



Dear Colleague,

09/02/2022

I am now in my second week at Cardiff and Vale UHB and have been spending time meeting colleagues, along with some of our partners and stakeholders. Firstly, I would like to thank you all for making me so very welcome, I feel I've made a great decision. Although still early days I'm beginning to feel a like a member of Team CAV and beginning to make connections between people, conversations and initiatives so I don't feel quite so out of touch!

I'm going to spend my first month or so discovering how things work around here, who the movers and shakers are and most importantly what matters to all of you. Please bear with me, I'll be asking lots of questions, some of which might seem a bit obvious but I want to gain a full understanding of the Health Board's current position, your view of what the challenges and opportunities are, and how we can work together to shape our future and the context we are working within.

It's clear the whole health and social care system remains under significant pressure with patient flow across the system the biggest challenge. I visited University Hospital Wales earlier in the week and met colleagues from the Emergency Unit, the Children's Hospital and the OPAT. I was incredibly impressed and inspired by the commitment, resilience and compassion shown by all despite all the challenges and although I sadly

don't have a magic bullet I do commit to work with you all, listen and take all opportunities to influence and advocated for Team CAV and the patients and citizens we serve.

The Covid news does seem a little better with a reduction in positive PCR cases amongst the over 60s and fewer hospital clusters. There is an overall reduction in positive cases across the region except for those in the 20-29-year-old age group. Hospital admissions for COVID-19 have also stabilised but as I've said there continues to be high demand for our services in all areas across primary, acute, mental health and the community.

It is still incredibly important to get your COVID-19 vaccination as this is still the best defence against the virus and it is having a positive effect on serious illness and hospitalisations. You may have seen our vaccination campaign on our social media channels linked to the Six Nations where we are encouraging you all to 'kick COVID-19 into touch'.

Our three Mass Vaccination Centres are now offering walk-ins for first, second and booster doses so if you haven't had your vaccine you can simply walk into a centre between 8am and 8pm. Some of our community pharmacies are also offering walk ins and dates and times will be updated on our [website](#) each week. Staff can also get their flu jabs at our walk in centres and there is more detail on that later on.

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I'm looking forward to meeting many of more of you over the coming weeks as I visit sites across the estate and communities. So get your topics, suggestions and questions ready so that you can support my discovery phase and make sure I come away understanding what matters to you. A number of colleagues have emailed me direct or dropped me a message via Twitter asking for a visit or meeting and I will do my best to take you up on those kind offers. Please do email me direct or contact [news@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:news@wales.nhs.uk) so we can arrange some time.

### **Solidarity with the LGBTQ+ community**

It was humbling to see so many people attend the vigil of our colleague Dr Gary Jenkins on Sunday whose life was taken in a horrific act of homophobia.

The vigil saw hundreds of people gather on the steps of the Museum in Cardiff, some who knew Dr Jenkins and others who were standing together to show that Cardiff does not stand for this level of intolerance. Colleagues and patients of Dr Jenkins spoke about his life and career and it was evident that he was a well respected and admired colleague and clinician.

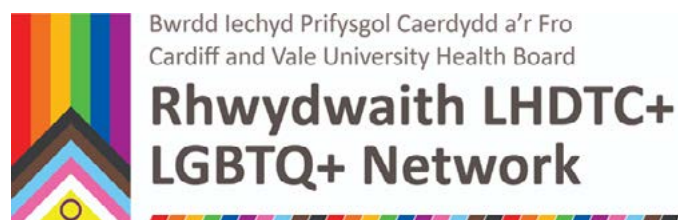
As a diverse and inclusive employer, we stand together in solidarity with our LGBTQ+ colleagues and communities that discrimination and hate crime is not welcome.

Sadly, the LGBTQ+ community continues to experience significant inequalities. Everyone should be able to feel comfortable in their own skin and it's important that collectively we all keep taking positive steps forward to tackle issues such as homophobia, biphobia and transphobia to help achieve that.

I'm aware of good work that's been happening within the organisation to embed an increasingly inclusive culture, which is certainly something I want to see us continuing to build upon. An important component of ensuring that happens is to improve awareness and understanding. I would therefore encourage everyone to take the opportunity to get involved in activities taking place throughout LGBTQ+ History Month, such as those being shared internally for NHS Wales employees.

The Health Board's LGBTQ+ Staff Network enables LGBTQ+ staff to come together to share information and support, offers all staff with confidential support and advice on LGBTQ+ issues at work, and helps to promoting an inclusive and supportive culture.

The LGBTQ+ Staff Network is looking for a group of colleagues to form the Health Board's new LGBTQ+ Peer Support Network, which will give colleagues across the organisation someone to go to for advice, or help finding information about where they can go for further support. To find out more information and get involved, contact [rainbownetwork.cav@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:rainbownetwork.cav@wales.nhs.uk).



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## Visiting at our sites

As Wales has entered alert level 0 for COVID-19 we are still limiting footfall on our sites at this time to ensure staff and patients remain safe from COVID-19 spreading in our hospitals.

We are still offering visits by appointment only but we are experiencing an increase in calls to the visiting booking lines. Please be patient with our teams while they answer calls and accommodate requests in line with our visiting guidance. You can also email a request to [Visiting.Cardiffuhb@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Visiting.Cardiffuhb@wales.nhs.uk).

We appreciate how important visits are for your loved ones and yourselves, and our priority remains protecting our patients, staff, and communities.

## Don't forget your flu vaccine

With the number of flu cases rising in Wales, it's important that those of us who work in healthcare take up the offer of a flu vaccine. It's not too late.

Getting the vaccine is especially important now because we're likely to see flu and COVID-19 circulating together over the next few weeks.

As cases rise, flu vaccine uptake in NHS Wales healthcare staff is considerably lower than at the same point last year, with a relatively small number of flu vaccines given to NHS Wales staff in December.

Immunisation remains one of the best ways to protect ourselves and others from catching or spread flu. Please, let's keep ourselves and those we care for safe this winter.

If you are a member of UHB staff you can now

receive your flu vaccination from any of our Mass Vaccination Centres where they are offering walk in clinics this week. You just need to show your staff ID to get it.

If you are within the priority groups and have not yet received your flu vaccine you can get it from your GP or Community Pharmacy.



## Recovery and Redesign: Providing accessible support services

As a Health Board we have a number of services and approaches in place to support patients who are waiting to access planned care. Throughout the pandemic ensuring patients have access to support services remained a priority, and as we work to restore activity to pre-COVID levels, these support services remain a vital part of our recovery strategy.

A key part of this approach has been our Prehab2Rehab work, with the aim of this project to provide robust self-management advice to educate, support and inform patients about general health and wellbeing whilst they await their elective operation. From March 2020, during an initial 12-month period, 3,135 eligible patients were identified and sent 'nudges' via text promoting healthy behaviour. The majority of the

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patients who responded, found all the nudges useful and informative, with a health behavioural change reported by 40-72% of people who received each nudge.

Another aspect of the Prehab2Rehab project has been the establishment of the Health Board's new digital rehabilitation resource [Keeping Me Well](#). The website, which has been developed by a multi-disciplinary team, provides a range of information and advice available to support patient's health and wellbeing, whether they are preparing for treatment or managing a long-term condition.

Further support services span a range of areas including effective social prescribing offered by primary care teams, along with the Living Well and Prepare Well programmes managed by multi-disciplinary teams including occupational therapists and physiotherapists. Our Mental Health team continues to work closely with third sector organisations to signpost patients to suitable charities such as Cardiff and Vale Action for Mental Health, Mind and Beat. Furthermore, wellbeing support is also provided by our [Recovery College](#), which offers free educational courses to patients on a range of topics covering mental health, physical health and wellbeing.

We continue to work alongside teams and third sector organisations to ensure accessible and effective support is offered to all patients currently awaiting treatment.

## Help shape 'Your Ideal Recovery & Wellbeing College'

The Cardiff and Vale Recovery & Wellbeing College has been a huge success since its launch in Autumn 2020. In a first of its kind in Wales, the college provides free educational courses on a range of mental health, physical health and wellbeing topics. Anyone is welcome to enrol as a student and courses take place online, as well as in-person, at venues across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. The college has facilitated 225 workshops, over 605 teaching hours and registrations from 683 students since it launched.

Peer support is at the core of all courses available, co-produced and co-delivered by health care professionals and peer trainers with lived experience of mental health and physical health challenges. Course leads use their experience to support others in their recovery.

Co-production underpins the Recovery & Wellbeing College as the first co-produced, peer led mental health service in Wales, not only through the development of courses, but engaging with people in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan on how the college is run and what its curriculum looks like. The college hosts regular Open Forum sessions where updates are provided and people are invited to share their views. Additionally, the college's Board has student representatives and since the college was established it has worked in partnership with the Third Sector, carers and service users.

Now, the Cardiff and Vale Recovery & Wellbeing is inviting people to get involved in exploring the direction of travel for the college beyond its infancy. The success of the college means it is now at a pivotal point where next steps need to be identified to ensure that the model is sustainable

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and continues to provide an exceptional offering to the Health Board's local population.

### How to get involved...

The Recovery & Wellbeing College would like anyone from Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan with an interest in the college to attend a series of online sessions called 'Your Ideal Recovery & Wellbeing College' which will inform the co-production of business plans. The college wants to ensure prospective plans are designed in a way that are reflective of the needs of the local population. Find out more about contributing to the sessions.



### Celebrating our Youth Board's contributions to mental health services

Our Health Board has its very own Youth Board, made up of young volunteers aged 13 to 25. The Youth Board is instrumental in ensuring young people are part of our decision-making processes. The programme is extremely successful, particularly due to the perspectives it offers and contributions it makes towards the way we shape our services. In turn, this helps the Health Board improve access to services for children and young people, as well as supporting them to lead healthier lifestyles.

Recently, the Youth Board has identified emotional wellbeing and mental health as key priority areas and have been engaged in a series of projects around these topics. This Children's Mental Health Week, we wanted to share some examples of the fantastic work the group has been involved with:

### Feedback on CAMHS environment at St David's Hospital

The Youth Board has worked with Health Board colleagues to offer their views, giving open and honest feedback about the existing area and making suggestions on what they would like the environment to look like. They advised on elements such as décor, colours and furniture styles. Thanks to Cardiff & Vale Health Charity, funds were made available to refurbish the area based on the Youth Board's suggestions.

Developing the new emotional wellbeing and mental health website Cardiff and Vale UHB has recently developed a new website for children and young people, providing useful information and resources. The website has been co-produced with the Youth Board from the very beginning through to its launch, and will continue to be developed with input from the group.

### Designed, voiced and starred in videos and animations

A series of videos and animations have been created with the support of the Youth Board to inform young people about mental health, caring for their own mental health and where to get help. You can see some of these videos on the Health Board's TikTok account @CV\_UHB.

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## Consulted on pathways and service user communication

A major piece of work has been undertaken in collaboration with the Youth Board on service pathways and how services communicate with young people and families. They worked with Health Board colleagues to review the content of letters and other materials to make them friendlier for young people and less formal. They also advocated a children's rights-based approach, by suggesting letters are addressed to the child or young person. [Read more.](#)



## Cardiff & Vale Health Charity

### January Staff Lottery winners

Congratulations to Jayne Somers, Maternity UHW, Emma Wakefield, Paediatric Cardiology, Cardigan House UHW, Joy John, T4 UHW, and Alyson Chambers, Finance UHW for winning £1000 each in January's Staff Lottery.

The Staff Lottery supports staff across Cardiff and Vale UHB by creating new winners every month. It also enables staff to apply for funding from the Staff Lottery Bids Panel, which has awarded grants of over £1.5 million to support numerous projects across the UHB which benefit patients, staff and visitors.

The Staff Lottery Bids Panel recently supported a project to provide outdoor seating in the courtyard of St David's Hospital.

The garden area is currently accessible by staff and patients; however, it isn't being fully utilised due to the lack of seating. By providing the additional seats, the outdoor space would become a comforting environment for patients and their carers to frequently use. St David's Hospital staff will also be able to use it to relax and unwind during their breaks, as there isn't currently a staff haven available on site.

Did you also know Cardiff & Vale Health Charity Staff Lottery Scheme has given away over £1 million in winnings back to staff members since 2005? Why not sign up? The Staff Lottery Application form can be completed electronically [here](#) and returned to: [fundraising.cav@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:fundraising.cav@wales.nhs.uk).

Many thanks for all your hard work this week and for those who are working over the weekend thank you and to everyone else enjoy some rest and time with loved ones.

Best wishes,

*Suzanne*