



CHIEF EXECUTIVE CONNECTS

Dear Colleague,

26/11/2021

Like all other NHS and social care organisations, the NHS is facing a never been seen before level of demand. For many, the health system is complex area and I understand it is very difficult to see beyond the issues other than ambulances waiting at our Emergency Unit (our A&E).

However, over the coming weeks and months we will be as open and transparent with our communities and our staff as we possibly can. I think it is vitally important we try to engage the public in why they are having to wait longer to see either their local GP or for their much-needed surgery.

Last week I shared some details on how we are trying to tackle a huge backlog as well as maintaining services through winter pressures and remain COVID-19 ready. It is a unique set of circumstances and a very difficult balancing act we face.

On top of this, we are dealing with higher staff absence and recruitment and retention issues than ever before, we know our staff are tired and many of them suffering from burnout. I would like to share a link to a letter that was written by one of our ITU consultants and I wholeheartedly agree, we need to help the helpers across all of the health and social care system, regardless of rank or role. [Please read it here.](#)

Our Recovery and Redesign programme is focussing on key themes to get us back on track and see as many people as possible looking at unscheduled care, planned care, mental health, primary care and diagnostics. All of which are equally important to get the health system moving.

Next week we will be releasing a joint communication from the key partners across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan responsible for providing healthcare services. It may be uncomfortable reading for some, but as I said, I feel it our duty to manage the public's expectations as we move into winter and what we all consider to be an even more challenging period.

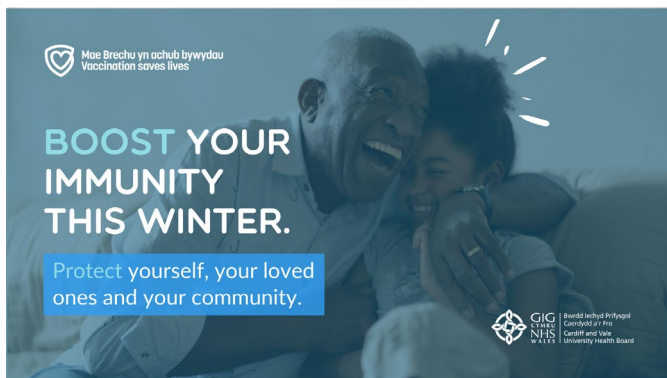
We will be setting out as number of ways in which we would like the community to step up and help the helpers, to support their precious public services and to make choices that impact not just on themselves but many others.

We have seen incredible public support over the past 20 months. We understand that people are jaded and just want to get back to normal, but I hope that by doing some small things differently and continuing to support the NHS and partner organisations we can get through this winter together.

Vaccination update

Last week we reached the milestone of delivering 100,000 booster vaccinations to our population of Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. This coupled with the first and second doses means we have now delivered a total of 859,941 COVID vaccinations to keep our population safe.

Recent JCVI guidance has been updated to include 16 and 17 year olds receiving their second dose and the 40-49 age group now being eligible for the booster dose. Booster doses are being offered after a minimum 6 month interval and second doses for 16 and 17 year olds are being offered at a minimum of 12 weeks after the first dose or if you have had a positive COVID infection, 12 weeks after your positive test. People will be invited to an appointment directly so there is no need to contact the Health Board or your GP Practice directly at this time.



Recovery & Redesign: Eyecare in the Community

The Ophthalmology service in Cardiff and Vale UHB has seen a significant increase in demand over recent years, which has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Traditionally delivered within secondary care, the service has had to

re-think how it delivers eyecare to the population of Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan in order to accommodate a growing number of patients.

The Ophthalmology service has worked with Primary Care to change the service structure and enable less complex patients to receive their care in a community setting. During the pandemic, the care of more than 5,000 patients was moved out of secondary care and delivered in the community.

In May 2021, the Ophthalmology service recognised the need for more highly skilled optometrists to ensure this service change was sustainable. The concept was to create a Teach and Learn Centre within Cardiff University's School of Optometry to train 20 optometrists across Wales to deliver care locally.

The centre opened on 7 September 2021 with an initial cohort of nine optometrists receiving hands-on training to attain the Higher Certificate in Medical Retina. This will future-proof the service and ensure that sufficient numbers of highly-skilled optometrists are able to deliver community eyecare moving forward.

The changes have freed up space within the UHW Outpatient suite for more complex patients to be seen while allowing for social distancing. The feedback from patients and staff has been extremely positive so far, with the service changes enabling elderly and vulnerable groups of patients the opportunity to access local high street practices instead of having to attend a busy hospital site. These appointments help to improve the overall patient experience plus offer reduced travel, time and cost, as well as minimise contact with other patients.

While there has been an improvement in performance as a result of these changes, we recognise that there is more we can do. The Ophthalmology and Primary Care teams are confident that re-structuring the service, along with the implementation of the Teach and Learn centre, should see waiting times reduce further and ensure a sustainable service is delivered.

Wales Climate Week 2021

This week is Wales Climate Week 2021 and we are in the middle of running a five-day programme of virtual events designed to encourage a nationwide discussion and conversation on the Net Zero Wales Plan and the collaborative action needed to ensure Wales meets its targets.

Our sustainability team has been working with colleagues across the health board to produce five videos highlighting how we are making our local region a greener, more sustainable place to live and work.

The videos have been shared on our social media channels and hosted on our newly launched Shaping Our Future Sustainable Healthcare website.



Monday 22nd November: Wales & the World

The medical products we use everyday create carbon emissions, and while many of these products are designed to be thrown away after use, we're committed to making more sustainable choices. We've also set up a pilot project that aims to reduce our environmental and financial impact by supplying anaesthetic nitrous oxide gas to some wards by portable cylinders instead of older, piped systems.

Tuesday 23rd November: Energy and Emissions

We're working in partnership with Vital Energi through the Re:fit Programme to deliver energy, carbon and cost reductions to support and deliver the Welsh Government's decarbonisation strategy and targets.

The first phase of the Re:Fit programme saw the installation of 6,800 LED lights and smart controls to increase energy efficiency at our hospitals, headquarters and car parks. We've even upgraded our air conditioning systems with high-efficiency options which overall, has resulted in an emissions reduction of around 750 tonnes a year. The second phase of carbon and energy reduction actions include the installation of solar panels across our sites.

Wednesday 24th November: How Wales is Responding to the Climate Emergency

We run a free Park & Ride service for patients and staff travelling to University Hospital of Wales and University Hospital Llandough as well as a free shuttle bus between the two. And for those who can, we encourage active travel through walking and cycling routes between our sites too.

There is indisputable evidence from the international scientific community that climate change is taking place due to man-made emissions of greenhouse gases. Burning fossil fuels is a major contributor to these emissions.

We're one of 16 public bodies pledging commitment to the 'Healthy Travel Charter', encouraging sustainable travel for public sector employees commuting in and around Cardiff.



Thursday 25th November: Exploring the role of Nature in Climate Resilience

Our goal is to establish an ecological community health park to benefit wildlife, plants, and people through positive human environment interaction.

We are developing an innovative new space at University Hospital Llandough site, Our Health Meadow. Once the space begins to come to life, it will bring with it a series of eco systems and biomes.

In addition, The Cardiff & Vale Health Charity, as well as NHS Wales fully supports the Queen's Green Canopy initiative, which will see us plant more trees to care for our patients, their families, our staff, communities and our planet.

Friday 26th November: How Individual Choices Impact the World Climate

We can all contribute to the sustainability agenda within Cardiff and the Vale at home or at work. The simple things can really make a difference if everyone takes part – whether that's turning off the light when you leave a room or reducing, reusing and recycling everything you can. We encourage staff to turn off PCs and monitors at the end of the day as well as not leaving laptops to charge overnight.

Living Well Competition

The Recovery & Wellbeing College is looking for designers to take part in its competition to design a logo for its new curriculum. The 'Living Well' curriculum is centred on the ethos of recovery, helping students to bridge the gap between mental health and physical health. As a new addition to the Recovery & Wellbeing College, the curriculum needs a logo to promote its courses and is inviting colleagues to design its logo. The logo needs to be visually stimulating, engaging and it must to reflect the ethos of recovery. Supported by Cardiff & Vale Health Charity, the submitted designs will be showcased at an exclusive exhibition, with the winning designer being awarded with a £100 Amazon voucher. Please submit your entries to cardiffandvale.Recoverycollege@wales.nhs.uk by 26 November.

Supporting Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board has developed a new website, co-produced with children and young people to offer useful information and resources on emotional wellbeing and mental health. The wellbeing

of some children and young people has been significantly impacted by the pandemic and it remains vital that people access support.

Visitors to the new website will find information about emotional wellbeing, mental health, services available and how to access them, as well as lots of advice and a range of useful resources signposted. All information on the website has been specially curated by healthcare professionals in partnership with young people.

[Visit the emotional wellbeing and mental health website here.](#)



Award win

Congratulations to Dr Mohid Khan, Consultant Gastroenterologist and Lead of the South Wales Neuroendocrine Cancer Service, for being awarded the British Society of Gastroenterology service development prize. This competitive award recognises work that has a demonstrable impact on patient care by innovative service improvement and in this instance, for leading the transformation of the service resulting in earlier diagnosis, improved patient reported outcomes and patient experience across south Wales. The whole Neuroendocrine Cancer team has recently been recognised by the Royal College of Physicians for excellence in patient

care and the British Medical Journal awards as they work towards European Centre of Excellence status.

Rock Stars Roll for Donations

This month Welsh rock band, Manic Street Preachers, has donated a huge £35,000 to Cardiff & Vale Health Charity to aid the recovery phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. Formed in Blackwood in 1986, the band played a series of concerts at Cardiff's Motorpoint Arena to raise funds for local NHS charities in Wales as well as providing a free concert to NHS workers as a thank you for their hard work during the pandemic.

Wales HIV Testing Week 22 – 28 November

This week, Artist and Cardiff & Vale Health Charity Patron, Nathan Wyburn, marked the launch of Wales HIV Testing Week coordinated by Fast Track Cardiff & Vale with a portrait using charcoal sourced from Wales. Nathan's latest artwork, commissioned by the Arts for Health and Wellbeing Programme, is of British gay rights activist and co-founder of the Lesbians and Gays (LGSM) support group, Mark Ashton.

With the stigma surrounding HIV, the campaign intends to encourage others to get tested, highlighting how easy it is and what the benefits are by testing early, such as a long and healthy life, and no more transmissions. [For more information visit Fast Track Cardiff & Vale.](#)