

Chief Executive CONNECTS



Dear Colleague,

18/11/2021

This week feels like the first real lengthy cold snap of Autumn as we head into the traditional winter season, and dare I say the conversations around Christmas at home and in work. I really do hope this will be the season to be jolly but the reality for many of us working in the NHS, and the patients with us, is that it is a difficult time of year.

This year with the need to restrict visiting and access to those in hospital, to reduce the risk of infection from COVID 19, it will be even more difficult for some. We have been working with our local authority partners, Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust, families and friends to ensure that we discharge as many people as possible from our hospitals to get people back home to their loved ones.

Over the next few weeks as we start to hit the winter pressures- although it has felt like winter started in August this year - we will be asking our communities to do all they can to firstly keep themselves fit and well. Prevention is better than cure and wherever possible take care to look after yourselves. Slips, trips and falls are one of the key admissions to our emergency unit alongside respiratory conditions, very often caused by something as simple as getting cold. A difficult one I know for many with trying to keep the heating on with price hikes and many feeling the pinch of the cost of fuel.

We have lots of information on how to look after yourself and your loved ones, particularly the frail and older people. You can find some useful information on our [Keeping me well website](#).

One of the best ways you can help us to help you is by getting your flu vaccine. I would encourage all of our staff as well as our patients and community to get their flu jab as soon as possible. The evidence is clear. By having the flu jab and being double vaccinated against COVID-19 you are protecting yourself from getting seriously ill, but also protecting others around you too.

Following the awful events in Liverpool on Remembrance Sunday, which is now being treated as an act of terrorism, and as a result of the death of the MP David Amess, the UK threat level has been increased from substantial to severe, in line with national counter-terrorism alert levels.

I want to be clear, there is no intelligence to suggest we are expecting a threat to our own hospital sites, but we have a duty and responsibility to remain vigilant and the message is to be alert, not alarmed.

Our communities may see an increased police presence at some high-profile locations with lots of people. Again this is in line with previous responses to a changed national threat level. If you see something suspicious, or out of the ordinary then please alert our security team in the first instance. These have both been rare and unusual incidents and it is far better to be aware and to raise an alarm rather than wish you had after an event.

We continue to have restricted visiting in place across many of our sites but I would still urge you all to be more aware and report anything suspicious.

Prof Stuart Walker
Interim Chief Executive

Cardiff and Vale staff recognised in string of award wins

Following the triple award win for our Eye Care Team, our winning streak continues with further outstanding achievements for our nurses and midwives as well as our creative colleagues in Medical Illustration. These national awards are so well deserved and really shine a light on the amazing work our staff have delivered in what has been a very challenging year.

Last week our nursing and midwifery staff were recognised and commended at the RCN Wales Nurse of the Year Awards 2021. The annual event celebrates the achievements of nurses and midwives across Wales and recognises their positive influence on nursing and midwifery practice, and the care they provide to individuals and communities.

Our colleague Kirsty John was presented with RCN Wales Nurse of the Year, a well-deserved accolade for her fantastic work she has done to leading the testing system for all men arriving in custody and creating a vaccinations hub within HMP Cardiff. Kirsty also won the Primary Care Nursing Award. In total, five awards were given to our staff across seven different categories: Katherine Fischer, Winner of the Children and Midwifery Award, Sarah Rees and Paula Strong were Runners Up for the Advanced and Specialist Nursing Award, Abigail Holmes was a Runner Up for the Chief Nursing Officer for Wales Award, Emily John was a Runner Up for the Registered Nurse (Adult) Award, Emma Williams was Winner of

the Supporting Improvement Through Research Award and the Suzanne Goodall Paediatric Nursing Award was given to Laura Truscott-Wright.

Executive Nurse Director, Ruth Walker said "Huge congratulations to Katherine, Sarah, Paula, Abigail, Emily, Kirsty, Emma and Laura for demonstrating the amazing contribution that they make to the nursing and midwifery profession here in Wales and the benefit to our patients, citizens and communities. It was a real pleasure to see your work being recognised at the RCN Nurse of the Year Awards last evening.

"Each award or nomination is well deserved and further showcases the number of dedicated and uniquely talented nurses and midwives we have at Cardiff and Vale UHB.

"After what has been a difficult year it is great to see our hard-working nurses and midwives being recognised for their dedication and commitment in caring for our patients. It is so impressive to see how you have continued to lead, drive, and innovate within your clinical environments to improve outcomes for patients. Thank you."

Our Medical Illustration Department also scooped a total of 17 awards at the Institute of Medical Illustrators Awards which recognise excellence in clinical photography, healthcare design and clinical video. A special mention to Bolette Jones, Head of Service of Medical Illustration, who was presented with the Norman K. Harrison Gold Medal, a prestigious

award from the Chairman for her outstanding contribution to the profession.

Colleague Abi Bird who won a gold award for her photograph of Polypoidal Choroidal Vasculopathy, taken on a widefield retinal camera. The silver award winners were Abi Bird, Jess Leonard and Hannah Wilce and bronze award winners were Abi Bird, Laura

Mullen, Khris Swann, Joe Moody, Hannah Wilce and Lauren Price. I'd like to share my congratulations with this team who are a highly specialised and skilled group of people who make an important contribution to the care of patients.



Vaccination Update

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our staff for the resilience and professionalism they have shown throughout our vaccination programme, with our COVID-19 and flu programmes continuing to make good progress.

Getting vaccinated remains our best protection against serious illness from viruses such as COVID-19 and influenza. This winter we may see COVID-19 and influenza circulating at the same time, so getting vaccinated is important for helping to protect yourself, your family and your community.

Our flu vaccination programme is well underway and we are working with GP surgeries, Community Pharmacies and our staff Flu Leads to ensure those who haven't yet received their flu vaccination this season are offered it in the coming weeks.

If you are eligible, you will be offered a COVID-19 booster no earlier than 6 months after your second dose. We are scheduling booster appointments in the same order second doses were received. When it is your turn, you will receive an appointment letter inviting you for your booster. Please wait to be contacted, our booking line continues to receive a high volume of calls so please only call the booking line if you need to cancel or reschedule your appointment. If you have any questions about the autumn booster programme, you can find more information on the Public Health Wales website by clicking [here](#).

I would strongly urge you to get vaccinated in the coming weeks, to help booster your immunity this winter. If you are eligible and invited for your flu vaccine or COVID-19 booster don't delay, please prioritise your appointments.

Introduction to the Site Leadership triumvirate and OPAT (Operations, Planning and Transformation) Centre at UHW

As we emerge from the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, respond to scheduled and unscheduled care demand, and experience ongoing difficulties deploying our workforce, a decision has been made to introduce a new leadership arrangement at the University Hospital of Wales.

This site-based approach to leadership is increasingly common across large NHS organisations and will provide visible leadership, shorten decision-making chains and problem solve with staff across the hospital and beyond. The triumvirate are not an additional layer of management: they have delegated authority from the Health Board Executive Team to lead and support staff across the hospital.

The appointed triumvirate is:

- Scott McLean, Managing Director (UHW)
- Alun Tomkinson, Associate Medical Director (UHW)
- Jason Roberts, Deputy Executive Nurse Director / Interim Nurse Director (UHW)

The UHW triumvirate is here to support staff, so we can make a positive difference to what we know is a uniquely difficult time in our health service. Similar site leadership arrangements are being established at the University Hospital Llandough and in Primary & Community Care. The UHW site leadership team will work closely with the other two site leadership teams to ensure there is a whole system response.

Blood collection tubes update

You may be aware that since August there has been a critical national shortage of the collection tubes used to take blood samples. The situation has been of significant concern across the NHS and has meant that, where it has been safe to do so, we have had to reduce the number of non-clinically urgent and routine blood tests taken in order to preserve supplies of tubes for people who urgently required blood tests.

To further preserve supplies, our teams have been reviewing processes to identify opportunities where they could identify and remove unnecessary or duplicate tests. Their great work has identified new, efficient and sustainable practices that we will maintain moving forward, enabling us to minimise wastage and unnecessary use of blood collection tubes into the future.

I have been hugely impressed by the contribution of staff whose efforts to control the use of tubes has prevented the situation from escalating and impacting on urgent blood tests, with particular thanks to our colleagues in primary care.

Thankfully, the production issue that caused the shortage of blood tubes appears to have resolved, and we are beginning to see stocks of the tubes return to more comfortable levels. However, we are now faced with a backlog of routine and non-clinically urgent samples that need to be processed, at a time when our organisation is under some of the most significant strain in its history. Please be assured that while we work to prioritise and work through this backlog of routine and clinically non-urgent samples, we are continuing to ensure that all clinically urgent blood tests are collected. If you are concerned or need to access urgent care, please contact your healthcare professional.

Nursing staff and directors 'in this together' this winter

As we move into winter, we are very concerned about the pressures that are nursing and midwifery teams are experiencing and we have embarked on a number of initiatives to boost recruitment and strengthen our workforce. In addition, Executive Nurse Director, Ruth Walker, will be speaking directly with our nurses, midwives and ODPs across the health board to determine how we can better work together and support each other this winter. Ruth will host a special online Q&A as well as a series of drop-in sessions in key areas. We will be sharing more details soon so we ask staff to please keep a look out for this information.

Recovery & Redesign: Endoscopy Services

As a consequence of the pandemic, we have experienced a growing number of patients waiting for both treatment and surveillance. Additional funds from Welsh Government has enabled the service to recruit additional substantive staff and implement an insourcing arrangement to increase the volume of activity being undertaken which has meant we can reduce the number of patients waiting.

Our team has been boosted by a new Clinical Nurse Endoscopist, a Consultant Endoscopist and insourcing arrangements were put into place. Recruitment for substantive endoscopy nursing staff is ongoing.

The appointment of the Consultant has enabled clinical validation to be completed on 25% of patients on the surveillance waiting list of approximately 4000 patients using the British Society of Gastroenterology risk stratification tool. This process is ongoing.

New staff have also enabled insourcing activity to be established, with 8 lists per weekend at UHL and 4 lists per week at UHW. The service has also installed air filtration units, which has enabled an increase in the number of OGDs undertaken on each list by two patients.

Activity is being monitored weekly. From last week, activity was 124% of pre-COVID levels which means that the service is now starting to be able to address some of the backlog that has built up over the course of the pandemic

Looking ahead, a pilot of transnasal endoscopy is due to commence in early December which, if successful, will further increase capacity. The service is also working with Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board and In Health to procure a mobile endoscopy unit which would be sited at the University Hospital Llandough. It is hoped that the unit will become fully operational during Jan-Mar 2022.

PenGu reaches milestone in sequencing COVID-19 samples

Our colleagues and partners at the world-leading Pathogen Genomics Unit (PenGU) at Public Health Wales has officially sequenced over 100,000 COVID-19 samples and are continuing to do so. The sequencing of the samples is vital in monitoring how the virus is developing in Wales and to identify new

variants and what effect they may have on how the virus behaves.

This key milestone solidifies Wales' position as a global leader in Genomics and has facilitated scientists and health care professionals to make informed decisions throughout the

evolution of the pandemic, more crucially providing earlier detection of new strains and variants and to what impact they have on how the virus behaves.

I would like to personally extend my gratitude to Dr Fu-Meng Khaw, National Director of Health Protection and Screening Services and Executive Medical Director for Public Health Wales and to Dr Sally Corden, Head of PenGU and her team for their support.



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Iechyd Cyhoeddus
Cymru
Public Health
Wales

Car parking restrictions return on 1 December

AsAs you will now be aware, from 1 December we will be reintroducing car parking restrictions that were in place before the pandemic. Contractors ParkingEye will be back on site to ensure that all users are parking in designated areas. We understand that car parking spaces are limited and it is very busy at peak times, so we are asking those who can, to consider alternative ways of traveling including the free Park and Ride to UHW and UHL.

The buses run all day from Monday to Friday and are designed to provide a stress-free journey to our main hospitals for patients, staff and visitors. See our [website](#) for timetable information.



UHW marks 50 years since opening

This Friday 19 November marks 50 years since it was officially opened by Her Majesty The Queen in 1971. Radio Glamorgan, our hospital station, will be dedicating Friday morning to 1971 with a mix of music and memories. Tune in online through Radio Glamorgan's website or listen through your smart device.

Launch of new Shaping Our Future Sustainable Healthcare Website

Following the recent UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) and ahead of Wales Climate Week 2021, we have launched our new [Shaping Our Future Sustainable Healthcare website](#). This new website provides information on the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board Sustainability Action Plan, as well as the initiatives we are implementing in order to improve sustainability in healthcare delivery.

At Cardiff and Vale UHB we are passionate about improving our impact on the environment. This plan, and future engagement hub builds on what has been achieved and we look forward to future iterations which set the goals and ambitions even higher.



Llunio ein
Gofal Iechyd Cynaliadwy
i'r Dyfodol
Shaping Our Future
Sustainable Healthcare

Health Hero Winner

Cardiff & Vale Health Charity has announced that Carly Shier has been crowned Health Hero for November and will receive a treat from sponsors, Park Plaza Cardiff. Carly, who began her career in Procurement as a buyer before joining the UHL Theatre Stores team was nominated by her colleague, Victoria Wilson, Assistant Service Manager.

Carly is described as a huge asset with a 'can do' attitude and is a gold standard example of 'doing the right thing'. If you would like to nominate a staff member who has worked tirelessly to help colleagues or patients and deserves recognition, nominate them by emailing fundraising.cav@wales.nhs.uk