

# Chief Executive CONNECTS



Dear Colleague,

9/12/2020

Yesterday marked a turning point in the fight against COVID-19 as the first members of Cardiff and Vale UHB staff to receive the vaccine were given it in the morning. Vaccination has long been an integral part of modern medicine and has been responsible for great strides in this field with the global eradication of smallpox just one notable example. Now, vaccination offers a ray of light at the end of what has been an incredibly long and indescribably challenging year.

But we are not there yet and there is a long way to go until a large enough proportion of our community has been immunised that we are able to return to some semblance of normality. There is a long, difficult winter still ahead of us. You may have seen in the news yesterday that Wales is currently the only part of the UK where COVID-19 cases are currently rising and they will continue to rise if people continue to ignore the regulations. It is easy and tempting to think that the actions you take will not affect the lives of others and that it will not matter if you break the rules to visit a friend's home. Make no mistake, we all have a personal responsibility; the cumulative effect of all of our actions translate to higher case numbers and, sadly, higher numbers of deaths.

If you work in the health service, it is doubly important that you follow the rules as reckless behaviour increases the risk of cross infection of already vulnerable patients in hospital and risks staff shortages due to sickness and self-isolation on an already stretched workforce. The Health Board is making every effort to support staff during these challenging times and is recruiting as many new members of staff as quickly as possible. Please set an example, behave sensibly and within the regulations.

While the advent of this revolutionary vaccine is undoubtedly good news, please do not use it as an excuse to bend or break Welsh Government regulations, even if you have received it. We are so close to the end of this fight with COVID-19 but our behaviour now determines the manner of our journey there, and the size of the challenges we will face along the way.

Thank you for following the COVID regulations until now; please continue to do so for just a little longer!

**Len Richards**  
**Chief Executive**

# First COVID-19 vaccines delivered

As I mentioned in my introduction, yesterday was the first day of the COVID-19 vaccination campaign with many staff members of Cardiff and Vale UHB and local care home staff among the first in the UK, and the world, to have received the vaccine. The start of the vaccination programme comes just days after the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) approved the first COVID-19 vaccine for use in the UK, confirming its safety and effectiveness for mass vaccination centre use, based on a detailed independent expert review of the results of large scale clinical trials.

Our staff involved in delivering the vaccine, led by our Executive Director of Public Health, Fiona Kinghorn, have worked at an incredible pace to ensure that everything was ready and in place for the first vaccines to be delivered early yesterday morning. Taking into account the very specific storage and preparation challenges posed by the vaccine itself, this is no small feat and I would like to thank Fiona and her team for pulling together, working with local, national and UK partners to coordinate the delivery.

I would like to thank our Primary Care team, led by Tracy Meredith, Kay Jeynes and Richard Desir, for their roles in developing the workforce and delivering training as well as supporting the sourcing of venues and logistics alongside our Emergency Planning and Capital, Estates and Facilities team.

Thank you also to Darrell Baker and the Pharmacy team for their role in vaccine management, to Mark Cahalane and the Digital team for the implementation of the digital support systems surrounding this work, and to Angela Hughes and the Patient Experience team for their invaluable input on the end-to-end patient journey. I would also like to thank Lynne Aston and the Finance team for their support of this campaign, and Ceri Knight and Louise Yau from the Communications and Engagement team for ensuring that staff know this vaccine is safe and available to them, and who are also facilitating international media coverage of the delivery of the first vaccines, so please look out for that. Finally, a huge thanks to the Local Public Health team for their oversight of this campaign, led by Lorna Bennett, Cheryl Williams, Nuala Mahon and supported by Tim O'Connor from Q5. A tremendous effort by all involved which will save many lives and provide us all with hope for the future.

Priority groups of health and social care staff will be vaccinated first, in line with Joint Committee of Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) guidance. When we are in a position to invite members of the community for vaccination, you will receive a letter from the Health Board with details of your invitation. More details of our wider vaccination campaign plan will be announced in due course. In the meantime, please do not contact your GP or community pharmacy to request the COVID-19 vaccine.



Elliott Carrington-Windo, transplant clinical teaching fellow, is vaccinated by Lynne Cronin, Senior Nurse, Primary Care.



Nuala Mahon, Immunisation Coordinator, said: *"I am very honoured to be part of this process that will in time help us to return to normal life, especially for healthcare workers who have been under a lot of pressure."*



Dr Jonathan Holman, from EU and Air Ambulance says he feels *"totally fine"* after having the vaccine.



Dr Lucy Jawad says, *"I feel lucky and privileged to be one of the first to get the vaccine. Huge thank you to the Health Board for how quickly and efficiently they organised the vaccination process."*



# Enjoying Christmas Safely

This is usually a time of year when we would meet informally and in person with our teams and work colleagues for Christmas meals or parties; however, this year will be very different, particularly as the number of people who can gather together socially is limited currently to a maximum of four individuals from different households.

I want to take the opportunity to remind staff about the importance of adhering to the current restrictions that are in operation in Wales and setting an example to the public in general.

This Christmas, any team get-togethers that are held remotely via Teams or Zoom will clearly not be the same, but can still play an important part in supporting team working and staff wellbeing, as well as being a much safer option for everyone involved.

If you are Christmas shopping over the coming weeks, please make every effort to do so safely by maintaining social distancing, shopping only with your household or bubble, keeping your hands clean and perhaps considering online shopping or click and collect.

## Professor Rachel Collis awarded Featherstone Professorship

I am absolutely delighted that Professor Rachel Collis, Consultant Anaesthetist, is the first woman to be awarded the Featherstone Professorship for her work in the field of obstetric anaesthesia. The Association of Anaesthetists' Featherstone Professorship is awarded to participating clinicians and scientists who've made a substantial contribution to anaesthesia and its related subspecialties in the fields of safety, education, research, innovation, international development, leadership, or a combination of these.

Prof. Collis will hold the Featherstone Professorships two years, and during this period she will be required to deliver a Featherstone Oration at a major Association of Anaesthetists meeting. On receiving this award, Prof. Collis said: "I felt tremendously honoured to receive this award. I'm not an academic or have an academic contract but I have done a lot of research leading the Obs Cymru project, which has been one of the highlights of my career. Research is something I've always felt passionately about."

[Read more here.](#)

## Primary Care Optometry nominated for Healthcare Awards

I am happy to announce that Cardiff and Vale University Health Board has been shortlisted as Finalist for the upcoming Healthcare awards for our novel services established in primary care Optometry practices. The project, entitled, 'Transformation of eye care services (glaucoma and unscheduled eye care) and the use of a digitised patient record enabling shared care between optometry and ophthalmology', is a finalist in a number of awards namely, the Health Service Journal (HSJ) awards 2020, Building Better Healthcare Awards 2020, and the Health Business awards 2020.



The team were also selected to present our novel service models as exemplar practice for the national Bevan Exemplar Innovation Showcase event on 4th December 2020. I wish to thank all members of the primary and secondary care teams for their dedication and collaborative working in establishing these services for patient benefit.

Selections are based on ambition, visionary spirit and the demonstrable positive impact that projects have on patient and staff experiences within the health and/or social care sector. I cannot wait to see how the team get on at the various ceremonies and have my fingers crossed for them as I believe they are leading the field for innovative eye care in Wales.

## Time to Reflect Service

We are inviting patients, staff, volunteers and members of our community to come together and reflect on our shared experience of the year and remember those who we have lost. Join us virtually on Thursday 17th December at 6pm for Time to Reflect service which will be premiered on our Facebook page

You can also share a message or dedication on our virtual Reflection Wall in memory of a loved one.

**GIG Cymru NHS Wales** | Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Caerdydd a'r Fro  
Cardiff and Vale  
University Health Board

Join us virtually on Thursday 17th December at 6pm

*Time to Reflect*

You can also share a message or dedication on our virtual Reflection Wall in memory of a loved one

[www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cavreflection](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cavreflection)

## Meddwl Cymraeg – Think Welsh

Yesterday was Diwrnod Hawliau, or Welsh Language Rights Day, and we marked the occasion by launching our new Meddwl Cymraeg – Think Welsh campaign, which aims to encourage use of the Welsh language and promote Welsh culture and heritage.

The campaign recognises that people have the right to speak Welsh when they engage with us as a Health Board, whether as patients, visitors or staff, and therefore encourages employees to actively think about the Welsh language and consider how they can contribute to making our organisation more accessible to Welsh speakers.

As part of the campaign, a range of information, resources and activities will be made available in the coming months to encourage them to encourage our staff to have the confidence to speak Welsh at any level of fluency, support non-Welsh speaking staff to improve their skills, and help services to increase their use of the language.

I would urge you all to support and engage with this campaign and make use of the opportunities it presents in the coming months, for the good of our Welsh speaking patients and colleagues. [Find out more about the Meddwl Cymraeg – Think Welsh Campaign.](#)

## Increased risk of cyber attacks

Late last week we were advised by the National Cyber Security Centre that there is an increased likelihood of ‘phishing’ and ‘smishing’ cyber-attacks targeting staff via emails and SMS (text messages), in relation to the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

All health Board employees are urged to be extra vigilant of cyber-attacks, which can also become more prevalent during the festive season.

The IM&T Security Team have prepared thorough guidance outlining common types of cyber-attack, signs that you may be the target of a cyber-attack, and actions that employees can take to protect themselves and the organisation from the threat. [Please read the guidance on the staff intranet here.](#) Employees are also encouraged to ensure they have undertaken cyber awareness e-learning that is available through ESR.

If you are concerned that you are the target of a cyber-attack, or for further information or support, please contact the IM&T security team, at: [CV.IMT.Security@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:CV.IMT.Security@wales.nhs.uk).

## Join us live for the Staff Recognition Awards 2020

The Staff Recognition Awards are one of the dates on the calendar that I most look forward to as it gives us the important opportunity to take a moment and celebrate the many successes that staff throughout the organisation work so hard to achieve.

It was really disheartening when we had to take the difficult decision to postpone the event back in March as the COVID-19 pandemic was really beginning to take hold, but I am delighted that we have been able to reschedule the awards as a virtual event this Thursday.

The event will celebrate the successes of individuals and teams in the year or so ahead of the pandemic. We will of course be recognising the phenomenal efforts of our staff in reacting to the pandemic when the time is right at a later date, but it is important that we don't overlook incredible achievements of individuals and teams in the months ahead of it.

I would like to invite everybody to join us in celebrating the remarkable achievements of our staff, live on the [Health Board's Facebook page](#) from 6pm this Thursday.

## Book your flu jab

In other important vaccine news, following Welsh Government's announcement, people aged 50 to 64 (as of 31 March 2021) will be eligible for a free NHS flu vaccine from 1 December 2020 from their local GP surgery or community pharmacy. If you are asked to wait, please be patient as they may be prioritising higher risk groups first. Flu vaccinations can be accessed in the community from a GP surgery, Community Pharmacy, or school as appropriate.

I am proud to say that within Cardiff and Vale UHB, 66.8% of frontline staff have received the vaccine, beating our previous record! We only need around 900 more members of staff to reach our target of 75% uptake.

By doing so, we're protecting our colleagues and patients from flu, which could be easy to overlook this year but could still have terrible consequences for our most vulnerable. I would like to once again thank all staff involved in the delivery of this programme for their determination and hard work.

Our flu champions are offering immunisations to all staff (including non-frontline workers) and I would urge staff members to contact their [Clinical Board Flu Lead](#) or access an Occupational Health clinic through our phone first system. Call Internal 43264 or External 02920 743264 in advance to book a slot at UHW. Social distancing is controlled at all clinics in order to safeguard both staff and clients

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# Other News and Events

## Could you be our new Vice-Chair?

Cardiff and Vale UHB is looking to recruit to the position of Vice-Chair. This is a great opportunity to use your skills and experience to make a difference to the lives of people and communities served by Cardiff and Vale University Health Board. [If you interested in applying, you can find out more here.](#)

## Collaboration with Women's Arts Association

The Arts for Health and Wellbeing team, supported by Cardiff & Vale Health Charity were delighted to be able to collaborate with the Women's Arts Association Wales in improving the environment in Nuclear Medicine at University Hospital Llandough and University Hospital of Wales. [Watch the project here.](#)

## 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.](#)

## [Don't forget](#) - three rules to keep Wales safe

- Wash your hands regularly with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds and use hand sanitiser when this is not possible.
- Always wear a face covering in indoor public spaces (such as shops or places of worship), or when keeping a distance from others is not possible
- Keep 2 metres apart from people outside of your household (ie: those that you live with).