

Chief Executive CONNECTS



Dear Colleague,

12/01/2021

As I am sure you are aware, the Mass Vaccination Programme has been ramping up over recent weeks. To date we have delivered 13,577 vaccines to our priority groups, 1,257 of which were delivered just yesterday - an incredible feat.

But, while we have been making great progress, we have faced some issues with staff being able to access our booking lines. Yesterday, I sent a letter out to our staff acknowledging and apologising for these difficulties, and outlining our approach for improving the system going forward, which includes a new online booking form for UHB staff to request their vaccination appointments, which in less than 24 hours has received 1,400 booking requests.

This week our GP Practices are working to deliver the vaccination to our 80 and over population. Some are already underway, and all 60 practices will have received training and a vaccine supply by the end of the week. This will significantly ramp up our delivery to the most vulnerable in our population and it is great partnership working to have our Primary Care colleagues on board to help us deliver this. If you are under this cohort please be assured that your GP Practice will contact you to offer an appointment so you do not need to call them to book.

Our Mobile Vaccination Teams is also working hard to deliver the vaccination to care home

staff and residents. Three care homes were completed last week with plans to increase our capacity and resource to deliver this to the rest of the care homes over the coming weeks. Care Home managers will be contacted with the plans.

We have made a commitment to vaccinate all cohorts 1-4 with their first dose by the 15 February so please be patient while we work through this.

For the individuals that have had their second dose postponed you will be contacted with another date for your second dose so do not need to contact the booking centre. Appointment letters for these are being sent out this week. Our Executive Medical Director, Dr Stuart Walker discusses evidence about the interval between doses in his blog today.

I want to thank everyone who has worked so hard to get this programme up and running over the last few weeks. It has not been an easy task but they have done an incredible job. I would ask our communities to please be patient as we continue ramping up this significant operation, ready to vaccinate those most in need within the next few weeks.

Len Richards
Chief Executive

Letter from the Nursing & Midwifery Council

The Nursing & Midwifery Council has together with the UK's Chief Nursing Officers has issued a letter to nurses and midwives across the UK, updating colleagues on the work it is doing to support them in meeting the challenges being posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and strengthen the workforce capacity, in addition to giving guidance on supporting the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines and the available support for individuals' health and wellbeing.

The letter also acknowledges the flexibility that nursing and midwifery professionals have shown in often working outside of their normal roles or places of work during the pandemic, and the consideration that must be given to continuing to work safely in line with

the NMC code under these circumstances. Most importantly, the NMC and CNOs share their incredible pride in nursing and midwifery staff throughout the UK for their outstanding response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which is certainly a sentiment that we have for our colleagues here at Cardiff and Vale UHB.

[You can read the joint letter from the NMC and CNOs here.](#)

Lakeside Wing accepts its first patient



Our new Lakeside Wing on the grounds of the University Hospital of Wales now has more than 50 patients, after receiving its first patient during the festive period.

The new surge facility currently has 166 beds which is on track to increase to 400 beds before the end of this month, enabling us to meet the capacity requirements for winter and COVID-19.

The facility is being used to support patients who are undergoing essential rehabilitation on

their road to recovery after a period of acute illness, not necessarily COVID-19. These patients are benefiting from a multi-disciplinary model of care from staff including physiotherapists, occupational therapists, dieticians, pharmacists, healthcare supportworkers and registered nurses.

Construction of the Lakeside Wing began on 12 September, and everybody involved has done a phenomenal job to get the facility up and running in such a short space of time – especially against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I'd like to thank everybody involved for their outstanding work so far, and look forward to the rest of the facility coming online very soon. [Find out more about Lakeside Wing here.](#)

Focusing on Mental Health

Monday 18th January is 'Blue Monday', which is supposedly the 'most depressing day of the year.' While we know that it is little more than a gimmick which perhaps undermines the seriousness of mental health issues, we can use it to remind ourselves of the significant strains that our staff and the wider community are currently coping with.

We are all by now well aware of the intense pressure that is currently placed on our Health Board and the wider NHS by the COVID-19 pandemic, which is having a clear impact on us all to some degree. In addition to this I'm alert to the ongoing additional burden that COVID-19 restrictions and home schooling are having on people's mental health.

I have been taken aback by the dedication, professionalism and resilience that has been shown right across our organisation over the past 10 months. The response by our staff to the COVID-19 pandemic and its array of associated issues has been inspiring, and I am incredibly proud of their input.

That said, we are living in difficult times, and it is to be expected that some of us may well be struggling in the current circumstances. There is a wide range of information, guidance and advice available to people who are struggling with their mental health, much of which is available through our Employee Wellbeing Service. [You can find out more on the EWS webpages.](#)

Annual Leave

We are quickly approaching that time of the year when members of staff would usually be planning to use up the last of their annual leave entitlement, but as we all know this is far from a normal year.

Staff across the UHB have gone above and beyond in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, which in many cases has meant that they have been unable to take as much annual leave this year as they might have liked.

Annual leave is an important component of looking after our own wellbeing, so I would urge staff to make every effort to use their allocated leave in the coming weeks, taking the opportunity to have some much-needed time to rest, recuperate and recharge.

However, with the Health Board under particular pressure at the moment, I understand that for some staff this simply might not be feasible.

I would like to assure any members of staff who have outstanding annual leave entitlement that they may be unable to use that there will be flexibility around carrying their annual leave forward, beyond the usual policy. If you have any further concerns, please discuss these with your line manager in the first instance.

Beat Flu

Book your flu jab

Members of the public who fall into high risk groups are being encouraged to get their flu vaccine. Individuals can check their eligibility for a free NHS flu vaccine by visiting www.beatflu.org.

In addition, people aged 50 to 64 (as of 31 March 2021) are now eligible for a free NHS flu vaccine from their local GP surgery or community pharmacy.

If you are asked to wait, please be patient as they may be prioritising higher risk groups first. Flu vaccinations can be accessed in the community from a GP surgery, Community Pharmacy, or school as appropriate.

Staff Flu Vaccination programme

Our staff flu vaccination programme continues and our flu champions are working incredibly hard to offer immunisations to all staff (including non-frontline workers). I would urge staff members to contact their Clinical Board Flu Lead to arrange an appointment.

Occupational Health continue to offer seasonal flu vaccines to UHB staff - health board staff should call internal 43264 or external 02920 743264 in advance to book a slot.

Open access clinics are also available each Friday between 9am and 4pm at Denbigh House, UHW.

I am very pleased to report that 61.7% of health board staff had now received their flu jab.

We have achieved a very impressive 64.5% of

frontline staff vaccinated and there is a lot of work which goes into making this happen across the health board. I would like to once again thank all staff involved in the delivery of this programme for their determination and hard work.

Staff flu incentive

Each staff member receiving a flu vaccine in work is eligible to be entered into our weekly prize draw. Congratulations to all of our lucky winners so far who have received a wide range of prizes.



Congratulations also to our latest winners - Angharad Robinson from Surgery clinical board who was last week's winner and received an Echo dot and Royston Leonard from Estates, winner of the previous week who will receive a National Trust voucher.

[View further information on this year's Flu vaccination programme,](http://www.beatflu.org) or visit: www.beatflu.org

Other News and Events

Health Charity supports CAMHS service

Cardiff & Vale Health Charity has recently supported a bid for funds to help improve the environment for service users, their families and staff.

[Read more.](#)

Supporting staff to make better working environments

Cardiff & Vale Health Charity has recently helped to improve the working environment for staff at the Phoenix Community adult mental health rehabilitation unit in Cardiff.

[Read more.](#)

Virtual Race Around Wales Raises Money for Community Health

The Ras123 campaign has this year raised £2,300 for health charities across Wales.

[Read more.](#)

One Million steps, 100 days, 500 miles

Are you looking for a new challenge this year to improve your physical and mental health and wellbeing? Make this campaign your first step.

[Read more.](#)

Three rules to reduce the spread of Covid-19 in Wales

As we work through the COVID-19 vaccination programme, I would like to take the opportunity to remind you of the importance of basic actions we should undertake NOW to keep ourselves and others. Please continue with regular handwashing, social distancing and wearing a mask when required.