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Caerdydd a'r Fro
Cardiff and Vale
University Health Board

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**Len Richards
Chief Executive**

12 February 2021

Dear Colleagues

As you may be aware, construction on the Lakeside Wing has finished and as of Monday 8 February, the Lakeside Wing has been officially handed over to Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (CAVUHB) from the main contractors, Darwin Group Ltd.

Since construction started on Saturday 12 September, it has taken just under 150 days to build the three-storey facility on the Lakeside area of our UHW site. To build a facility of this size (which is equivalent to the size of three primary schools) in under five months is an impressive feat and is testament to our colleagues working on this project, particularly those from the Capital, Estates and Facilities team.

Together with our contactors Darwin Group Ltd and FP Hurley who have worked on the site 24/7 since building began, we have made sure there has been minimal disruption to site and services for staff, patients and local residents. At its peak, there have been 240 people working on the building at once.

The U-shaped modular building was built following a £33m investment from Welsh Government and accommodates 400 beds to help us meet the sufficient surge capacity requirements as predicted by Welsh Government and local intelligence data and modelling, in the event of a second spike in the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Lakeside Wing acts as a step-down facility where patients are undergoing essential rehabilitation after a period of acute illness, which may not necessarily be Covid-19.

Greenery and parking at UHW

We recognise the importance of greenery, spaces, trees and the impact of this on our environment for patients and staff and we pledged how we will minimise the loss of any green areas as far as possible before we started construction.

We located two trees that were identified with memorial plaques and these have been replanted in the area next to the wishing well, alongside the lake.

In addition, we have re-instated all of the memorial benches around the lake after they have been in safe storage during building work to prevent any potential damage.

Once the contractor has removed his office and storage accommodation from site, we will survey the surface of the disabled car park (11a) with a view to bringing it back into operation at the earliest possible opportunity.

Staffing and recruitment for the UHW Lakeside Wing

We thank those staff who admirably volunteered and have been redeployed to the Lakeside Wing, where their skills and expertise are required most by our patients.

Equally, we thank those staff who have maintained the same levels of care to our patients on wards and within departments where their fellow colleagues have been redeployed from; we cannot commend staff enough for their flexibility, helpfulness and resolve as we battle the second (and the biggest) spike in this pandemic.

There has already been a great deal of recruitment that has taken place by both the nursing and Workforce Hubs, who have worked tirelessly to recruit over 1000 staff on fixed term and permanent contracts. This included sifting through numerous applications to ensure a large number of staff are recruited to a post or on a Bank only basis so that they can be deployed when required.

Staff wellbeing and the Staff Haven at the Lakeside Wing

Working in and facing a once-in-a-generation pandemic is one thing, but to encounter it in one of our busiest Winter periods is a completely different challenge altogether and we understand the impact it has on our mental health.

We're pleased to announce that a Staff Haven has been located inside Lakeside Wing, thanks to a generous donation made by Welsh professional footballer Gareth Bale and his wife Emma. Cardiff & Vale Health Charity and the Employee Health and Wellbeing Service worked together with the Capital, Estates and Facilities Team to create a peaceful, tranquil space for all staff to use as an area of rest and recuperation. Staff, including those based at the Lakeside Wing, were asked to contribute to the design, look and feel of the space which is a mobile-free zone and boasts calming artwork, a break-out kitchen, quiet seating areas and shower facilities. You can read more about the haven, which opened on Monday 1 February, on the Cardiff & Vale Health Charity's [website](#).

We cannot emphasise enough how important it is to take time out to focus on our mental health and wellbeing. Please remember that our [Employee Health and Wellbeing Service \(EWS\)](#) is also here to support you and there's a range of [free, online resources](#) you can access to help your daily wellbeing.

Communicating to staff about the UHW Lakeside Wing

We have kept staff updated on the latest project progress through the Tuesday and Thursday editions of the COVID-19 update, [StaffConnect](#) and the weekly CEO Connects blog.

We also share updates on the Health Board's social media channels and we have a dedicated [webpage](#) which includes the latest information and a comprehensive list of frequently asked questions. We will continue to communicate any important updates on the Lakeside Wing using these channels.

You may have seen our 'Behind the Build' series both on social media and on StaffConnect where we focus on the members of the Health Board who work on this project, their roles and contribution, as well as learning more about the temporary surge facility which is one of the first of its kind in Wales. Please keep an eye on our social media channels as we continue to promote the good work and I hope you can join us in recognising the work that has gone into this landmark project.

Lastly, we want to thank staff for your efforts as we have all come together and battled through this challenging and ever-changing time and praise you for your ongoing support, not just for the UHW Lakeside Wing but for the Health Board and more importantly, our patients.

Yours sincerely



Len Richards
Chief Executive