

Chief Executive CONNECTS



Dear Colleague,

18/11/2020

As the winter continues to draw in and the Christmas season approaches, it is important that we find the time and the ways to celebrate safely but it is imperative that we do not lose sight of the situation we are in and the effects on the NHS in the near future that the actions we take now could have. Last weekend was another difficult weekend for our Health Board as the seasonal winter pressures we face annually continue to coincide with the additional extreme pressure of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I understand how fatigued everyone is that we must continue to follow the guidance, limit who we see (especially over Christmas), and live with the stark reality that this virus has not gone away. I feel it too. But make no mistake, it has not gone away. We have not gone away either and I am incredibly proud of the way the staff within the Health Board have and continue to respond to the pressures of COVID-19. The personal responsibility we take both in work and in our daily lives will determine how difficult this challenge will be over the coming winter.

In the early weeks of the pandemic, there was an outpouring of good will to the NHS unlike anything I had ever seen before and, although it feels like aeons ago, I would ask that you find it in your heart to show us that good will again simply by following the Welsh Government guidance.

Ignore the conspiracy theorists that you may see online calling for people to disregard the guidance, and the callous commentators who proclaim that the lives of the elderly and vulnerable are not worth protecting.

The NHS was founded on the principle of free and equitable care for everyone: to provide for all people. That is exactly what we are still trying to do in the face of the greatest challenge the service has seen in its long history. All I am simply asking from you is that you continue to care; care about your family's safety, care about your elderly neighbours, care about your community, and care about the healthcare staff who will be here for you night and day when you need to be cared for. This winter, the NHS is in your hands.

As the temperature drops, be sure to heat your home, be vigilant of anything that could lead to a slip, trip or fall, if you're eligible then be sure get your free flu jab, and ensure that you're familiar with [the three ways you can access our services in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan](#). All of this will help to keep you well and alleviate pressure on NHS services this winter.

Len Richards
Chief Executive

Cardiff to host COVID-19 vaccine study

Volunteers are needed to take part in a new study to test the effectiveness of the Janssen two-dose investigational COVID-19 vaccine candidate, with one of the trial locations at Cardiff and Vale University Health Board. If you're interested in finding out more and signing up to participate, visit the StaffConnect app.

The Phase 3 ENSEMBLE 2 study, co-funded by the UK government's Vaccine Taskforce, will test the safety and effectiveness of a two-dose regimen, developed by The Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson. The study will take place at 17 sites across the UK and recruit up to 30,000 adults worldwide.

With several more phase 3 studies for potential vaccines expected to start over the next six months, researchers are highlighting the need for volunteers from across the UK to continue to join the fight against coronavirus.

In particular, there is a need for volunteers who are most vulnerable to the effects of coronavirus, including frontline health and social care workers and people from Black, Asian and ethnic minority backgrounds.

Phase one of Lakeside Wing complete

The first phase the Lakeside Wing at University Hospital of Wales is due to be handed over to the UHB from Darwin on 25 November on time and in budget.

Construction began on 12 September with 280 building modules being installed in just 70 days. Impressively, 166 hospital beds have been completed, and 56 of these will be ready to accept patients from this week.

I would like to thank all our colleagues who have worked on this project to get the new facility ready in such a short space of time.



Get Wales TRACHES ready

The Cardiff and Vale Tracheostomy team in conjunction with staff across NHS Wales have teamed up with the Spread & Scale academy and the institute of clinical science and technology to produce a novel approach to supporting staff to care for those with tracheostomies. They have created an online educational package, competency assessment and course booking process. They have also produced an All-Wales tracheostomy database (including collaboration with NWIS) providing an ability for each Health Board to input data for their patients, allow data transfer across NHS Wales and bi-annual reporting. Additionally, a new service improvement platform is being developed to provide support to make local changes in tracheostomy services at an individual, team and institutional level to improve patient outcomes, reduce harm and release capacity

This will all be available across NHS Wales and will also allow allocated staff to access data on training uptake, progress with competencies and to arrange local courses with support for simulation training. All we are asking is for staff to use it, to make the most of the system and tell us how we can make it better for Wyn and everyone else.

We will be virtually launching this on Friday 27th November at 10.30am via Microsoft Teams. The event will only last one hour but will provide all the additional information that is needed. All staff are welcome to join and can do so by [following this link](#).

Is email overload affecting your wellbeing?

I have had a lot of feedback recently that a major detriment to staff wellbeing is the sheer volume of emails that we send and receive on a daily basis. This problem is compounded by the fact that many staff only have a very limited amount of time to check their emails among their other responsibilities and there are some who have no access to email and rely on their managers to cascade important information to engage with the UHB.

To help begin to address all of these problems, we introduced the StaffConnect app during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and I am encouraging you again to increase your use of it.

We have recently redesigned its interface to make it even easier to use and have developed a system to sign up staff members who may be on honorary contracts, the staff bank, and those hosted by other Health Boards and trusts. In order to enact this properly, we will require cooperation from clinical boards and we will soon be writing to them with instructions about how to help get their staff registered. It has been great to see early adoption of the app in some parts of the system with Medicine Clinical Board pushing to sign their staff up and receiving training from the communications team about how to get the most from StaffConnect's functions.

[Sign up here](#).

New mental health support service for staff

I'm really pleased to announce that from December, the Health Board will be working with Remploy to provide confidential mental health wellbeing support to help staff stay in work if they're struggling with their mental health, or to support their return from absence.

The new service will give employees access to practical expert advice and support over a period of nine months, focusing on how creating wellbeing plans, workplace adjustments and coping strategies could make a difference to their lives. As part of the service, the Health Board will have a Vocational Rehabilitation Consultant who will work closely with the Employee Health and Wellbeing Service.

This will mean we can address any anonymised themes that come through and make positive changes to support the wellbeing of all our employees.

The first monthly session will take place virtually on Tuesday 15th December. Staff can self-refer or can be referred (with consent) by Occupational Health and the Employee Health and Wellbeing Session. To book your appointment, please email your name and phone number to Remploy (chris.kingsbury@remploy.co.uk and bethany.kimberley@remploy.co.uk) stating that you're a member of Cardiff and Vale UHB staff, or for more information contact the [Employee Health and Wellbeing Service](#).

Trauma Resilience Management Course launches online for Welsh Medics

I'm also pleased to say that the Health Board, alongside HEIW and DNA Definitive, has been able to secure funding from Welsh Government to develop a digital trauma resilience management (MedTRiM) course for medics in Wales.

Previously run as face-to-face workshops, this course delivers training to deal with healthcare associated events that are potentially traumatic, and a variety of skills to support your colleagues enhance your own wellbeing.

MedTRiM was selected as one of the five projects, from over 100 applications, to receive government backing in order to rapidly pilot and implement to provide digital solutions to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. The course is being provided to doctors as part of this pilot until March 2021. During this time the scalability and availability options for wider NHS staff will be explored.

[To find out more and enrol, click here.](#)

Procurement win HSCA team of the year

I would like to offer my congratulations to our frontline procurement team who, last week, won the team of the year award at this year's Healthcare Supply Association (HSCA) awards. The team were also highly commended for the technology award for their work with the ophthalmology department and Claire Salisbury, the UHB's Head of Procurement, was highly commended in the procurement leader category.

During COVID-19 the procurement team were instrumental in the supply and sourcing of PPE not just for Cardiff and Vale but the whole of the UK. Following the success of ensuring adequate supplies of PPE for Cardiff and Vale UHB, the team went on to support the delivery of 115 million surgical face masks, forming three new supplier relationships on behalf of NHS Wales.

They also supported the Head of Procurement in establishing a Four Nations contract that supported continuity of PPE across the United Kingdom. They also played a key role in the commissioning of the Dragon's Heart Hospital

I am incredibly proud of the work which Claire and her team have done throughout the last year in order that we can continue delivering our services as seamlessly as possible and keep our staff as safe as possible throughout this pandemic. We owe the procurement team our sincere thanks for all their hard work addressing the challenges of COVID-19 and this recognition is well deserved. Congratulations!

[Read more here.](#)

European Testing Week

European Testing Week is a campaign that encourages partner organisations in community, health care and policy institutions throughout Europe to unite to increase testing efforts and promote awareness of the benefits of earlier hepatitis and HIV testing. Cardiff has recently become the first city in Wales to sign up to the global [Fast Track Cities initiative](#) with the ambitious aim of eliminating new HIV diagnoses by 2030. This aim has recently been endorsed by the Health Minister and NHS Wales. We now have free postal testing for patients in Wales too.

To do this, we need to test more and treat early to break transmission chains as patients with an undetectable viral load cannot pass on the virus sexually. The British HIV Association has recently published [new HIV testing guidelines](#) and recommends testing in a number of conditions. I would encourage members of staff to make themselves familiar with this guidance and see how they can [take part in European Testing week here.](#)

Other News and Events

Last day of all staff survey

Today is the last chance for you to have your say on the future of our Welsh NHS in the all-staff survey, Our Reflections, Our Decisions, Our Future, which closes this evening at 11pm. All of your answers are completely confidential and the survey should only take a few minutes to complete. Please don't miss this vital opportunity to have your say and, if you haven't done so already, please make the time to [complete the survey today](#).

Health Charity Newsletter

To promote the variety of events they are hosting of the Christmas period, the Cardiff & Vale Health Charity have launched a newsletter, [which you can read here](#).

World Children's Day

Friday 20th November was World Children's Day, and the Health Charity announced that it has been working with our youth board to support an animation specifically aimed at training staff about their legal and professional obligation of embedding Children's Rights in to their practice.

[Read more about the project here](#).

White Ribbon Day

Tomorrow is White Ribbon Day and, this year, it is very important to mark this day following a marked rise in domestic abuse linked to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns. There are a number of events taking place this week, which you can see [here](#).

Staff Lottery £20,000 draw

This Friday it's our Health Charity SuperMegaDraw where one lucky member of staff could win £20,000 – good luck to everyone who contributes to our Staff Lottery. [Read more here](#).

John Lewis shopping evenings

John Lewis Cardiff is offering Cardiff and Vale UHB staff exclusive shopping evenings between 7.15pm and 9.00pm on four dates over the next few weeks. To find out more, and to sign up to one, please visit the StaffConnect app newsfeed.