



Dear Colleague,

23/12/2021

This is our final CEO Connects for 2021 and what a roller coaster of a year it has been. While there have been some significant challenges I want to remind ourselves of what we have achieved, how far we have come and some of the good things that have come out of Covid.

We are absolutely not out of the woods yet. Omicron is increasing fast in our community and as a health service we are facing unprecedented demand. Balancing the needs of our population with Covid, running a significant booster and flu vaccination campaign and keeping as many services running across the whole system has been incredibly tough.

But if I had three main asks of our community in which they can support their NHS this festive period and particularly into January when traditionally demand on our services at its highest it would be these:

1. Get your booster vaccination job or if it's your first time for getting the vaccine, take up the opportunity to get it now. Do what you can to make your appointments and please, please, give our staff who are working throughout a smile when you do this. We have now booked booster appointments for all eligible adults aged 18 and over who should have received

a text message or letter confirming their appointment date. If you have not heard from us please complete the 'leave nobody behind' form on our [website](#) and our team will call you and book you in. Please note the number may be withheld on some mobiles when we call.

- 2. Use NHS services, particularly Emergency Unit (A&E) appropriately.** This time of year we see an increase in people requiring treatment, but not everyone would be best placed to go to A&E. You can be better off using the primary choice options in the local community and getting to see a specialist in that area. Please be patient with these services as everyone is struggling with staffing shortages and increased demand on services. Please also take care during the festive period as we would rather you spend time with your loved ones than need to make an unexpected trip to our Emergency Unit.
- 3. Take your relatives home if you can** - at the moment we have a significant issue with not being able to free up bed capacity, due to not being able to discharge patients who are medically fit to go home but can only do so with a care package or some support around them. If you are able to do this,

please consider it. The more bed capacity we free up, the better we can manage the influx of demand coming in. And again, please be kind to our NHS staff in EU and frontline services, including primary care, social care and our community and midwifery services.

The difficulties of two years have resulted in our current capacity issues, and we understand the frustration people feel. We too have relatives and family members and friends in the same situation. However, I am never ceased to be amazed and humbled by the way in which, yet again our NHS heroes are stepping up. Their willingness to work evenings and weekends, their willingness to come in for an extra shift, their willingness to still treat patients despite receiving a torrent of abuse.

As a cardiologist with over 40 years' experience of working in the NHS, I have seen difficult times, held the hands of patients to give them the worst possible news and supported colleagues through life-changing incidents. But I have not ever experienced such a prolonged and sustained period of intense pressure, demand and requirements to be agile and change working practices in a matter of weeks as in the last two years. I have never felt more proud of my colleagues as I lead them into an uncertain 2022.

Some of the things that perhaps don't hit the headlines that I am particularly proud of are:

- Keeping surgery going – this year we have carried out 16,868 surgical treatments across the health board
- Keeping urgent cancer diagnosis and care

going to whilst also treating acute illnesses – this year to date we have treated 1962 patients on a suspected cancer pathway

- Our recruitment of people to work with us to deliver services to our population – from January until the end of November we had recruited 2,403 staff, equating to 1,905 whole time equivalents roles across the health board. Our nursing recruitment drive continues and we continue to fill posts across critical care, children's nursing, theatre nurses and mass vaccination nursing. Our next recruitment event is on 20 January at the All Nations Centre – you can sign up [here](#) if you wish to attend.
- Our clinical innovation – we've continued to make important contributions to driving forward clinical innovation this year, both in the fight against COVID-19 and across healthcare more widely. That ranges from leading the [world's largest ever ICU Oxygen trial](#) back in February, to [delivering the ComFluCOV study](#) which confirmed that people can safely receive the flu and COVID-19 vaccinations together, and the [ongoing PRONTO trial we launched in July](#) which aims to improve sepsis care, patient outcomes and optimising antibiotic use in patients with suspected sepsis. Having officially opened the [Cardiff Joint Research Office](#) in collaboration with our partners at Cardiff University in September, the organisation is entering a new, exciting era of clinical innovation, and I am looking forward to watching the endless possibilities unfold.
- Our transformation of services to meet the needs of the population while keeping us

all Covid safe. For example the launch of CAV24/7 and virtual consultations as well as further developments across unscheduled care, planned care, mental health, primary care and diagnostics to help us see as many patients as we can and keep our health system moving.

This is a time of year for peace and goodwill to all. Like many, I will be working over Christmas and the New Year. For everyone not just in the NHS but social care, police, fire and rescue, government- all of those working to keep us safe and secure, thank you from everyone at Cardiff and Vale UHB and have a healthy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda.

As we enter the festive period here is a Christmas message from myself and our Chair, Charles (Jan) Janczewski reflecting on the previous year and looking forward to 2022.



Recovery and Redesign: Same Day Emergency Care in Surgery

Since Same Day Emergency Care (sSDEC) was first introduced into our General Surgery service in 2020, the specialist care provided has been a key part of improving surgical pathways for our patients. This model of care has helped improve the timeliness of treatment and prevent unnecessary hospital admissions with assessment, diagnosis and treatment provided on the same day, where previously patients would have been admitted to hospital.

Throughout the pandemic, the same day care we have provided has meant patients are seen early in their treatment pathway with our surgery teams working closely with radiology to improve the availability and speed of diagnostics which has enabled faster decision-making on care.

Furthermore, we have introduced two dedicated theatre sessions for same day surgery that means patients can be sent home and brought in the next day for urgent procedures, avoiding overnight admission and allowing patients to prepare and recover at home.

The vital work the sSDEC team have undertaken will be expanded throughout our Surgery Clinical Board next year, with the creation of a new assessment unit and short stay ward, due to be completed in early 2022.

This new, multi-speciality unit will increase the Health Board's surgical capacity allowing us to see more patients including referrals from GPs and our Emergency Department. Once opened the unit will provide a state-of-the-art facility to allow us to maximise the benefits of sSDEC for our patients and wider communities.

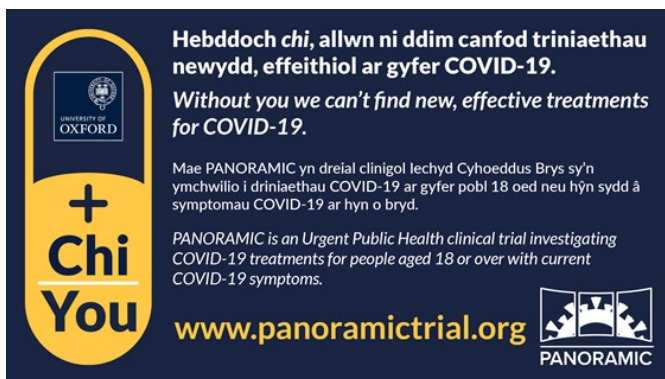
COVID-19 antiviral and antibody treatments

Some NHS patients who are at greater risk from severe COVID-19 are now eligible to receive antiviral and antibody treatments. There are two ways in which you can receive antiviral treatments:

- as part of your standard care if you are at highest risk of severe COVID-19 and extremely vulnerable
- through a UK wide antiviral study called PANORAMIC

To find out whether you are eligible for COVID-19 treatments or participation in a UK-wide antiviral study visit <https://gov.wales/covid-19-treatments>

These treatments are a further measure in addition to vaccinations. Vaccinations remain of greatest importance to protect those most vulnerable in the UK.



Hebdoch chi, allwn ni ddim canfod triniaethau newydd, effeithiol ar gyfer COVID-19.
Without you we can't find new, effective treatments for COVID-19.

Mae PANORAMIC yn dreial clinigol Iechyd Cyhoeddus Brys sy'n ymchwilio i driniaethau COVID-19 ar gyfer pobl 18 oed neu hyn sydd â symptomau COVID-19 ar hyn o bryd.

PANORAMIC is an Urgent Public Health clinical trial investigating COVID-19 treatments for people aged 18 or over with current COVID-19 symptoms.

www.panoramictrial.org

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
+ Chi You
PANORAMIC

New optometry service for homeless citizens in Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

We are delighted to announce that the first optometry service for homeless citizens took place on Friday 19 November 2021 in Cardiff. It highlights the excellent collaboration between optometrists providing their expertise and time, a supplier to provide the spectacles, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board providing the equipment and clinic space, Cardiff City Council providing the premises and the South East Locality Team providing the essential collaborative links. Pictured here are optometrists Vikki Ann Baker (project lead), James Tombs and Anna Rees who provided the first clinical session for 11 patients. Clinical sessions will be organised on a regular basis to meet the local demand. Thank you to all members of the team for such wonderful support.



Keeping Me Well website – your views wanted

Developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Keeping Me Well was introduced as our Health Board's dedicated resource to support people affected by the pandemic.

Over the course of the last year, the platform has transitioned into a therapies-specific website, offering advice on services and self-management of new and ongoing conditions from a team of multi-disciplinary specialists.

The website is currently undergoing an important restructure to help to make advice and information more accessible and provide additional and relevant resources. As a result, the team are looking for feedback on the website in its current form.

Interested in finding out from staff and service users what they like, dislike and would like to see on the website going forward, the team have developed this short feedback form to encourage feedback from the wider population to influence the website's redesign.

To share your feedback, [please visit this form by clicking here.](#)



Sonja Edwards, the first NHS funded Hospital Smoking Cessation Counsellor, retires after 35 years

The Smoking Cessation Teams in UHW, Llandough and Barry Hospitals have wished a happy retirement to Sonja Edwards who will be ending her 35 years of service at the end of this month.

Sonja, from Llantwit Major, has been in post for 35 years, working at Llandough, Barry and UHW counselling inpatients, outpatients and staff. She was the first NHS-paid hospital Smoking Cessation Counsellor to be appointed in the UK.

Sonja was involved in setting up a UK group for Smoking Cessation Counsellors to help share knowledge and has conducted and presented research at a number of medico-scientific meetings to a wide-range of health professionals in the UK and abroad.

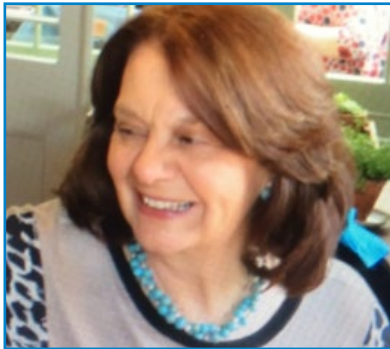
Dr Ian Campbell, Honorary Consultant Physician at Llandough, with whom Sonja has worked with throughout her career, described her as “a warm, humorous, empathic, friendly and hard-working person, who was ideal for the role of advising and supporting patients to quit smoking.

“In so doing for 35 years she improved and saved the lives of many patients in Cardiff and the Vale, as well as helping to encourage many other NHS hospitals to appoint smoking cessation counsellors.

“Well-known and liked in Llandough and across the UK, she has been an inspirational pioneer who helped spread nationally and internationally the gospel that stopping smoking is an important part of the treatment of many diseases, especially heart disease and lung diseases”.

Sonja's dedication to her role and the people she has supported was demonstrated in 2013 when she retired, but returned to help the service on a voluntary basis for a year. Since 2014, she has reduced her working hours but has continued to support those in need.

Sonja said: "I have enjoyed every day of my working life and it has been a privilege to work alongside my colleagues and help and support people through their smoking cessation journey. I am proud that the service continues to provide its high standard, personalised, intensive behavioural counselling support programme."



We wish Sonja a very happy retirement and are grateful for all of her contributions over the last 35 years.

Cardiff & Vale Health Charity

As we look back on 2021, during the pandemic our fundraisers have been taking on incredible challenges like the Three Peaks Challenge, cycling from North to South Wales and walking 100,000 steps in a day, among many others.

All donations we have received this year have helped improve staff facilities, provide new equipment, and organise events such as the Bike Health Checks. These are just some examples of how we were able to help our patients and our wonderful Cardiff and Vale Health Board staff.

We will be starting the new year with an Afternoon Tea at the Coal Exchange Hotel to raise funds for the Prop Appeal. You can book your table here.

To find out more visit www.healthcharity.wales/ / www.healthcharity.wales/cy/

We'd like to say another huge thank you for your support, and wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Best wishes from Cardiff & Vale Health Charity.



Arts:

CRI Now: a Moment in Time

CRI Now – A Moment in Time is a new exhibition in the CRI chapel that represents a snap-shot in time and features 1 portraits of willing staff members as well as their own CRI photography. Photographer, Lisa-Marie created, captures the character, countenance and expression of our dedicated staff members in this display as part of the Arts Council of Wales funded project, Cardiff Royal Infirmary: People, Place, Future. <https://cardiffandvale.art/2021/12/10/cri-now-a-moment-in-time/>

Texting Games for Patients

With the support of the Staff Lottery Fund at Cardiff & Vale Health Charity, the Arts for Health and Wellbeing team is delighted to implement the first games project for the Arts for Health and Wellbeing Programme with Modular Designer, Jordan Draper. If you would like to be gifted a game for your hospital department, please contact bex.betton@wales.nhs.uk <https://cardiffandvale.art/2021/12/13/texting-games-for-patients-launches-with-modular-designer-jordan-draper/>

Kyle Legall – Diversity in the NHS

The Arts for Health and Wellbeing team, with the support of NHS Charities Together through Cardiff & Vale Health Charity, have commissioned artist Kyle Legall to produce an outdoor mural that celebrates diversity and inclusion within Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan and across Wales. <https://cardiffandvale.art/2021/12/14/kyle-legall-diversity-in-the-nhs/>

