



Dear Colleague,

22/04/2022

I would like to open this week's CEO Connects with an enormous thank you to my colleagues across primary, secondary and community care who had another busy week and weekend across the bank holiday.

The Emergency Unit continues to operate under heightened pressure. I'd like to remind those in our community that if you think you need to attend the Emergency Unit and it is not life threatening please call 111 first. You can also use [NHS 111 Wales](#) to access healthcare advice and information. I realise that many of you will have heard this many times, but I feel it's an important and relevant message to reiterate.

I often talk about what's happening at the "front door", but I want to also mention some of our specialist services including Advanced Therapies Wales and the brilliant work the team is doing in the field of precision medicine. The CAR-T centre at University Hospital of Wales, led by programme director Dr Keith Wilson, is the only centre in Wales that delivers this type of specialist treatment for patients with higher-grade lymphoma. The team is doing an extraordinary job in improving outcomes for cancer patients and have continued to treat up to 15 patients a year throughout the pandemic. I want to applaud the pioneering work they are doing despite the challenges they face around infrastructure and resource.

As a University Health Board, we are required to demonstrate that we are fulfilling the remit associated with University Hospital status. Research of all kinds and clinical trials are therefore a really important activity for us as a team. Team CAV is clearly doing some ground-breaking work in a number of areas and has a strong partnership with Cardiff University alongside other higher education institutions and prestigious bodies across Wales, the UK, Europe and globally. Although demonstrating the value of University status is important there are even more important reasons for us to be research active and ready. There is strong evidence that health care organisations who are research active provide the highest quality of care and the very best outcomes are achieved for patients. Clinical trials often create the only opportunity for patients to access life changing or saving therapies when all other therapies have been exhausted so for that reason it is really important that we continue to expand our portfolio of trials and look for those life extending or saving opportunities for patients as a part of our standard practice. Participation in research and clinical trials is also a great way to access professional development and learning. So, you see there are lots of reasons for us to get even more engaged in this exciting and progressive agenda!

This week I had the pleasure of visiting colleagues from the Mental Health Clinical Board at Hafan y Coed for an engaging face-to-face discussion. I enjoyed the discussion and gained a deeper understanding of some of the main challenges and issues the team have faced and how the pandemic has affected their work over the past two years. I was very impressed to hear first-hand about some of the innovations and adaptations they had made to treat patients in the best way possible through new models of care. We all agreed we need to take hold of those positive changes and continue to build upon them as we adapt and shape services to meet the current and future needs of patients. Well done and thank you to all those working in the Mental Health Clinical Board.

If you would like me to come along to a session with you and your team for a discussion do let me know by emailing news@wales.nhs.uk. My diary is getting filled up quickly but I do promise to get to all of the invites I receive in due course.

Mental Health is something we all need to take care of and the recent effects of long periods of isolation and lockdown restrictions have had an impact on many of us and those in the local communities. There is a wealth of online self-help resources for communities to access if they need support including Silvercloud, Stepiau and the Recovery College.

As we head towards the summer months we can be grateful for brighter skies. In last week's CEO Connects Fiona Kinghorn, Executive Director of Public Health, wrote about how the warmer weather encourages us to spend time outside, which can positively impact our mental and physical health and

wellbeing. Thank you, Fiona, for reminding us all of the power of sunshine and fresh air! I was fortunate enough to have some annual leave last week and I have certainly felt lifted after spending time with my family in the sunshine.

I am grateful to all my colleagues who remain dedicated to providing the best care across services for patients, whether that's in the hospitals or out in the community, for their continued hard work, positive spirits and professionalism. Thank you.

1. WINGS project success

I would like to extend a special mention to colleagues working within the All Wales Medical Genomics Service (AWMGS), hosted by Cardiff and Vale University Health Board who were recently featured on the BBC Wales News Today Programme, online and breakfast radio to highlight recent successes of the Wales Infants and Children's Genome Service, otherwise referred to as WINGS.

Since its implementation in spring 2020, this ground-breaking service (which is still a UK first) has seen approximately 50 acutely unwell babies and infants with a suspected rare genetic condition and remarkably provided a diagnosis in over 40% of cases. Using the Novaseq 6000 and technology referred to as 'whole genome sequencing', our staff are able to scan the entire DNA code of the human body for between 6000 – 8000 known genetic diseases, which can otherwise take several years or longer to identify and many hospital visits which scientists refer to as a 'diagnostic odyssey'.



Through support of Welsh Government capital funding, AWMGS has recently secured a second Novaseq 6000 which will further extend referral eligibility to more patients with suspected genetic illnesses which will be of huge comfort to patients and their families, including Mum and Dad of Baby Thea, who is one of the many to have benefited from the service and is now being treated for EIF5A related disorder, a condition first reported in 2021 said to affect only 6 people worldwide.

Congratulations and thank you to Head of the All Wales Medical Genomics Laboratories, Sian Morgan, Constitutional Scientist Angharad Williams and Consultant in Clinical Genetics Dr Ollie Murch, who were the service representatives.

[Please click here to read the full BBC Wales News coverage.](#)

2. Dementia Learning and Development – Read About Me toolkit

The Dementia Learning and Development Team at Cardiff and Vale University Health Board have developed a simple toolkit to assist people with a dementia or cognitive impairment who are receiving medical care, allowing staff to have a better understanding of the patient without the need for repetition of their personal story.



It helps to maintain continuity of care for them throughout their journey and also maintain their independence following their stay.

It is a very simple document and really easy for carers to complete. Patients can take their

'Read about Me' with them wherever their journey takes them during their stay in hospital.

[The documents and further info can be found by clicking here.](#)

Please share this information with people with dementia and their carers where you think it would be useful for them.

[Click here for further information about training and support that the team offers.](#)

3. CAV Recruitment Event

A reminder that we are holding a recruitment event on 4th May from 10am – 3pm, showcasing the vast variety of roles across the Health Board.

The event will be held at the Hilton Cardiff (CF10 3HH) and will be open to anyone with an interest in starting a career with the Health Board. Attendees will be able to visit stalls and talk to managers about the wide range of fulltime and part-time opportunities available, covering areas such as administration, facilities, laboratories,



phlebotomy, nursing and many more.

Members of our team will be present to give advice on interview techniques and job applications, as well as sharing their experiences of working for Cardiff and Vale University Health Board. Jobs on offer include, but are not limited to, those listed on the jobs section of our website. Please spread the word with your family and friends. We look forward to welcoming you there on the day.

4. Cardiff & Vale Health Charity

A team of 25 staff members at Estyn, the education and training inspectorate of Wales are organising Rhian's Ramble – an 870 mile walk between them, covering roughly the total mileage of the Wales Coastal Path, to raise funds for the Breast Centre Appeal. [To donate, please visit this link.](#)

Cardiff & Vale Health Charity is delighted to announce a collaboration between our Breast Centre Appeal and CancerPal, an organisation that provides Care Boxes and products to help ease the side effects of cancer treatment. [You can read more about it by clicking this link.](#)



There are so many wonderful artworks up for grabs in the NHS Online Art Auction 2022, raising funds for the Arts for Health and Wellbeing Programme. The auction is running online until Monday 2nd May 2022. [Submit your bids by clicking this link.](#)

[To find out more visit the charity website here.](#)