access academic opportunities.

Further efforts to improve workforce diversity and inclusion include:

Redesigning job adverts to better reflect the diversity of our workforce and attract a broader range of applicants.

Expanding work placement opportunities through the Work Experience Framework, now offering Job Taster Sessions, Internships, and placements for school and university students, as well as those who are long-term unemployed.

By creating multiple entry points into NHS careers, these initiatives are helping to build a more inclusive, representative, and skilled workforce for the future.

Apprenticeship Academy

The Apprenticeship Academy continues to make great strides in creating new opportunities for apprentices to join Cardiff and Vale across a range of areas, including Digital, Administration, and Building Services Engineering. This year, we also took an exciting step into clinical roles, welcoming our first Healthcare Science and Healthcare Support Worker Apprentices.

In a large organisation like ours, it is essential to develop apprenticeship pathways in all areas to help us 'grow our own' talent and build a strong, sustainable workforce. Alongside our new apprentices, we have also supported 215 existing staff members by enrolling them onto various training frameworks, helping them to upskill and develop in their roles.

A highlight of this year was attending the Apprenticeship Awards Cymru in March 2024, where we were thrilled to be named Macro Employer of the Year. This prestigious award recognises our dedication to apprenticeships, our dynamic approach, and the way we have embedded apprenticeships into the organisation's learning and development culture.

Engaging with Stakeholders

Strengthening Public Engagement and Partnerships

Throughout 2024, we have remained committed to ensuring diverse voices from communities across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan are heard. We recognise that some individuals face barriers to engagement, and we are actively working to remove these obstacles. The approval of our Co-production, Engagement, and Consultation Framework in November 2023 reinforces our responsibility to consider the Equality Act and the impact of service changes on all community members.

This year, we have engaged with the public on various service changes, ensuring we assess and address any additional barriers they may create. For example, if a service relocates, we consider the impact on individuals relying on public transport or those with limited travel options. Our engagement approach includes digital and in-person opportunities, targeted outreach via community platforms, and tailored communication to reach underrepresented groups.

Collaboration remains at the heart of our engagement strategy. In partnership with Cardiff and Vale Public Services Boards, we have established a Public Services Engagement Group to share best practices and strengthen community connections. We continue to work closely with the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Equality Forum, 50+ Forums, Youth Forums, and initiatives like the Your Place steering group, which focuses on areas of deprivation in Barry.

Embedding Health Equity in Strategy and Planning

Building on the success of our 2023 strategy, we have developed six strategic portfolios that shape our future in key areas, including people and culture, population health, quality, clinical services, infrastructure, and future generations. Health equity is a central theme in our work, particularly within Shaping Our Future Population Health and Places, Quality, Value, and Sustainability, and Clinical Services. By focusing on prevention, reducing health inequalities, and improving access to care, we aim to halt the widening life expectancy gap by 2027 and maintain it through 2035.

This strategic, community-driven approach will empower people to lead healthier lives and ensure that services are designed to meet the diverse needs of our population.

Health Inclusion Service



Cardiff and Vale Health Inclusion Service's (CAVHIS) vision is to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals who find it hard to access healthcare through the delivery of a high-quality health screening service and community orientation. CAVHIS works hard with our partners towards reducing health inequalities in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.

Prayer Mat Packs

In response to patient and family feedback, the Patient Experience Team has introduced 'Prayer Mat Packs' to support the spiritual and religious needs of patients, staff, and visitors who may be unable to leave their location to pray.

An initial 20 packs were funded and distributed to key ward areas, ensuring accessibility where they are most needed. Since the pilot launched, Prayer Mat Packs have been made available in the following areas:

- University Hospital of Wales (UHW): MEAU, Delivery Suite, Rainbow Oncology, A7, Palliative Care Team, Digital Library Trolley
- St David's Hospital
- University Hospital Llandough (UHL): Meadow, Alder, Maple, Beech, Willow, Oak, Digital Library Trolley

Digital Trolley Volunteers continue to promote the initiative during ward rounds, distributing leaflets and displaying posters in relevant areas. Feedback is actively being gathered to assess the impact of the packs and inform future improvements and wider rollout.

This initiative reflects our commitment to inclusive care, ensuring that spiritual and religious needs are respected and supported across our health board.

Patient Experience Team and Dementia Training

The Voluntary Services Team have worked closely with the Dementia Learning and Development Team to put in place training opportunities for volunteers.

The aim is for all volunteers to receive informed level dementia training to better understand and support patients and visitors living with dementia that they engage with. Following this there is follow up training volunteers can attend, and a new module is being piloted.

Participating in Pride Cymru



The Health Board proudly joined organisations from across NHS Wales to participate in Pride Cymru. This vibrant event provided an excellent opportunity for the Health Board to visibly demonstrate its ongoing commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion and equality.

By taking part in Pride, the Health Board reinforced its dedication to creating a supportive, inclusive environment for the LGBTQ+ community, both within the organisation and in the wider community. The event also highlighted the Health Board's efforts to promote equality of opportunity and celebrate the diverse identities of its staff and service users.

Supporting Trans and Non-Binary Employees

In May 2023, the Health Board approved a Trans and Non-Binary Employee Support Procedure, marking a significant step towards fostering a more inclusive and supportive workplace for trans and non-binary staff.

To further embed best practice across NHS Wales, the Head of Equity & Inclusion presented the procedure at the NHS Wales Assistant Directors of Workforce & OD meeting, inviting colleagues from other health organisations to adopt it as a template for their own policies. The procedure has also received endorsement from trade unions within the Health Board, reinforcing its importance in ensuring dignity, respect, and equity for all staff.

This initiative demonstrates the Health Board's ongoing commitment to workplace inclusion, ensuring that all employees feel safe, valued, and supported in their professional environment.

Cardiff and Vale Youth Board



Cardiff And Vale Health Youth Board
Bwrdd Iechyd Ieuenctid Caerdydd A'r Fro

Made up of volunteers aged 13-25 from a wide range of backgrounds and communities, Cardiff & Vale Youth Board is fundamental in giving young people a voice in shaping services across Cardiff and Vale. The Youth Board contribute to the ongoing developments in Child and Adolescent Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Services, and have participated in engagement for the Health Board's 10-year strategy, Shaping Our Future Wellbeing.

People are respected and free from abuse, harassment, bullying and violence

Child Health

There has been an increase in Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Group 2 training for staff at all levels who are patient/public facing. We have introduced training twice a month on a rolling programme.

Disclosures of Domestic Abuse from both the public and staff has increased since lockdown. The Health Board has appointed further health Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA) to address this. We have also appointed an IDVA for Children to consider healthy relationships and will pick up cases from the Paediatric Emergency Department.

The whole of the safeguarding agenda has increased with more awareness and recognition of abuse in all its forms and neglect. Staff can find more information in the [CAVUHB Safeguarding Annual Report 2022/2023](#)

Tackling Hate Crime

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board is committed to addressing and preventing hate crime. Our Case Management Team plays a key role in raising awareness, ensuring staff understand that targeting individuals based on their identity is completely unacceptable.

We recognise that experiencing hate crime can be distressing and overwhelming. Staff who are affected are encouraged to report incidents to the police when appropriate.

Importantly, reporting to South Wales Police does not mean victims are required to take further legal action, but it does allow them to access vital support services.

When staff report hate crime incidents, the Case Management Team is on hand to offer guidance and support. Incidents can also be reported internally via DatixCymru, following the Health Board's reporting policies and procedures.

Hate Crime Reports

During 2023/24, 12 hate crime incidents involving Health Board staff were reported to the police—an increase from the previous year. This suggests that staff are becoming more confident in speaking out against unacceptable behaviour.

Of these cases:

- Three incidents of racially aggravated public order offences were taken forward through the Criminal Justice System, leading to:
 - A 12-month conditional discharge
 - A 9-month contract with the Cardiff Youth Offender Panel
 - An out-of-court resolution through Restorative Justice
- Eight incidents were reported for information purposes, with victims choosing not to pursue formal complaints. Where appropriate, the police issued informal warnings to the perpetrators.

We will continue working to create a safe and inclusive environment for all staff, ensuring that hate crime has no place in our organisation.

Training, Support and Development

Treat Me Fairly

Equality and diversity training is mandated in the Health Board with staff required to complete the 'Treat Me Fairly' eLearning module. As of 31st March 2024, 76.15% of our staff had completed the eLearning module.

Patient Experience Team and Sight Life

The Patient Experience Team made links with Sight Life to look at how we can work together to improve the experiences of people living with a sight impairment, using our services. Bespoke training was developed for our Information Centre Volunteers and Welcome Team Volunteers, raising awareness of the different types of sight impairment and how best volunteers can support someone who comes into the hospital requiring support. So far one session has taken place at University Hospital of Wales and one at University Hospital Llandough, with a further session planned.

Equality Health Impact Assessments

Equality Health Impact Assessment (EHIA) are a critical tool in ensuring that strategy, policy, plans, procedures, and service changes are developed with a clear

understanding of their impact on different population groups, particularly those who may experience health inequalities or face barriers to access.

By embedding EHIA into our governance and decision-making structures, we continue to proactively assess and address inequalities, ensuring that the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion remain central to our work. This approach not only strengthens compliance with statutory duties but also enhances our ability to create a healthier, fairer future for all.

Further information on the EHIA toolkit can be found on our website:

[EHIA toolkit - Cardiff and Vale University Health Board \(nhs.wales\)](https://cavuhb.nhs.wales/staff-information/toolkits/ehia-toolkit/)
(<https://cavuhb.nhs.wales/staff-information/toolkits/ehia-toolkit/>)

Inclusion Ambassadors

Our vision is to ensure that teams across the Health Board reflect the diversity of the communities we serve, with meaningful representation of people from protected characteristic groups at all levels. By fostering a workforce that is truly inclusive, we can drive forward positive change, creating a safer, kinder, and more welcoming environment for all staff.

A key initiative in achieving this vision has been the development of Inclusion Ambassadors—a role designed to empower individuals to advocate for change, challenge inequalities, and actively support their colleagues. Inclusion Ambassadors act as champions of equity, diversity, and inclusion, helping to embed these values across their Clinical and Service Boards.

By embedding inclusion at every level, we are not just meeting our responsibilities—we are building a stronger, more compassionate organisation that reflects the diverse voices and experiences of our workforce.

Clinical Diagnostics & Therapeutics

Throughout 2023/24, the Clinical Diagnostics and Therapeutics (CD&T) Clinical Board continued its commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion. Inclusion Ambassador meetings remained active, and collaboration with Staff Side led to the creation of a Safe Space initiative, allowing staff to anonymously raise concerns about discrimination. A poster featuring Trade Union logos was developed to acknowledge their support in this work. This initiative provides an alternative reporting route while complementing existing formal processes.

To promote inclusivity, the Clinical Board shared EDI Awareness Days, webinars, and events through newsletters, team briefings, and its SharePoint site. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion remains a standing agenda item in key governance meetings, reinforcing its importance. The Anti-Racist Action Plan was widely circulated, and the One Voice Network presented real-life examples of race discrimination at a Clinical Board

meeting to enhance awareness and learning. Additionally, staff were encouraged to update their equality data on ESR to support more inclusive workforce planning.

Inclusion Ambassadors led various initiatives, including Welsh language promotion, disability awareness training, and participation in Project Search, which provided student placements—some of whom secured permanent roles. Therapies secured funding to print the Stepping Stones booklet in a physical format, ensuring accessibility for those who struggle with digital resources. Pharmacy has been reviewing patient experiences, focusing on supporting those with language barriers. Meanwhile, AWTTTC established an Equality Group to enhance Equality and Health Impact Assessments (EqHIAs), and Medical Illustration produced EDI resources while offering expertise in accessible design.

The Clinical Board's Equality and Inclusion efforts aim to enhance patient care and staff experience, ensuring an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and supported. Moving forward, the Therapies directorate will develop an action plan to drive this agenda, reinforcing the Board's commitment to embedding equality into everyday practice.

Mental Health

The Mental Health team has been recognised for its commitment to equality and inclusion, winning three awards from Diverse Cymru. These achievements highlight the ongoing dedication to creating inclusive services that support both staff and service users.

Individual Placement Service (IPS) Thrive continues its vital work in helping people with mental health conditions gain employment, providing tailored support to improve job opportunities and overall wellbeing. Meanwhile, the Lived Experience team is training individuals with disabilities to take on Peer Roles, offering valuable support based on their own experiences. Notably, the first Peer Role outside of Mental Health has now been introduced, with a team member working in Live Well.

Additionally, the Recovery and Wellbeing College plays a crucial role in providing accessible learning opportunities for staff, service users, and carers alike. Their courses promote personal growth and resilience, ensuring equitable access to education and support. For more information on how to engage with the College, please contact Susie Boxall.

Medicine

The Medicine Clinical Board continues to strengthen its commitment to equity and inclusion by developing a network of volunteer champions for the nine protected characteristics. These champions play a vital role in sharing key information and educational resources throughout the Clinical Board, helping to foster a more inclusive and informed workforce.

The Clinical Board also ensures adherence to all UHB Equality Policies, with compliance monitored through line management processes and directorate structures. In addition to internal efforts, services within the Clinical Board actively work to tackle health inequalities and improve access to care. A recent example includes the Stroke Service, which facilitated a stroke prevention awareness event in partnership with the Sikh community of Cardiff, supporting targeted education and prevention efforts in underrepresented communities.

By embedding equality into both its workforce and service delivery, the Medicine Clinical Board continues to drive meaningful change and improve health outcomes for all.

Specialist Services

The Specialist Services Clinical Board has taken significant steps to enhance staff wellbeing, engagement, and workplace culture over the past year.

- A dedicated Staff Wellbeing Programme was introduced in 2023 within the Inherited Bleeding Disorders Service, with plans to expand it across the wider directorate this year.
- Haematology is actively exploring ways to improve staff engagement, including plans to introduce the “Staff Voices” programme and conducting a focused morale-boosting initiative within the Bone Marrow Transplant (BMT) team.
- In Critical Care, three Staff Nurses who joined NHS Wales through the ‘Once for Wales’ International Recruitment scheme were invited as guests of the First Minister to attend Diwali celebrations in November, where they also had the opportunity to meet the Chief Nursing Officer (CNO).
- Critical Care teams participated in team days throughout 2023, fostering stronger relationships between Team Leaders and staff, facilitating two-way communication, and addressing the evolving needs of post-pandemic critical care nurses.
- A ‘Speaking Up’ Group has been launched within Critical Care to empower all multi-disciplinary team (MDT) members to confidently raise concerns, ask critical questions in the clinical setting, and contribute to a stronger safety culture.

By prioritising staff wellbeing, engagement, and psychological safety, the Specialist Services Clinical Board is fostering a more inclusive, supportive, and collaborative working environment.

Primary, Community & Intermediate Care

The Primary, Community & Intermediate Care (PCIC) Clinical Board has continued to embed equity, inclusion, and staff wellbeing across its services and workforce.

- Equity Champions have been identified across the Clinical Board, including within the Clinical Board Management Team, to promote key messages from the Corporate Equalities Team. Additionally, the Mass Immunisations and Testing Team has introduced Senior Equity Leads to drive forward equity-focused initiatives.
- The Clinical Board remains committed to adhering to Health Board Equality policies and has collaborated with the Equity & Inclusion Team to provide targeted training, including anti-discrimination and neurodivergence awareness sessions, for staff in local areas.
- Given its focus on delivering community-based healthcare, PCIC ensures that equity considerations are at the heart of service design. This approach helps address health inequalities and social barriers, ensuring accessible and inclusive services for diverse patient groups.
- Wellbeing Champions have been trained across PCIC to facilitate peer support, providing colleagues with advice, guidance, and signposting on mental health and wellbeing.
- The Health Board was named Macro Employer of the Year at the Apprenticeship Awards Cymru 2024. A current apprentice and a former apprentice from the Primary Care Team shared their experiences during the validation panel, helping to secure the Health Board's finalist position.
- PCIC teams have prioritised staff engagement and wellbeing, with events such as the Cardiff Community Resource Team (CRT) Full Team Event in October 2023. This event enabled staff to share their experiences and highlighted wellbeing activities designed to support and enhance the CRT team's working environment. Dedicated Wellbeing Team Volunteers continue to champion these efforts.

By embedding equity, engagement, and wellbeing into its operations, the PCIC Clinical Board is ensuring both staff and patients benefit from a more inclusive and supportive healthcare environment.

Surgical

The Surgical Clinical Board in Cardiff & Vale UHB has taken proactive steps to foster an inclusive and supportive workplace, ensuring that colleagues from diverse backgrounds feel valued and respected. Monthly wellbeing sessions have been introduced, celebrating cultural diversity through shared experiences, including international food buffets that bring together flavours from around the world.

To support our internationally educated nurses (IENs), we have established a dedicated IEN support group, providing a welcoming space for newly recruited nurses. In addition, an IEN buddy system has been introduced, pairing new staff with experienced colleagues to help them settle into their roles and the wider organisation.

Recognising the importance of cultural and religious observances, clinical leads have adapted staff schedules to accommodate significant events such as Eid and Ramadan. Where needed, off-duty arrangements are adjusted to support staff

wellbeing, and colleagues are given the flexibility to observe prayer times. These initiatives reinforce our commitment to an inclusive and respectful working environment, ensuring that all staff feel supported in both their professional and personal lives.

Outcome 2: We communicate and engage with people in ways that meet their needs

Engaging to Shape an Inclusive Future

As part of the Health Board's Shaping Our Future Wellbeing strategy consultation, staff were actively engaged to share their views and experiences, particularly in relation to health inequalities. These discussions played a crucial role in shaping future priorities to improve equity in healthcare delivery.

In addition, extensive staff engagement was undertaken to inform the development of Shaping Our Inclusive Culture: Cardiff & Vale University Health Board's Strategic Equality Objectives and Plan (2024-2028). Through engagement sessions, drop-in sessions, and online feedback via Microsoft Forms, staff had the opportunity to help shape the organisation's strategic approach to equality, diversity, and inclusion for the next four years.

The Health Board's Strategic Equality Objectives (2024-2028) focus on:

- Fostering an inclusive culture through awareness campaigns and education, ensuring all individuals—staff, patients, and service users—feel valued and respected.
- Enhancing communication to ensure information is accessible to everyone, promoting meaningful engagement.
- Improving accessibility within health services and facilities, creating a more inclusive environment for all.
- Enhancing data collection and analysis to better identify and address inequities in health outcomes and staff experiences.

Further staff engagement was conducted through the NHS Wales Staff Survey, in which 3,662 staff members shared their insights. In addition to general workplace experiences, the survey also gathered feedback on diversity and equality, helping the Health Board identify areas for improvement and inform future actions.

By listening to staff voices and embedding their feedback into strategic planning, the Health Board is committed to fostering a more inclusive, equitable, and supportive working and healthcare environment.

Accessible Communication and Information

All Wales Therapeutics and Toxicology Centre

All Wales Therapeutics and Toxicology Centre (AWTTC) has established an Equality Group, an internal working group of staff from the different sections of AWTTC. The group aims to promote equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the Health Board and ensure that AWTTC conducts and publishes high-quality EHIA's for its work projects.

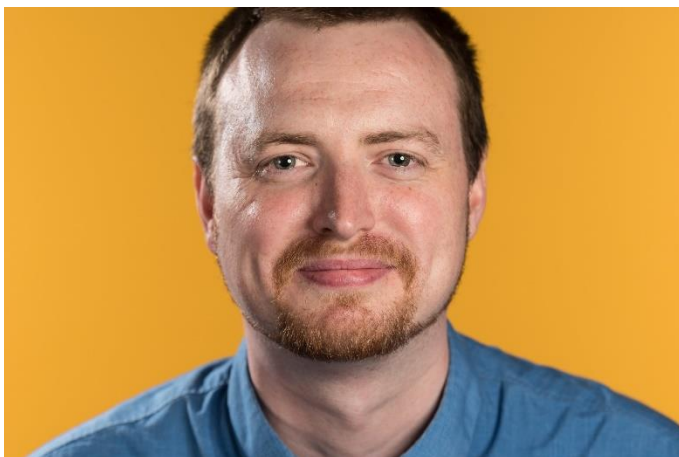
Medical Illustration

Medical Illustration provides clinical and non-clinical photography and video, along with design, illustration and print services to the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board. They have designed and printed Inclusion Calendars, LGBTQ+ posters, and the Annual Equality Report, to name but a few. They support departments by providing patient material, often in different languages, both in printed and digital formats.

The department has a Disability Champion who is also able to use BSL. A member of the team also attends the Access Ability Network meeting.

The photographers are trained to be sensitive to patient needs and to adjust their care accordingly to ensure all patients are treated equitably. A survey is offered to all patients and results are used to inform appropriate improvements to the service.

The designers have been trained and have extensive experience of designing material for a wide variety of learning needs. They have produced larger format versions of documents for those with visual impairments. They can advise on accessible design improvements and can produce materials to help patients with cognitive impairments. This all helps contribute to an improved patient experience for all those who require our care.



Kris is the Disability Champion from Medical Illustration

Cedar Service



Centre for Healthcare Evaluation, Device Assessment and Research (CEDAR) is a service that focuses on service improvement and redesign projects for medical devices, diagnostics and interventional procedures within NHS Wales. The national Patient Recorded Outcome Measures (PROMs) translation into Welsh is led by Cedar and Cedar has employed a Welsh-language Co-ordinator to undertake this work. The National Patient Reported Experience Measure (PREM) refresh has involved stakeholder groups around Wales including Mental Health, Llais, visual and hearing impairment groups, learning disabilities groups, ethnically diverse communities, youth and the elderly.

Feedback Mechanisms

As a Health Board, we introduced the CIVICA Once for Wales Feedback System in October 2022. This new patient feedback system allows the Patient Experience Team to engage with our local community, to understand how the services the Health Board provides are working. Patients are sent a text message link to leave feedback on the services they have received, making it far more accessible for those with sensory loss as they will be able to access it using their own devices, the mobile friendly survey pages also adapt to screen size and orientation.

The surveys are clear and user friendly with a logical layout and sharp colours and contrast. To ensure the surveys are accessible they can be created with photo symbols for those with learning difficulties, in BSL for those who are hearing impaired, Text-To-Speech and Speech- To-Text format and can be translated into several languages. Our current main survey is available in our top 10 languages, including:

- Welsh
- English
- BSL / Welsh
- BSL / English
- Arabic
- Bengali
- Portuguese
- Simplified Chinese

- Kurdish Sorani
- Farsi
- Czech

In addition, we have kiosks in a number of public and outpatient areas, these kiosks are very user friendly with the survey designed in an 'easy read' format, using universally understood visuals for patients to provide quick, real-time feedback.

Information and Support Centres

Our Information and Support Centres continue to play a vital role in ensuring patients have access to clear, inclusive, and accessible health information. Resources are available in a range of formats, including Easy Read, to meet the diverse communication needs of our communities.

In addition to providing information, the centres offer signposting to specialist organisations that offer further support. This includes partnerships with organisations such as Sight Life and Action on Hearing Loss, ensuring that patients can access tailored guidance and services that enhance their wellbeing and independence.

These efforts reflect our commitment to making health information accessible to all, empowering individuals to make informed decisions about their care.

Improving Accessibility for Volunteer Applications

Cardiff & Vale UHB's Voluntary Services is committed to ensuring that volunteering opportunities are accessible to everyone. To support this, we now offer paper copies of application packs for individuals who may have difficulty accessing or using digital platforms.

In addition, large-print application packs and Easy Read documentation are available for volunteers who require these adjustments. By removing barriers to participation, we are creating a more inclusive and welcoming volunteering experience for all.

Editorial Panel and Guidance

This year, the Patient Experience Team has expanded the Editorial Panel by recruiting more volunteers to support its important work. The panel plays a key role in reviewing patient resources to ensure they are clear, accessible, and user-friendly.

Over the past year, the panel has reviewed 26 resources created by staff, including guidance to support deaf patients and a wellbeing poster for outpatient clinic areas. Volunteers provide valuable feedback on readability and accessibility, helping to ensure that patient information meets the diverse needs of our communities.

By involving volunteers in this process, we are strengthening our commitment to patient-centred communication and improving the overall experience for patients and their families.

Interpretation Services



The Health Board continues to use the Wales Interpretation and Translation Service (WITS) to support patients and service users who require interpretation when accessing care. In the case of emergencies where WITS is not available, or where interpreters cannot be agreed, the Health Board has two online interpreting services available, one being Sign Live which supports with British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation.

Sign Live allows BSL Users to communicate with anyone, at any time, using the app to connect them to a qualified BSL Interpreter. A number of devices in the Health Board have this app and it can also be used via a computer, making it easily accessible. The Health Board also uses Language Line, which has the option of BSL and American Sign Language (ASL). Available within seconds at the touch of a button, Language Line's award-winning video interpreting is available in over 40 of the most requested languages.

Butetown Team: Supporting Women, Children, and Public Health Engagement

The Butetown Team is a dedicated group of four part-time staff members who work exclusively with women and children within the community. With Somali and Bengali as two of the primary languages spoken within the team, they play a vital role in building trust and engagement with local communities.

This year, the team has worked closely with Public Health Wales to improve outreach and communication around key public health messages, particularly vaccinations. Their efforts have included:

Attending community focus groups and school sessions alongside the School Nursing Team to encourage the uptake of childhood vaccinations.

Supporting community members to attend Public Health 'Lunch and Learn' sessions, as well as wider health and wellbeing events.

Through their culturally sensitive approach, the team has helped to break down barriers, improve health awareness, and ensure that vital public health information reaches those who need it most.

Welsh Language Standards

The Equity & Inclusion Team has been working closely with Clinical Boards to support the delivery of the national '[More than Just Words](#)' plan, which aims to strengthen Welsh language provision in healthcare. This has included efforts to improve the recording of Welsh language skills among staff and targeted collaboration with key areas such as Mental Health Clinical Board (MHCB) and the Dementia Team, where bilingual communication is particularly vital.

To further support Welsh language development, the Health Board has partnered with the National Centre for Learning Welsh to pilot a suite of Welsh language learning opportunities for staff. The first cohort of the 'Building Confidence' course has been successfully completed, with a second cohort set to begin in April 2024. These initiatives are crucial in enhancing staff confidence in using Welsh, ultimately improving our ability to provide bilingual healthcare services.

The Health Board remains committed to strengthening compliance with the Welsh Language Standards and ensuring that Welsh-speaking patients can access care in their preferred language. We have maintained regular engagement with the Welsh Language Commissioner, who has acknowledged a positive shift in our approach while also highlighting areas for further improvement.

Senior leaders, including the Chair, Chief Executive, and Director of People & Culture, met with the Welsh Language Commissioner in January 2024 to discuss progress and challenges. This commitment to engagement was reinforced in a recent review meeting, where the Commissioner's Office recognised the steps taken while emphasising the need for continued development.

The Health Board acknowledges that there is still work to be done to fully embed bilingual service provision, but these ongoing efforts mark significant progress in ensuring equitable, high-quality care for Welsh-speaking patients and communities. For further information on Cardiff and Vale UHB and the Welsh Language, please see our [Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2022-2023](#).

Outcome 3: More people receive care and access services that meet their individual requirements

Efforts to Reduce Health Inequities

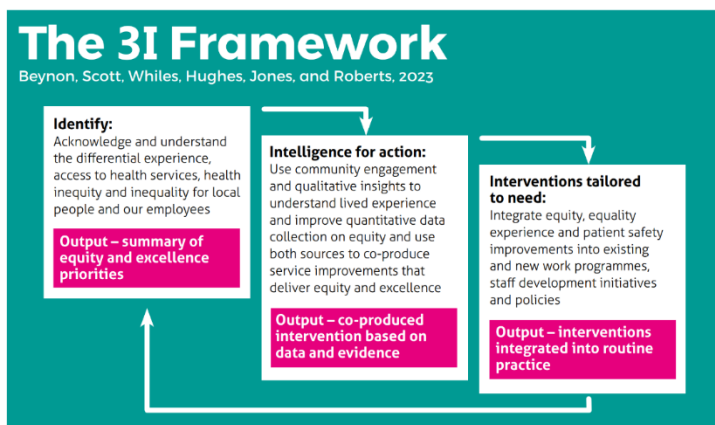
Improving Access to Healthy, Affordable, and Sustainable Food



Food Sense Wales (FSW), a fund within Cardiff and Vale Health Charity and hosted by the local public health team, continued its vital work throughout 2023/24 to improve access to healthy, affordable, and sustainable food across Wales. As part of its Sustainable Food Places initiative, FSW helped establish cross-sector food partnerships in all 22 local authority areas, supported by a £2.5 million investment from Welsh Government. This work involved collaboration with every Health Board in Wales, alongside developing a community of practice, offering one-to-one support, hosting workshops, and sharing case studies.

An interim evaluation report by UWE, published in June 2023, highlighted the strong focus of these partnerships on tackling food poverty across Wales. Closer to home, Food Cardiff made significant progress toward achieving Gold Sustainable Food Places status, expanding its membership to 259 individuals from 122 organisations. These efforts continue to drive meaningful change in food accessibility and sustainability across the region.

Equity, Equality, Experience, and Patient Safety Framework



In 2023, a three-step process – the 3i equity, equality, experience and patient safety framework – was launched and presented to the board to help staff think through how their services could make a difference to reducing health inequalities. The framework together with a [Support Pack](#) was developed to assist staff with applying the framework in practice. The Health Board identified a number of initial actions that have

strategic importance to delivering on the Equality, Equity, Experience and Patient Safety agenda. These 24 projects were described in a first action plan. The actions needed are organisation wide: Planned Care, Equitable Employee Experience, Unscheduled Care, Maternity Care, Prevention, Analytics, Primary Care, Representation, Mental Health and Patient Safety. Work began in multiple areas to progress these initial plans during this financial year with an initial 6 month update on progress to be (will be/was) presented in May 2024.

Outcome 4: Gender and any other protected characteristic pay gaps are eliminated

Gender Pay Gap

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board aims to ensure that people are treated fairly and equitably at work. Our focus ensures that staff have the same access and opportunities to reward, recognition, and career development.

Gender Pay Gap legislation (developed by the Government Equalities Office), whilst a statutory responsibility for all employers of 250 or more, provides a useful mechanism with which we can measure our progress toward gender pay equality. Cardiff & Vale's Gender Pay Gap Report 2024 can be found on our website. The report outlines the current Gender Pay Gap within the Health Board, the steps that have been taken to reduce it, and the actions that will be taken to eliminate it.

Conclusion and Vision 2024-25

Cardiff and Vale UHB is committed to fostering a truly inclusive organisation where every individual—staff, patients, students, volunteers and communities—feels valued, respected, and supported to thrive. We recognise that achieving equity requires continuous reflection, engagement, and proactive efforts to eliminate barriers and ensure fairness in all aspects of our work. Our vision is to create an environment where diversity is celebrated, and inclusion is embedded at every level, enabling us to deliver high-quality, equitable healthcare services for all.

Moving Forward: Our Commitment to Change

As we progress through 2023–2024, Cardiff and Vale UHB will continue to build on the foundations set by our new Strategic Equality Plan 2024–2028. We will work towards:

- Advancing key national strategies, including the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan, Welsh Government's LGBTQ+ Action Plan, and More Than Just Words.
- Enhancing our data collection processes to gain deeper insights into workforce and patient demographics.
- Strengthening engagement with community partners to shape inclusive services and policies.

- Reducing the Gender Pay Gap.
- Supporting staff networks and governance structures to promote a culture of inclusion.
- Continuing our commitment to bilingual service provision, ensuring equitable access to Welsh language resources.

Through these actions, Cardiff and Vale UHB reaffirms its commitment to embedding equity and inclusion across all aspects of the organisation. We recognise that achieving meaningful change requires sustained effort, collaboration, and accountability, and we remain dedicated to creating a culture where everyone can thrive.