



CHIEF EXECUTIVE CONNECTS

Dear Colleague,

04/03/2022

I'd like to start this week's blog with a belated Happy St David's Day - Dydd Gwyl Dewi Hapus. I continue to receive the warmest of Welsh welcomes from colleagues and I'm starting to feel like a member of the team – Diolch!

On Tuesday, I got a real sense of the pride that people feel to be Welsh, and it was lovely to see little touches like Welsh-themed meals on the menu for patients and the team as part of this. Having recently had my first Welsh lesson, I am certainly looking forward to learning more about Welsh language and culture as I begin a new chapter in my career. The opportunity to explore and learn about a new place was all part of the attraction. [You can see my video here.](#) I'm also hoping that if England don't win Wales do as the remainder of this year's Six Nations takes place!

Over the past few weeks I have been bringing myself up to speed with the issues, challenges and opportunities that the team faces as they go about the important work of taking care of patients and their loved ones. I'm starting to get a sense of the gravity of some of the issues and the need to prioritise the approach to responding. I can see that everyone has been working tirelessly in difficult circumstances and I want to thank you for your on-going commitment and professionalism. I'm certain that all issues and challenges can be overcome but it will take time and focus.



One of the many highlights of the week has been my first meeting Chairing the Genomics Partnership Wales (GPW). As you can imagine I was a bit nervous since this is highly complex territory and I'm no academic or scientist! I needn't have worried, everybody was very welcoming and patient with me as I took time to understand the details of the partnership and the ambitions. The GPW brings together the NHS in Wales together with Welsh government, the All Wales Medical Genomic Service, Pathogen Genomics Unit, Wales Gene Park, Higher Education Institutions, patients and the public and other strategic partners to deliver precision medicine in Wales. It is a really exciting area of healthcare which brings great opportunities for improving patient outcomes through personalised medicine and other genetic adaptations and innovations.

I enjoyed meeting the teams, hearing more about their work, understanding the plans to relocate the partnership at new premises in 2023, and discuss with colleagues at Welsh Government progress on the forthcoming Genomics Delivery Plan for Wales. I am looking forward to visiting the GPW teams soon and supporting the transition to their new premises in the months ahead.

Yesterday marked the launch of the Wales Safer Communities Network, which aims to give new impetus to the important work that we deliver with colleagues in the police, Welsh Government and other key public bodies to make our communities in Wales safer.

The network commenced in January 2021 following the recommendations of the Welsh Government's [Working Together for Safer Communities Review 2017](#). It creates a framework that will enable us to work together to deliver improved community safety, through delivering programmes of work and steering policy and practice. It's an important area of work, and I am enthusiastic for Cardiff and Vale UHB to play an integral role in taking it forward.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the developments that we have seen taking place in Ukraine over the past week. As with situations that we have seen elsewhere globally such as those in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria and Palestine, and sadly in many places across the World affected by conflict and natural disasters the priority for us as team and a Health Board is to be sensitive to the issues and consider the impact that situations like these have on people's lives. We are a multi-national and diverse team and there will always be colleagues affected by situations elsewhere in the World, commonly these

things will affect us all in one way or another so we need to take care of one another. Caring is at our core so be kind to yourselves, be kind to each other and be kind to patients and the citizens and communities we serve.

As always, the Employee Wellbeing Service is available to offer support to you all. I would encourage people throughout Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan and beyond to do the same. If the situation in Ukraine, or indeed anywhere in the world, is affecting your wellbeing for whatever reason, please reach out and talk to somebody.

Eye care facilities to reduce waiting times

To accommodate the growing number of patients requiring eye care, we worked with Cardiff University to re-think how eye care was delivered to our local population, which culminated in the new NHS Wales University Eye Care Centre which you may have spotted in the media last week.

The Centre enables us to upskill experienced Optometrists to gain further glaucoma qualifications whilst treating patients on hospital waiting lists. It is enabling Optometrists to see a wider variety of patients in their high street practices, preventing them needing to be seen in hospital.

This is an excellent example of innovative work being undertaken by our teams to offer patients treatment more quickly, and closer to where they live. I'd like to congratulate the team on this excellent work – which will be welcome news to patients requiring eye care.

[You can find out more about the new NHS Wales University Eye Care Centre here.](#)

Reflecting on LGBTQ+ History Month

As we look back on LGBTQ+ History Month, we can do so with a great deal of pride following [last week's announcement that the Health Board is among the top employers when it comes to LGBTQ+ equality.](#)



The Health Board this year ranked 37th and earned a Gold Award in this year's [Stonewall Workplace Equality Index](#), setting us apart as one of the top three health organisations across the UK in terms of LGBTQ+ equality for our colleagues.

Our Arts Programme also marked the month, displaying [four spectacular pieces created by artist and Patron of our Health Charity, Nathan Wyburn.](#) These portraits, along with others, were made to highlight poignant dates throughout the calendar year from Pride to World Aids Day, HIV Testing Week and Transgender Remembrance Day.

However, while we can be proud of our progress within the organisation, we can't allow LGBTQ+ history month coming to an end to shift our attention away from the significant issues still faced by the LGBTQ+ community both locally and across the world. Together, it is important that we stand up to issues faced by the LGBTQ+ community such as discrimination, harassment and violence, which as we have sadly experienced can have tragic consequences.

Within the Health Board, our LGBTQ+ Staff Network deserves huge credit for the work they have done to make LGBTQ+ issues more visible across the organisation, and for the support network they provide for colleagues.

I would like to share my sincere thanks to the network's committee members for their dedication to the cause – you can [meet the team and find out more about the icons within the LGBTQ+ community who have inspired them here](#) <https://cavuhb.nhs.wales/news/latest-news/meet-the-lgbtq-staff-network/>

Vaccine Update

If you have not yet had your first, second or booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine we run daily walk-in sessions at our Mass Vaccination Centres in Splott, Bayside and Barry Holm View. Getting vaccinated remains our best protection against serious illness and hospitalisation, and helps us keep doing what we love. [Find your nearest vaccination centre on our website by clicking here.](#)

Update on 5-11 year olds

Last month the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advised that all children aged 5-11 should be offered two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, with a minimum interval of 12 weeks.

In Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan we will begin delivering the second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine to this age group from mid-March, with the majority of vaccines being administered at one of our Mass Vaccination Centres.

Please wait to be contacted with details of how to book an appointment, we will contact you via phone call, letter or SMS message.

The decision to have a COVID-19 vaccine is a choice for each individual to make. We will be sharing further information including resources for parents in due course.

[For more information on our Mass Vaccination Programme please visit our website by clicking here.](#)

Guidance on face coverings

From 28th February the legal requirement to wear a face covering in many indoor public places came to an end. In light of Welsh Government's changes to the guidance for face coverings, we would like to remind staff that face coverings remain a legal requirement for adults and children aged 11 and over, unless exempt, in health and care settings.

We understand that outside things are changing. However, our colleagues



in hospitals, GP practices and community healthcare settings are still wearing face coverings to protect you.

We require you to continue to wear your mask while in our all our hospitals and community healthcare settings.

[You can read the latest guidance about face coverings on the website Welsh Government here.](#)

NHS 111 roll out in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan

The NHS 111 service will be rolled out in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan from 16th March 2022. The service, which is in place across Wales, is the new way to contact the NHS from landlines and mobiles free of charge.

The 111 service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and provides access to urgent care along with health information and advice. The service is fully integrated with the online Symptom Checker, [which you can find on the NHS 111 Wales website by clicking here.](#)

The launch of NHS 111 service in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan will help improve access to care, with free health advice just a phone call away.



We will be sharing further information about the roll out in the coming weeks, so please check our website and social media channels for updates.

[If you would like to find out more about the service you can visit the NHS 111 Wales website by clicking here.](#)

Raising awareness of eating disorders and support

This week is Eating Disorder Awareness Week. Eating disorders are mental health conditions where people develop unhealthy eating habits influenced by emotions and body image concerns. It is important to raise awareness of eating disorders, as they are often misunderstood and are sadly responsible for more deaths than any other mental health illness.

It is estimated that more than a million people in the UK suffer from an eating disorder, which can occur due to a range of genetic, environmental, psychological and other factors. They can affect any of us, but are most common among women, particularly those aged 13-17.

I would urge everyone to [read the information about eating disorders on our website](#), so that you are able to identify signs of an eating disorder in yourself and your loved ones, and know how you can access the support you need.

Health Charity

Prop Appeal Afternoon Tea Event

A wonderful afternoon of tea, cake and laughter was



had by all who attended the [Prop Appeal's Afternoon Tea event at The Coal Exchange Hotel](#). A huge thank you to all who came along to enjoy the fun. We are delighted to have raised over £1345!

Daniel Bould is crowned Health Hero for February

[Health Care Support Worker, Daniel Bould, has been crowned Health Hero for February](#) thanks to his



kind and caring nature towards patients, staff and visitors. Find out how his work at the Stroke Rehabilitation Centre at University Hospital Llandough makes him a worthy winner.

Arts

- **Postcards of Thanks Gifted to Cardiff Royal Infirmary Staff and Supporters in Celebration of the Chapel's Centenary**



As the 100th anniversary of the Chapel at [Cardiff Royal Infirmary is marked, the Staff Lottery, part of Cardiff & Vale Health Charity has funded for CRI staff and supporters to receive a card of thanks](#) for their contribution to the hospital and its community.

- **Music and Arts for Health and Wellbeing at Barry Hospital**

As part of Cardiff & Vale Health Charity's 'First Impressions' Project at Barry Hospital, we were able to fund [Ruth Bradshaw, Music and Arts for Health and Wellbeing Facilitator, to hold sessions with patients on the Sam Davies Ward at Barry Hospital.](#)