

Chief Executive CONNECTS



Dear Colleague,

19/01/2021

This has been another strong week for our Mass Vaccination Programme, as we have now passed 25,000 vaccinations. We continue to make good progress working through the JCVI priority groups one and two, with more than 13,000 frontline healthcare workers from Cardiff and Vale UHB and various partner organisations working on our patch, protecting our frontline from COVID-19 so that we can continue to care for our community. Numbers of over 80s receiving their vaccination are really starting to accelerate, with around 3,500 now vaccinated with the first dose. [You can keep track of progress on our website.](#)

This great progress is testament to the tireless work of our team delivering the vaccination programme across our sites, with all GP practices across the area now also on board and making an important contribution to our efforts. We have also been taken aback by the remarkable number of people showing an interest in supporting the roll out of the vaccination programme, whether to deliver vaccinations, help the booking centre, or support recipients of the vaccine. If you have put yourself forward and have yet to hear back, please be assured that the team will be in touch to guide you through the process as quickly as is possible.

In further positive news, we are starting to see the positive impact that lockdown is having on the number of cases of COVID-19 in the community. While it is reassuring to see things now moving in the right direction and we are starting to see admissions level off, services across the Health Board remain exceptionally busy. We are currently able to continue urgent surgery, cardiac and cancer treatment, however staff across our organisation are exhausted, critical care is still significantly constrained and elective surgery remains postponed. We must avoid even the smallest sense of complacency, which could see us move towards critical levels of pressure on our services.

For those who have received the vaccine, it's important to be aware that some people are likely to have mild infections of COVID-19 even after receiving the vaccine, and that they could still pass the virus to those they come into contact with. All of us must continue to observe the COVID-19 restrictions so that we can continue moving in a positive direction and to protect those around us, by wearing the correct PPE as required by your role, regularly washing your hands, maintaining a two-metre distance, and wearing a face covering as necessary

Len Richards
Chief Executive

Spread and Scale Academy application close this Friday

I am pleased to report that, in the few short weeks since we opened applications for the next Spread and Scale academy, we have already had an incredible response from across Wales. As there is only space for 50 individuals, competition for places will no doubt be fierce and I cannot wait to hear about all the fantastic projects which are selected to attend. Attending the Spread and Scale Academy and the skills you will learn there could be the difference between your project remaining in your own area and seeing it successfully implanted across your organisation, or NHS Wales for that matter!

Therefore, if you are considering submitting an application, I would heartily recommend that you do so as quickly as possible because applications will close on Friday.

If you want to know more about what to expect at the academy and submit an application, [please visit our webpage about it](#), where you can find podcasts with the Billions Institute who run it, and testimonials from previous attendees who have called it "the best thing [they] have attended in their career by a long way.

First Specialist Neurofibromatosis Nurse for Wales appointed

I am delighted to announce that Cardiff and Vale UHB is now host to the first ever Specialist Neurofibromatosis Nurse for Wales. Based at our UHW site and with support from Nerve Tumours UK's Specialist NF Nurse based in Liverpool, Helen Swann will have a national remit to the support patients living in Wales who are affected by the neuro-genetic condition.

Unknown to many, Neurofibromatosis (NF) affects more than 26,500 people across the UK and is one of the most common neuro-genetic conditions causing tumours to grow on nerve endings. Often inoperable and sometimes fatal, these tumours can be painful and can interfere with crucial neurological pathways. Therefore, early diagnosis and intervention are crucial for this very complex and varied condition, ensuring patients receive adequate and appropriate lifelong care.

Helen has commenced working with Jennifer Gardner, Consultant Geneticist at the University Hospital to enhance and expand the support network for families and patients with Neurofibromatosis throughout Wales. I'd like to wish her every success in the new role, I'm sure the availability of the new service will be of huge relief and comfort to patients and families affected by NF.

Employee Wellbeing - It's time to talk

Thursday 4th February marks Time to Talk day, a day organised by Time to Change Wales every year to get people talking about mental health. This year's theme is the Power of Small, highlighting that even a small conversation or action can make a massive difference to somebody who is struggling with their mental health.

We all know that it's been an exceptionally difficult year for us all, which makes talking about mental health and supporting each other more important now than ever before. The Employee Wellbeing Service is encouraging colleagues to get involved in Time to Talk day by putting on their own events in the month of February.

Below are some ideas:

- Organise a 'Wellbeing Walk' while being careful to maintain social distancing
- Host your own virtual 'CAV a coffee and TALK' event or other wellbeing time for your team
- Download [mental health information and resources](#), and display them around your workplace
- Host an online event ([Find out more on the Time to Change Wales website](#))

The Employee Wellbeing Service also has a [series of workshops taking place during February](#). Find out more on the Employee Wellbeing Service webpage, or contact the team at employee.wellbeing@wales.nhs.uk.

Video Consultations

With the COVID-19 pandemic continuing to put pressure on the NHS and the ongoing need to facilitate social distancing to help prevent the spread of the virus, we're continuing to expand our Video Consultation service, so that patients across an increasing number of our services are able to attend their appointments flexibly from home or at work, minimising the amount of time they need to take out of their day.

The service remains popular with our patients and continues to grow. Last week, we held 1,116 video consultations – a 15 per cent increase on our previous weekly record, which we achieved the week before. In total, we've now held around 17,000 consultations, which adds up to more than 175,000 miles of travel saved for our patients, and almost 50 tons of CO2 emissions avoided.

We're asking departments across the Health Board to continue considering new ways that they could use video consultations could support and enhance service provision. There is dedicated resource to support services using the Health Board's preferred video consultation platform, Attend Anywhere, with a range of training, on-boarding, reporting and technical support, accessible through a simple new [online form available through the intranet](#).

[Find out more about the Video Consultation service on our website.](#)

Consultation on Cardiff Council's budget proposals

Consultation on Cardiff Council's budget proposals for 2021/22 is now open!

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a major impact on all Council services. It remains difficult to predict the course of the pandemic, and its impact on services and Council finances, over the year ahead and beyond.

Tell the council where you think they should prioritise their limited resources by completing the [online survey](#) by Wednesday 10th February 2021.

Recovery & Wellbeing College Launches Spring Term Prospectus

Cardiff and Vale Recovery & Wellbeing College is excited to announce the launch of its Spring Term Prospectus, offering 17 free courses on a range of mental health and wellbeing topics. Courses available this term include; Understanding Anxiety, Men and Mental Health, Trauma Informed, Fighting Fit for Recovery and many more.

The Recovery & Wellbeing College is underpinned by the principles of co-production and recovery, is flexible, education-focused and has the promotion of wellbeing at its core. All of the courses on offer are co-produced by people with lived experience of mental health issues and mental health professionals.

The initiative has been a huge success for the Health Board since it came to fruition in September 2020. In its first term, the Recovery & Wellbeing College offered 12 courses, had 298 enrolments and delivered over 103 hours of teaching. This term, with 17 courses available, a growing team and an expanding network of excellent partnerships with the Third Sector, the Recovery & Wellbeing College will continue to offer more choice to its students.

Courses are available to individuals who are currently using or have used mental health services, their carers, all Health Board staff, or people working in mental health in the Local Authority and Charitable sectors. Anyone who enrolls on a course signs up as a student and is welcomed to the college to learn, aiding their understanding and awareness of mental health issues, and subsequently supporting recovery.

Anyone who may be apprehensive about enrolling with the Recovery & Wellbeing College are encouraged to reach out to the friendly team for an informal conversation to help ease any reservations. There are also a series of insight videos on our [YouTube playlist](#) that will give you a feel for what it's like to be a student, how the courses are co-produced and what makes the college so different.

You can access the full Spring Term Prospectus via the [Recovery & Wellbeing College web page](#).

Tell us about pharmacy services in your area

We're looking to hear from those who use their local pharmacy for themselves or someone else. This is to help us plan for services for our patients now and in the future to make sure they meet your needs, using a process called a 'pharmaceutical needs assessment'.

Your answers will help us identify if there are any service gaps, for example whether a pharmacy (also called a 'chemist') is needed in a particular area, or whether more pharmacies need to provide a particular service.

Your views are important to us so please spare a few minutes to complete this questionnaire. The questionnaire is anonymous and any information you give will not be linked to you.

Complete the survey in either English or Welsh by the closing date of 15 February.

Rapid NGS Diagnostic Virtual Workshop

The role of Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) in clinical diagnostics of patients with rare genetic diseases over the past decade has been transformative, and I am proud to see Wales leading the way in genomics. Currently the All Wales Medical Genomics Service (AWMGS) is the only NHS authority offering rapid whole genome NGS to sick children as part of their WINGS study.

This conference will bring together experts in rapid NGS from all areas of the UK and Ireland to share their experiences of setting up such a clinical service and to build best practices to allow national standards to be applied. The event will be free to attend.

[Register on Eventbrite here.](#)

Date: 4th - 5th February 2012

Time: 9.30am to 12.30pm

Topics include:

- Rapid neonatal whole exome sequencing
- Prenatal exome analysis
- Ethical considerations of rapid diagnostic testing
- Bioinformatic challenges

For further information please contact:
walesgenepark@cardiff.ac.uk

Other News and Events

In for a penny!

Donate the pennies from your pay to support the Cardiff & Vale Health Charity.

[Read More](#)

Valentine's Day Raffle

Join our Health Charity Valentine's Day Raffle 2021 to be in with a chance of winning a fantastic Hearts and Chocolate Treat Hamper!

[Read more](#)

Spaces for Cardiff and Barry 10k races

Our Health Charity has a number of spaces for the [Cardiff Bay](#) and [Barry](#) 10k races. Sign up to support them by running one!

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.](#)

St David's Hospital newsletter

Here's the latest news from the Health Charity at St. David's Hospital.

[Read more](#)