



CHIEF EXECUTIVE CONNECTS

Dear Colleague,

03/10/2022

On Friday you may have seen the Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) report following an unannounced inspection to the Emergency and Assessment Units at University Hospital of Wales in June.

The report did outline some concerns especially around the quality of the patient experience and the environment. I take these concerns very seriously and alongside the senior leadership team have been working to support the Medicine Clinical Board team and colleagues in the urgent and emergency care (UEC) pathway make the improvements necessary. Colleagues right across the UEC pathway, and indeed across the whole Health Board continue to work tirelessly to provide the most appropriate care to patients under extremely challenging circumstances and I'm both humbled and grateful for the work that you all do. Nevertheless, we must make the important changes required to improve the care and experience for patients as well as the team.

The forthcoming winter period is anticipated to be a challenge but I want to reassure patients, partners and colleagues that we will keep seeking improvement collaboratively.

You can assist the team by accessing the appropriate level of care, suitable to your condition, whether that be self-care, using

community services such as pharmacies or calling 111 who will be able to advise you. 999 should only be used in the most severe of emergencies, where life or limb is threatened. If we all use NHS services well, urgent and emergency care will be there for us if and when we need it.

Getting your vaccinations completed when invited is also really important and provides the best protection. The winter respiratory viruses vaccination programme for COVID-19 and flu is well underway as we continue to offer appointments to those eligible groups across the Mass Vaccination Centres, GP Practices and Community Pharmacies.

Anyone who is eligible for the COVID-19 Booster vaccination will be contact directly by letter and text message to attend. Where stocks allow you may also be able to get your flu vaccination if eligible but you may need to attend on two separate occasions to receive both vaccines. You can check with your GP or Community Pharmacy when they are offering the flu vaccine.

I really encourage all my healthcare colleagues to take up their vaccinations when offered (I had both COVID-19 booster and flu vaccinations this morning). The COVID-19 booster and flu vaccine will protect you, your family and loved ones as well as patients and

your colleagues. The vaccination programme is an important part of the Cardiff and Vale UHB winter resilience plan so when you get your invite to the Mass Vaccination Centre please take that important step. There will also be a number of occupational health clinics for colleagues across the sites and further details will be disseminated via SharePoint.

[For more information on the flu vaccine and COVID-19 autumn booster including eligibility please visit the website here.](#)

Last week we celebrated Organ Donation Week which raised awareness of the need to speak to your loved ones about your organ donation decision. Wales is the first nation to adopt an opt-out system which means unless you have recorded your decision not to be an organ donor it will be presumed that you do give consent. This is why it's so important to have the conversation with your loved ones so they are aware of your decisions. Since the law changed in Wales we have achieved the highest consent rate of all the UK nations which is making a real difference to people's lives. If you haven't yet had that "special" conversation yet, now is a good time. Later in this message I share the amazing achievements of the Welsh Transplant Team who competed in the British Transplant Games, broke records and picked up an incredible 21 medals!

Congratulations to all those who took part in the Cardiff Half Marathon on Sunday. Thousands of people lined the streets to support all the runners, with 18 runners collectively aiming to raise £3,000 for Cardiff & Vale Health Charity. Thank you for your outstanding efforts and for inspiring others to get active.

This Friday from 12-1pm I will be hosting an "Ask Suzanne session on Teams" which will be themed around the Cost of Living, something that's high on everyone's agenda right now. I know that many colleagues will be worrying about the months ahead and that money worries can negatively impact health and wellbeing so I want to both make sure that everyone is informed about the support available. I do also want to hear your ideas about what else the organisation can do to support you through this difficult time so please do come along and share your ideas, everyone is welcome.

Lastly, and importantly, thank you to you for all that you continue to do wherever across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan you work or volunteer, I know everyone continues to work very hard. Last Thursday our Chair Charles Janczewski, "Jan", chaired the Cardiff and Vale UHB Board Meeting. Board members reflected through much of the meeting on the importance of positivity supporting the health, wellbeing and resilience of the team as well as deep pride in the work that you are doing, day in, day out, to take care of patients and one another that was revealed in the Board papers and the discussions.

Your commitment and professionalism really doesn't go unnoticed. Why don't you come along to the next Public Board Meeting yourself and you can hear the discussions for yourself – everyone is welcome. [The meeting is at Barry Hospital on 24 November. More information will be available on the website nearer the time.](#)

Best wishes
Suzanne

National Robotic Assisted Surgery Programme

At Cardiff and Vale University Health Board we are proud to be part of an innovative National Robotic Assisted Surgery Programme, introduced by Welsh Government, that has been designed to improve outcomes for cancer patients by increasing the number of patients across Wales who have access to less-invasive, minimal access surgery.



Consultants began operating on Colorectal patients this summer using [CMR Surgical's Versius Robot](#) to perform complex procedures precisely by operating four robotic arms from an independent open console. The National Programme delivers well-recognised benefits including reduced pain, scarring and recovery time for patients.

Professor Jared Torkington, Consultant Colorectal Surgeon, said: "We are hugely excited about the start of the unique networked robotic programme in Wales, designed to improve the quality of surgery, attract and retain colleagues and work with the public in highlighting the importance of early presentation and existing screening programme in bowel and other cancers."

One of the patients who recently underwent colorectal surgery with the surgical team at UHW to have a polyp from his sigmoid colon removed, Timothy Simms, said: "For me it was more desirable than normal surgery. Mr Horwood explained what was involved, he was clear and concise and it sounded more attractive than the conventional surgery. I had no worries when it came to having the surgery everything had been explained to me and everything went exactly as it was supposed to. My greatest anxiety was the recovery time as at my age I can't afford to lose any time but this type of surgery is a quicker recovery so that was another plus. It's early days but I'm very happy with how everything went."

With training already underway, the gynaecology teams will also be looking to start robotic surgery for oncology procedures in the autumn.

[To read more about this project and what this means for patients across Wales, please visit this webpage.](#)

Welsh Gender Service Satellite Clinic Operational for Patients in North Wales

The Welsh Gender Service has recently reached a milestone landmark in its delivery of care across Wales with the introduction of its first satellite clinic for patients in North Wales.

Based at St David's Hospital in Cardiff, the Welsh Gender Service is a tertiary service that provides holistic, patient-centred care focused on hormonal, psychological and social aspects of transition.

Delivering services for patients across Wales, to date patients have either accessed clinic appointments virtually, or have travelled to the capital for face-to-face appointments.

With a commitment to provide patients with a more equitable provision of face-to-face appointments, the Service has been working with colleagues to develop satellite clinics across the nation to ensure these are more accessible for more individuals.

The clinics, which are run by Welsh Gender Service clinicians, will take place monthly, with patients being offered appointments based upon where they fall in the waiting list but with a choice of location; be that virtual, Cardiff or now North Wales.

The first satellite clinic is hosted at Panton Surgery, Holywell with the Practice Manager and the wider team working tirelessly in collaboration with the service to ensure these clinics are operational.

A spokesperson from Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee (WHSSC) commented: "As commissioners of the service we are really pleased and supportive of the opening of the new satellite clinic. Bringing care closer to home for patients is a key objective for WHSSC and this is a really good example of how the team have worked hard to put patients at the heart of service development and we wish them every success."

The Welsh Gender Service is hoping to continue to expand its provision of satellite clinics across Wales in the next twelve months to ensure more individuals can access face-to-face appointments with clinicians, closer to their homes.



**Pictured (L-R) Victoria Cooper, Receptionist at Panton Surgery, Elen Heart, LGBTQ+ community member, Jenny-Anne Bishop, LGBTQ+ community member, Dr Sophie Quinney, Clinical Director at the Welsh Gender Service and Janis Davies, Receptionist at Panton Surgery.*

AWTTC publishes IPFR Annual Report 2021-2022

Reporting on the work of the Individual Patient Funding Request (IPFR) teams across Health Boards and the Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee (WHSSC) for patients in Wales, the latest annual report has been compiled by the All Wales Therapeutics and Toxicology Centre (AWTTC). In another challenging year for the NHS in Wales IPFR panels have continued to provide a timely and efficient service.

Prof James Coulson, Clinical Director, AWTTC said: "The year 2021–2022 continued to be a challenge for the NHS in Wales. The COVID-19 pandemic adding strain to services but in itself also challenged how we operated in the NHS and resulted in many changes to practice for the better.

"The practice of moving to virtual panel meetings continued for many Individual Patient Funding Request (IPFR) panels and it will be interesting to see whether panels continue along the same vein going forward."

"It is reassuring to see that, despite the external pressures placed on the panel members, the quality of the IPFRs considered and the process behind them continues to improve."

[Read the full 2021-2022 IPFR Annual Report](#) and [read previous editions of the IPFR Annual Report here](#).

Well done Angela on scooping Manager of the Year Award

Congratulations to Angela Hughes, Assistant Director of Patient Experience at Cardiff and Vale University Health Board for winning Manager of the Year at the Patient Experience Network National Awards (PENNA) on Wednesday 28th September 2022.



The PENNA Awards are the first and only awards programme to recognise best practice in Patient Experience across all facets of

health and social care in the UK.

Angela's dedication to Patient Experience stems from her background as a Critical Care Nurse and wanting to do the best for patients, their families and local communities including hard to reach groups.

Angela started her nursing career in 1986 as a Student Nurse. From listening to patient, carer and family feedback during her time on the wards, she was inspired to make a difference through service improvement and used this learning to make positive change, working on projects throughout her past 36 years of NHS service. She took on a senior role in the Concerns Team in 2010 and subsequently was appointed to the role of Assistant Director of Patient Experience in 2015.

Angela is passionate about reducing health inequalities in the local communities, improving access to services and is always looking for new ways to make better use of resources.

Angela said: "I was delighted to have been nominated by my team. I really appreciate their time and efforts in collating feedback from the many people who I have the pleasure of working with both in the Health Board and across Wales. It is wonderful to win an award for the work that both I and my team care so passionately about, and for this to be recognised nationally."

The awards, which are in their 12th year, saw the Patient Experience community come together for a celebration event at the University of Birmingham. To read more about the PENNA Awards and this year's winners please visit their website - [Patient Experience Network](#)

Consultant in Palliative Medicine, Melanie Jefferson, retires

Congratulations to Melanie Jefferson who is retiring from Cardiff and Vale UHB. Throughout her long and rich career, Melanie achieved a huge amount and contributed to the welfare of thousands of people, and those who love them, as they experienced their final illness.

Mel became a consultant in palliative medicine in 1997. As a student at University of Wales College of Medicine she completed an intercalated BSc in Physiology and, after qualifying, maintained her high academic achievements with Membership of both the Royal College of General Practitioners and the Royal College of Physicians, who awarded her Fellowship in 2002.

Here's what her team had to say about her:

"From the outset in palliative medicine, Mel was an outstanding doctor and fantastic team member. Her calm, gentle communication skills and team leadership, combined with being a superb clinician, meant that all she worked with respected, liked and trusted her.

"Some of her training was in Oxford and Reading before she returned to Holme Tower Marie Curie hospice where she was subsequently appointed as a consultant. When she moved to UHW it was clear that she was the change-agent ideally placed to establish integrated palliative care services within the wide range of specialties with whom she worked. She became lead clinician for specialist palliative care in Cardiff and Vale UHB, chaired the specialist training committee in Wales from 2006-13 and during that time also was the Regional Specialty Advisor.

"Her love of teaching helped mould the new problem-based medical undergraduate curriculum, and she demonstrated how junior doctors' knowledge and skills in palliative care have increased as they entered practice. As lead in quality improvement in end of life care, she was welcomed by the joint audit group of the Health Quality Improvement Programme (HQIP) across England and Wales.

"Mel has been a quiet, unassuming, kind and wise colleague to all she has worked with and her contribution to healthcare has been constant and of the highest standard. Colleagues at all grades have valued her advice over care in complex situation. Countless patients and their families have benefitted greatly from her skills and her compassionate care and support. She will be greatly missed when she retires."

Welsh Transplant Team take home 21 medals at the 2022 British Transplant Games

Following the Welsh Transplant Team's success at the British Transplant Games, funding has been granted by the Charitable Funds Committee to support the team for a further five years.

Cardiff & Vale Health Charity has supported the Welsh Transplant Team over the recent years to celebrate organ donation and encourage patients to lead healthy lifestyles.

This year's British Transplant Games were held in Leeds and the Welsh Transplant team achieved a fantastic 21 medals including nine gold, seven silver and five bronze medals, with one member of the team setting a new British Record.



Pictured (L-R) Jonathan Baldwin, Kyle Foster, Lewis Evans, Clementina Umeh

One athlete, Lewis Evans, beat not only the British record for transplant sport, but the current world record for a transplanted athlete by running 100m in just 10.99 seconds. A huge congratulations to you all – this is an incredible achievement.

The Charitable Funds Committee were delighted to support the bid, as it provides opportunities for Cardiff and Vale University Health Board transplant patients to stay active and take part in sport which in turn supports their health and wellbeing by motivating the team to stay active.

If your department would like to apply for funding to support projects such as this one, please email fundraising.cav@wales.nhs.uk

If you'd like to find out more about the Welsh Transplant Team, please contact Shaun Thomas Shaun.Thomas2@wales.nhs.uk

[For more information, visit the Cardiff & Vale Health Charity website.](#)