



CHIEF EXECUTIVE CONNECTS

Dear Colleague,

17/10/2022

With the nights now really starting to draw in, we're seeing more of the seasonal signs that winter is really now fast approaching. It's no secret that this winter is going to be one of significant challenge not only to the NHS, but also for individuals and communities throughout the UK.

Here at Cardiff and Vale UHB we're continuing to finetune our plans for getting through winter as safely as possible, ensuring our teams are in the best possible position from a capacity and planning perspective to address the challenges that we will face.

Unfortunately, many of our services are already under immense pressure before winter has really begun to bite, and we have seen demand for our services increase again over the weekend. This is making accessing services, whether it be primary care, mental health care, urgent and emergency care or planned care, a challenge for those seeking our help. The experience can involve longer and uncomfortable waits for assessment and treatment for which I apologise. The current situation is also incredibly difficult for the team, whose commitment and dedication to providing the best possible care in the face of difficult circumstances is unwavering and fills me with deep pride and gratitude.

We are urging the public to only seek access to services where absolutely necessary and in the case of the Emergency Unit - where

they have a life-threatening illness or serious injury. Please consider all available options for accessing healthcare. If you are unwell and unsure what to do, you can visit the online symptom checker or call NHS 111 for advice. Our Primary Choice webpages also highlight the range of services available through Primary Care providers such as GP practices and community pharmacists.

I would also again encourage all colleagues and the public to do all they can to avoid becoming unwell this winter by taking up the COVID-19 booster and the flu vaccine if you are eligible. If you cannot attend your COVID-19 booster appointment you can [rearrange by completing this form on our website](#) or call the booking line on 02921 841234.

Further to my recent Ask Suzanne session on the Cost of Living Crisis, a new resource has been made available on the team SharePoint site with a range of information, advice and support that colleagues may find useful to support themselves, family and friends, or patients, and we will continue building on this as the situation develops.

Just to end on a positive note I felt really privileged to have been invited to the Surgery Star Awards 2022 earlier this week and to have been a part of the celebration of team endeavour, individual achievement and commitment. You could feel the team

camaraderie in the room and the pleasure in one another's successes. Celebrations like this are so important especially when it can feel and seem our work and efforts are not valued, recognised or celebrated. Many congratulations to all the nominees and winners, thank you for the invite (also a hint to any other teams holding a celebration!) it was a really enjoyable evening.

I also met two other teams this week that once again impressed and inspired me with their high degree of expertise, passion and desire to continually innovate and improve the quality of care they are giving, the outcomes achieved as well as the experience of the patients and their colleagues. A big thank you to the Parkinson's Service Team as well as the Ward East 10 UHL Team. I really enjoyed meeting you all, hearing and learning more about your work as well as giving me the opportunity to thank you all in person.

If you or your team want to share your story, challenge, opportunity or celebration then please do let me know so that we can fix that up. Contact me at suzanne.rankin@wales.nhs.uk.

Finally, then to end with a huge thank you to everyone across the Cardiff and Vale team for your incredible efforts in prolonged and difficult times. The care that you are providing in the face of such constraints is remarkable, and I am confident that by working together, communicating effectively, taking care of one another and approaching all that we do in a kind and compassionate way we will make it safely through the months ahead. Thank you and do take care.

Best wishes

Suzanne

Operational changes improve efficiency of Single Cancer Pathway

As a Health Board we are undertaking work to improve the efficiency and timeliness of treatment of patients on a Single Cancer Pathway (SCP), including operational changes to help identify and prioritise patients on the pathway.

The latest update includes the introduction of a Single Cancer Pathway (SCP) sticker system, to ensure there are no internal delays to a patient's diagnosis and treatment. The SCP sticker system will be used on all correspondence relating to patients on a single cancer pathway, including referrals to another speciality, requests for diagnostics such as radiology and pathology, and requests for treatment.

Our cancer services team have been working hard to communicate with all services that manage cancer patients to help reduce potential harm caused by patients waiting longer than necessary for diagnosis and treatment. Across the Health Board working together to improve the outcomes for all our cancer patients remains a priority.

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board colleagues can find out more about the SCP sticker system on the SharePoint news page.

Apprentices' success with primary care

At Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, we strive to be a great place to train and work and we're passionate about attracting, recruiting and retaining valuable members of staff who can help to shape our workforce.

One scheme that has seen recent success is the Primary Care Business Administration Apprenticeship, which has seen three individuals join the Primary, Community and Intermediate Care (PCIC) team over the last year to develop their skills, experience and knowledge to embark on a career within primary care.

Rhys Pepper, Jennifer Searle and Beatrice Ferda-Riley have spent the last twelve months supporting with administration, business & contract management, reception duties, communication and data work and attending a variety of meetings. Each apprentice spent eight months of their placement with a hosted GP practice and the remaining 4 months working alongside the primary care team within the Health Board to provide a broad experience of operational general practice, contract management and strategic planning.

It's the first time the primary care team has hosted apprentices, and Rhys, Jennifer and Beatrice's support has been instrumental to the service. All three individuals were offered permanent positions with their hosted GP practice and began their new roles last month.

Josie Smith, our Primary Care Contract & Development Manager has received great

feedback about the apprentices. She has said: "The success of the apprentices shows how much of an influence they have had during their time on placement. The demand for primary care services across the system has increased tremendously over the last few years and the drive and determination of the apprentices to support during challenging periods has been really impressive.

"Each apprentice demonstrated drive and determination to respond to the needs of the practice, manage their own responsibilities and develop their skillset. The feedback received from the practices has been incredibly positive. We wish Jennifer, Beatrice and Rhys all the success with their new careers."

[To find out more about the PCIC apprenticeship programme and what Jennifer, Rhys and Bea thought of their placements, please visit this webpage.](#)

Good luck to Jennifer, Rhys and Beatrice as they begin their careers within Cardiff and Vale UHB!

Main nitrous oxide manifold decommissioned at University Hospital of Wales

The main nitrous oxide manifold at University Hospital of Wales has been successfully decommissioned, marking a huge step in the Health Board's commitment to reducing carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions.

Nitrous oxide is commonly used in healthcare for anaesthetics but despite being a critical part of healthcare delivery, it is considered a harmful greenhouse gas. Studies show nitrous oxide has more than 265 times the global warming potential than CO₂.



There are currently four nitrous oxide manifolds across the Health Board's sites which are the typical method of storage. Findings by our multi-disciplinary project team have identified wastage from this type of system can be high due to leaks and loss of gas from the supply.

The Health Board has trialled portable nitrous oxide cylinders at the Children's Hospital for Wales as part of an individual pilot which has increased efficiency considerably, from 2.5% to 74%. This demonstrates that significant gains are to be made from moving from a piped supply to a portable cylinder supply.

Following the successful pilot, the team scaled the pilot study across the organisation through The Spread and Scale Academy, with ambitions to share insights and encourage change across Wales.



Earlier this year, the manifold at the University Hospital Llandough site was fully decommissioned. Now, only two of the four manifolds remain in use, the dental manifold at University Hospital of Wales and a manifold at St David's Hospital. There is a project underway to explore decommissioning these remaining manifolds. The team's made great progress so far and I'm looking forward to seeing the remainder of their excellent work come to fruition.

[You can read more about the project here.](#)

Dragon's Heart Institute highly commended at NHS Confederation and AHSN Network's Innovate Awards

I was delighted to see that Cardiff and Vale University Health Board was recently highly commended at the NHS Confederation and AHSN Network's Innovate Awards in the Innovative Health System of the Year Category for its Dragon's Heart Institute programme of work.

The Innovate Awards are a collaboration between the AHSN Network, which operates as the innovation arm of the NHS in England and acts as the collective voice of the 15 academic health science networks (AHSNs); and NHS Confederation, the membership body, representing healthcare in the UK.

The Innovative Health System of the Year category in which the Dragon's Heart Institute was shortlisted recognises health and care systems where a culture of innovation is the bedrock of how things are delivered, celebrating organisations with the culture, capability and track record of adopting and spreading innovation at scale.

We were highly commended in this category for the work associated with the Dragon's Heart Institute which was developed following the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic to spearhead innovation, develop future leaders, and to act as a catalyst for change across public services to improve the outcomes for citizens in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan, Wales and beyond.

[Read more on the Dragon's Heart Institute website.](#)

Dementia Learning and Development Team

A new Dementia Learning and Development Team has been established to support colleagues right across the Cardiff and Vale health system to deliver the best possible care to patients with dementia.



Funded by the Cardiff and Vale Regional Partnership Board, the Positive Approaches to Care (PAC) Trainers will help colleagues to see care from the perspective of those living with dementia, connect them to the theory of brain change and understand how people living with dementia can be enabled to live well, and introduce PAC skills and support colleagues to understand how they can support and enable relationship centred care.

[You can meet the team members on the RPB website here.](#)

Goodbye to Alison and Sue

Alison Needham, and Activities Co-ordinator and Healthcare Support Worker at UHL is retiring after 22 years in service.



Alison has worked in many roles, and despite personal hurdles herself in this time she has come in day after day and brought comfort, joy and entertainment to patients, staff, volunteers and visitors alike.

During that time, Alison has taken many new staff members and volunteers under her wing and gone the extra mile to help patients celebrate special occasions like Christmas and royal events. She has enhanced so many patients' lives, and definitely deserves the 'me time' she's looking forward to enjoying in her retirement.

Alison's colleague, Natalie McCulloch, a Multi Professional Rehabilitation Assistant on Stroke Rehab Centre described Alison as a constant source of inspiration, compassion for all and wisdom who she was honoured to have worked alongside.

This week, we also bid farewell to our Clinical Diagnostics and Therapeutics Clinical Board Director for Quality and Safety, Sue Bailey.



Sue is retiring after a 37-year career in the NHS, and almost 20 of those have been with Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, initially as a Superintendent Registrar and in more recent times in leadership roles in the CD&T Clinical Board.

I'd like to thank Sue for her dedication to the NHS over those years, particularly those spent here at Cardiff and Vale UHB, and on behalf of the organisation wish her the very best for her retirement and the years ahead.

Patients share gratitude for 'Excellent' South Wales Neuroendocrine Cancer Service

Last Thursday, patients of the South Wales Neuroendocrine Cancer Service hosted a celebratory event in recognition of its excellence.

The service provides care for patients living in south Wales who have Neuroendocrine Cancers (incorporating Neuroendocrine Tumours - NETs), uncommon but increasingly prevalent cancers that arise from different organs of the body.

Hosted here at Cardiff and Vale UHB, the service has this year been awarded European Neuroendocrine Tumour Society (ENETS) Centre of Excellence status, marking a significant milestone during the period of transformation that began in 2017. It has received glowing reviews with patient satisfaction dramatically increasing to over 95 per cent during that time, and won and received nominations for a string of UK and international awards.

The celebratory event, which took place at Hensol's Vale Resort, saw members of the South Wales Neuroendocrine Cancer Service and its patients sharing their experiences of the service and its transformation over the past five years.

Author, comedian and former doctor, Adam Kay participated in the event in his role as ambassador of the South Wales Neuroendocrine Cancer fund of the Cardiff & Vale Health Charity, which will support the service to implement innovative projects and research activities to improve care for patients while developing a better understanding of the cancer, how it can be detected earlier, and for the development of new therapies and management strategies.

Patients referred to the South Wales Neuroendocrine Cancer Service receive expert care tailored to their diverse, complex needs from a multidisciplinary team of clinical nurse specialists, pathologists, gastroenterologists, radiologists, dietitians, oncologists, endocrinologists, general and specialist surgeons, palliative care, and cardiologists, led by Consultant Gastroenterologist, Dr Mohid Khan.

The care provided by the team includes precise diagnostic assessment, holistic symptom management including nutrition, proactive monitoring, surveillance scans, clinical reviews and a variety of therapies or surgery.

Mohid and the Team delivering the wider South Wales Neuroendocrine Cancer Service should be incredibly proud of their outstanding achievements in recent years. Their excellent efforts have had a significant, positive impact on the quality of patient care, made clear by this wonderful gesture and positive feedback from their patients.

Thank you, congratulations and well done, team!

Diwrnod Shwmae

Last Saturday was Diwrnod Shwmae, which aims to celebrate and promote the use of the Welsh Language by encouraging everyone in the work place to use it, by starting every conversation with 'shwmae'.

I'd like to thank colleagues who took part in the day, which helps to highlight the language's place in all of our lives, from fluent speakers to learners and those still uncertain about their own Welsh.

Whatever your level of fluency, I encourage colleagues to use their Welsh language skills not only on Diwrnod Shwmae but everyday, to both help celebrate our culture operating in the nation's capital, and to ensure our services are as accessible and welcoming as they can be for everybody in the community.

To help colleagues greet each other, patients and service users, our Welsh language team has produced prompt cards containing essential phrases, which can be ordered from our Welsh Language Officer, Alun Williams.



Cardiff & Vale Health Charity

Jonathan Aver is crowned Health Hero for October

Cardiff & Vale Health Charity has announced that Jonathan Aver, Senior Capital Construction Officer has been crowned Health Hero for October. Jonathan has been hailed as someone who always displays the values of the organisation, and whilst working under much pressure, continues to engage proactively and pleasantly with others.

[Find out more about why Jonathan was selected here.](#) Congratulations Jonathan, enjoy your much deserved treat!

