

# Primary Care Workforce Bulletin

March 2021



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WALES

Addysg a Gwella Iechyd  
Cymru (AaGIC)  
Health Education and  
Improvement Wales (HEIW)



## Dear Colleague,

This is our second Primary Care Workforce bulletin bringing you a variety of updates on what we are doing in Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) to support workforce priorities in primary care. We hope you find this useful as we start to plan for the recovery and reset from the pandemic, making sure we get the best learning from the difficult times we have all experienced. Thanks also to everyone who has helped us maintain our crucial education and training activities during this time, and for the innovation and creativity that has been evident in the response to the pandemic. We are keen to use this to continue to improve and strengthen the development of the multi-professional workforce in primary care.

Please feel free to share this and provide feedback via [HEIW@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:HEIW@wales.nhs.uk).

Best wishes,



**Alex Howells (Chief Executive, HEIW)**



**Dr. Chris DV Jones (Chairman, HEIW)**

## About us

An NHS organisation established in 2018 to drive the transformation of the health workforce in Wales.

Our purpose is to provide NHS Wales with a single body to develop an integrated and comprehensive approach to the planning and development of the health workforce. We have a central focus on education and training along with a number of other significant functions including workforce planning and intelligence, leadership development, workforce modernisation and careers. A key part of our role is to ensure we add value and benefit in terms of improvements that are needed in quality of care and staff experience.

Established as the first Special Health Authority, HEIW sits alongside the Health Boards and NHS Trusts as the eleventh member of the NHS Wales family.

## Shaping the future

### Multi-professional education and training framework for primary and community care

Despite the pandemic, we've been able to set some foundations for how we can deliver excellent education and training for the multi-professional team in primary and community settings. About 200 people from a variety of backgrounds and professions attended workshops in October 2020 to debate what was needed from an all Wales approach to developing a primary and community care education and training framework – we have produced this [vision paper as a result of that feedback](#). This education and training framework is vital to underpinning the primary care model set out in A Healthier Wales, and in sustaining and improving education and training for the multi-professional team. A key objective will be to design and deliver high quality training and development for all professional groups based on clear and consistent standards, building on the excellent practice that currently exists in relation to GP Training. However, we anticipate that over time this will generate additional benefits in terms of recruitment, retention and workforce planning, and potentially contribute to a more “place based” approach to education and training for the future.

We are building on the existing good practice already taking place at local levels and within health boards and universities, as well as learning from innovative approaches developing across the UK. We want to make Wales a great place to train and work in primary care regardless of your professional background.

Having gained support in principle for the approach, we are now working through the pros and cons of different delivery models and exploring the curricula and teaching infrastructure that will need to be put in place.

For further information, to offer your feedback or ask a question please contact [HEIW.PrimaryCare@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:HEIW.PrimaryCare@wales.nhs.uk).



# COVID response

## Supporting the immunisation workforce in primary care

The pandemic response has required the rapid development of an immunisation workforce and we have worked with Public Health Wales to refresh the Healthcare Assistant (Nursing) - Administering Immunisations and Injections learning unit, which sits within the [Agored Cymru Level 3 Diploma in Primary Care Health Care Support \(General Practice Wales\)](#).

Wherever possible the learning has been adapted and transformed into a blended module, ensuring training is easily accessible and able to be delivered in a more flexible and timely way.

This training enables us to upskill Healthcare Support Workers (HCSWs) with the competencies and skills needed to immunise, expanding the numbers of staff needed for the mass vaccination programme.

The new model of training is now being delivered across Wales and has received positive feedback:

“ Learning is accessible when it is suitable for the learner. ”

“ A successful way of delivering and supporting training in these extreme times. ”

“ Communication and engagement between tutor and learners is better managed and more effective in a virtual setting. ”

*(Feedback from Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board).*

## Expanding our virtual provision for Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

We are now offering more online CPD events and resources to maximise ongoing learning and development opportunities for GPs and the wider primary care workforce, supported by our Revalidation Support Unit.

Along with our existing library of over 40 modules on a range of clinical and non-clinical topics, the GP CPD website now also includes virtual learning events and access to on-demand content.

Led by our three regional CPD Leads, Dr Nicola Flower, Dr David Lupton and Dr Nimish Shah, our face to face CPD events were replaced last autumn with free virtual learning events designed to update clinical knowledge on a range of topics. [You can book onto our upcoming virtual events via the HEIW website.](#)

[CPD On Demand](#) enables viewers to watch a recorded learning event from our virtual delivery programme at a time that suits them.

[The Vitals Series](#) is a series of short videos providing you with bitesize learning chunks on key topics such as sepsis, transgender health, Orbit360 support and our new addition to the series, anaphylaxis.



## Infection prevention and control in a pandemic

The pandemic has highlighted the critical importance of effective infection prevention and control practice, and education has a key role to play. HEIW is leading work with partners across universities, NHS Wales, Social Care Wales and Welsh Government to develop a suite of education and training resources to support Infection Prevention & Control (IP&C) practices across Wales based on the 'All Wales Infection Prevention and Control Training, Learning and Development Framework'.

Level 1 to Level 3 training modules will be available in the next few months to strengthen the current all Wales mandatory training as well as develop modules for specific staff e.g. clinical leads at ward/departmental levels and in primary care. To bolster the training offer, content will include the importance of human factors to reinforce and increase staff awareness about the importance and influence of behaviours in clinical practice. This training will be available across sectors. For further information please contact [Lisa.Bassett3@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Lisa.Bassett3@wales.nhs.uk).

To support the above, HEIW has recently recruited into the post of Infection Prevention & Control Programme Lead. It is anticipated the appointee will take up their post in May 2021. There are two main aspects to the role; firstly reviewing the training provided to the IP&C workforce who advise and guide staff across primary and secondary care during outbreaks and pandemics; and secondly, they will be transforming the make-up of the IP&C workforce to ensure it is sustainable and equipped to work across sectors including primary, secondary and the care home sectors.



## Supporting the care home workforce

HEIW is continuing to work with partners to support the care home sector through the current crisis and beyond. The work includes supporting individuals working in care homes to undertake nurse training. 12 individuals commenced their training in 2020, increasing to 15 in 2021. In addition, a Care Home Practice Education Facilitator pilot is planned for the Hywel Dda area to scope the potential for nursing home/care home sector placements for nursing and allied healthcare students and training needs for practice supervisors and assessors.



# Developments in dentistry

## Development of dental core training in general dental practices

We are creating a new career pathway in primary dental care following the success of a pilot year with “career development” posts in general dental practice. A new dental core trainee programme in general dental practice will be introduced in each health board in Wales from 1 September 2021.

This will be available to dentists in Wales who have completed their dental foundation training and want to further develop their clinical skills and knowledge working in general dental services. The 12 month posts will comprise of four days a week in a general dental practice and one day a week linked to the dental core trainee study days running at one of the postgraduate centres in Glan Clwyd Hospital, Llandough Hospital, Morriston Hospital and Prince Charles Hospital.

These posts provide opportunities and encouragement for young dentists to further develop their careers in general dental practice in Wales, helping to address some of our workforce challenges and improving access to dental care for patients.

For further information on these posts please contact [Helen.O'Hara@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Helen.O'Hara@wales.nhs.uk).

## Redesigning the delivery of basic life support training for dental professionals

In November 2020, we successfully launched a blended module for dental professionals working in primary care to enable them to complete their basic life support training during COVID. This training is a requirement of the General Dental Council (GDC) and all dental health professionals are required to do the training once a year.

Our dental, pharmacy and digital colleagues in HEIW collaborated to adapt a basic life support online module that had been developed for the pharmacy profession. The online module requires the user to complete and successfully pass two assessments, and the material has been accredited by the Resuscitation Council (UK).

Successful completion of the online module is then augmented with a practical competency assessment in the dental practice. Commissioned resuscitation officers attend to undertake this following strict social distancing measures and complying with COVID rules in place.

Participants who have undertaken the training have been very complementary and one dentist stated that “the course was excellent. The whole team really enjoyed doing it. The course was structured in such a way to make the course easy to understand and the interactivity of the course greatly helped the learning. It would be great if this course would be available again in the future.”

To date 1,243 have completed the online training programme.

Thanks in particular to Debra Roberts (Associate Dean (Pharmacy), Head of Programme Development and Advanced Practice) and Kate Lyons (Deputy Business Manager (Dental)) for making this possible and for demonstrating the value of effective collaboration through multi-disciplinary working within HEIW and across professions.



# Developments in general practice

## General practice nurse competency framework

HEIW is to lead development of a competency framework in a “Once for Wales” approach to be implemented throughout general practice nursing; currently health boards individually have their own frameworks.

The competency framework will ensure General Practice Nurses (GPNs) have the right skills and are deemed competent to undertake tasks which support patient safety by offering a standardised approach via the framework.

The framework is much needed to help support the GPNs in both career pathway and current competencies in line with role definition and description. Unfortunately, progress has been slow due to the ongoing COVID pandemic and HEIW is grateful to the GPNs who are supporting this piece of work at a difficult time; however, work is hoping to be completed in April 2021.

For anyone interested in supporting this piece of work please contact [Kerri.Eilertsen-Feeney2@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Kerri.Eilertsen-Feeney2@wales.nhs.uk).

## Longitudinal Integrated Foundation Training (LIFT) programme

In LIFT training, the trainee spends four days of the week in a hospital placement and one day every week in a GP practice. This enables the trainee to contextualise their learning more easily in the hospital placement to the primary care setting. It has been shown this type of training produces more patient-centred and holistic doctors who have a better understanding of the whole healthcare system, and who seem to acquire the required competences at a faster rate. In August 2020, there were LIFT placements in four GP Specialty Training Schemes - Gwent, Glamorgan Valleys, Carmarthen and Bangor. The opportunity to have a LIFT rotation was afforded to 12 trainees. LIFT is being expanded to a further four areas from August 2021 – Swansea, Cardiff, Bridgend and Wrexham. We are currently identifying GP practices to host LIFT doctors and the number of rotations available from August 2021 could be over double the current number.

## GP Induction and Refresher (I&R) scheme

The I&R scheme for the UK is for qualified GPs who have been out of the GP workforce for two or more years and overseas qualified GPs who have never worked in the NHS. The purpose is to provide an induction into UK General Practice and allow the doctor to accumulate sufficient evidence that they are ready to work independently as a GP and be included on the Medical Performers' list. After undertaking assessments which include a clinical problem-solving test and simulated surgery to assess their learning needs, those who score above the required mark are offered a supervised induction placement in one of our further training practices. At present, we have eight doctors at various stages of this process.

# Developments in pharmacy

## Transforming Initial Education and Training for Pharmacists (IETP)

The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) approved new standards for the initial education and training of pharmacists at their meeting in December 2020. These standards will transform the education and training of pharmacists and will require a strategic programme of change delivered via a phased transition from 2021-2026. The transformation will enable pharmacists to play a much greater role in providing clinical care to patients and the public from their first day on the register, including prescribing medicines independently.

The standards are a result of extensive collaboration with employers, statutory education bodies, higher education institutions and professional bodies, as well as Governments, and the wider public. At all stages, the standards have been developed in line with the key aims of the NHS in Wales and its strategy for pharmacy.

The IETP will provide a new set of learning outcomes that will be used to assess the full five years of education and training and will link to a continuum of development into post-registration pathways for emerging registrants.

The fifth year of education and training will be known as a foundation training year (previously referred to as pre-registration) and will provide enhanced supervision, support and collaborative working between higher education institutions, statutory education bodies and employers, with a greater emphasis on equality, diversity and inclusion to combat discrimination and address health inequalities.

Effective implementation of the new standards will be reliant not only on the work within HEIW, but on the collective ability of all stakeholders to maintain the collaborative approach to their development, securing the necessary resources including funding to achieve the required outcome.

It is essential that current and future pharmacy students engage with us on this journey, ensuring they are aware of the significant career opportunities they will have through this exciting development.

## Pre-Reg foundation pharmacist update

HEIW has developed one of the building blocks for the new standards through the new centralised multi-sectoral rotational training programme for the current pre-reg foundation pharmacist training-in-practice. This involves trainees spending a total of four months in each of the sectors of community, primary care and hospital pharmacy, coupled with HEIW off-site support. Wales are leading the way



for pre-reg foundation pharmacist training in the UK with this new model, contributing to the building of a flexible pharmacy workforce with the skills and competence to deliver the vision of “A Healthier Wales”: a workforce that can work, communicate and understand the whole patient care pathway which is essential for the efficient management and delivery of patient services. Through the development of our multi-sectoral rotational training programme, HEIW has responded to the urgent and prioritised need to transform pre-reg foundation pharmacist training to equip the future

pharmacy workforce with the skills to be able to work in and across all sectors.

Last year (2020), saw the implementation of this programme within the Swansea Bay and Betsi Cadwallader University Health Board areas. From August 2021, other health boards across Wales will be starting to deliver this new training programme. The Oriel recruitment fill rate to Wales multi-sector programmes for 2021/22 is 100%.

Presently we are planning ahead for our future cohorts of trainees, starting with the next cohort commencing August 2021. In many health boards, there will be trainees enlisted locally on this multi-sector rotational programme. Due to the growth/expansion of the training programme, we are currently engaging with primary care stakeholders, looking to secure community pharmacy and GP practice training placements for these trainees, where they will be spending four months in total in each of these sectors during their pre-reg foundation year. Key resource tools are provided by HEIW to support the programme including training handbooks and educational supervisor training, together with financial arrangements to support training sites.

We are reaching out to community pharmacists, primary care pharmacists and GP practices across Wales about the developments in pre-reg foundation pharmacist training and the opportunity to get involved in this training programme within your local areas. Communications from HEIW have been cascaded to community pharmacies and GP practices across Wales to register expressions of interest for programmes commencing August 2021 and the following year.

To find out more information about this opportunity and/ to discuss further, please get in touch with the Regional Lead for your area:

HEIW role	Name	Email address
Head of Pre-Reg Foundation	Laura Doyle	<a href="mailto:Laura.Doyle3@wales.nhs.uk">Laura.Doyle3@wales.nhs.uk</a>
Pre-Reg Foundation Regional Lead North for Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board area	Anna Hughes	<a href="mailto:Anna.hughes@wales.nhs.uk">Anna.hughes@wales.nhs.uk</a>
Pre-Reg Foundation Regional Lead South West for Swansea Bay University Health Board and Hywel Dda Health Board areas	Llynwen Jones	<a href="mailto:Llynwen.jones5@wales.nhs.uk">Llynwen.jones5@wales.nhs.uk</a>
Pre-Reg Foundation Regional Lead South East for Cwm Taf University Health Board and Powys Teaching Health Board areas	Laura Humphrey or Ffion Hawkins-Davies	<a href="mailto:Laura.humphrey@wales.nhs.uk">Laura.humphrey@wales.nhs.uk</a> or <a href="mailto:Ffion.hawkins-davies@wales.nhs.uk">Ffion.hawkins-davies@wales.nhs.uk</a>
Pre-Reg Foundation Regional Lead South East for Cardiff and Vale Health Board and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board areas	Martyn Jayne	<a href="mailto:Martyn.jayne2@wales.nhs.uk">Martyn.jayne2@wales.nhs.uk</a>
Pre-Reg Foundation Operational Lead	Bethan Broad	<a href="mailto:Bethan.broad2@wales.nhs.uk">Bethan.broad2@wales.nhs.uk</a>
Pre-Reg Foundation Operational Support	Natalie Stansfield	<a href="mailto:Natalie.stansfield@wales.nhs.uk">Natalie.stansfield@wales.nhs.uk</a>



# Developments in optometry

## Contract reforms

The Minister for Health and Social Services has agreed the Future Approach for Optometry Services Optometry document and with it heralds the biggest change in primary care optometry in Wales in a generation. HEIW are contributing to the reform discussions in Welsh Government through our Wales Clinical Leadership Training Fellows (WCLTF). Tim Morgan is leading on prevention with Welsh Government looking at how a new contract could enable optometrists to contribute in health prevention, involving the patient in decision making and providing advice. Tim is also analysing how optometrists can provide sustainable healthcare, ensuring costs analysis of service delivery whereby financial costs, person impact costs and environmental costs are all considered as a whole.

Sarah Schum, our other WCLTF, is ensuring that we have robust data on the workforce in primary care, which includes optometrists, dispensing opticians, contact lens opticians and practice staff. This will enable the shape of our current workforce to be properly evaluated and contribute to delivering the future services in primary care optometry.

Finally, Nik Sheen, the Head of Optometry Transformation in HEIW, is providing the education and development input with the aim of upskilling optometrists and supporting them when they take on additional clinical roles and, crucially, enable them to become more adept at managing and accepting clinical risk.

The Future Approach document can be found at these links:

- Welsh: <https://llyw.cymru/gofal-iechyd-llygaid-gig-cymru-dull-gweithredu-ar-gyfer-gwasanaethau-optometreg-yn-y-dyfodol>.
- English: <https://gov.wales/nhs-wales-eye-health-care-future-approach-optometry-services>



## Mentoring

A new mentoring programme to support newly qualified optometrists in Wales ran between February and September 2020. This pilot offered one-to-one mentoring sessions and peer group discussions for optometrists who had recently qualified.

The results of the evaluation evidenced the success of the mentoring programme for both mentees and mentors, despite the challenges of COVID, including furlough during the time of the programme and a lack of face to face meetings. All 'strongly agreed' that the mentoring scheme was helpful overall; all 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that they would recommend the scheme to colleagues and that they would like to continue with a mentor if the opportunity arose. In the interviews with mentees, the scheme was seen as 'bridging' the gap between pre-registration and being newly qualified.

Future considerations included:

- a more blended approach, including face-to-face and remote meetings
- offering mentoring immediately on qualifying for larger numbers
- providing more advice on learning opportunities, career development and further qualifications
- identifying a 'lead mentor' and a buddy system for new mentors
- creating more opportunity of informal mentor discussion and on-going support.



## Developing and supporting the multi-professional team

### The Nurse Staffing Programme – district nursing and health visiting

The Nurse Staffing Programme supports NHS Wales to fulfil the requirements of the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 through the development and implementation of evidence-based workforce planning tools. This enables organisations to calculate the right number and skills mix of nursing staff required to provide effective care for patients.

District nursing and health visiting are two of the five workstreams within the Nurse Staffing Programme.

Jody Hill is the District Nurse Project Lead and will lead work on testing the draft Welsh Levels of Care for District Nursing in 2021. This means that the final version will be available when the second duty of the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act is extended to district nursing services.

The process used to devise the patient acuity tool over the past three years has been through local and national engagement workshops across Wales involving hundreds of district nurses. The nurses were involved in participatory exercises utilising their knowledge of how dependant and acute the patients they see on a daily basis could be described under a tiered system. Ranking acuity, dependency and risk between 1- stable and routine care, through to 5 - unstable and in crisis.

District nurses are committed to developing and testing the tool which they acknowledge will prove instrumental in enabling them to articulate the needs of their caseload and inform their workforce plans.

For further information or training please contact [jody.hill4@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:jody.hill4@wales.nhs.uk).

The health visiting workstream is developing the Welsh Levels of Care (WLoC) specific to the care and support they provide to children and families. Currently themes are being explored and refined, but include areas such as child development, parenting and observation, assessment and risk. Throughout the rest of 2020/21 work will continue across Wales to refine and test the WLoC.

For more information please email [Rebecca.boore2@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Rebecca.boore2@wales.nhs.uk).

## Leadership

Gwella, the digital leadership platform for Wales was launched in August 2020 and provides a wide range of accessible, evidence based compassionate leadership resources including short reads, webinars, leadership tools, frameworks and articles.

Gwella is freely available to all primary care staff with no log in required. To access these leadership resources from any mobile device, just paste the following into your browser: <https://nhs.wales/leadershipportal.heiw.wales/>.

In addition to access to valuable leadership resources, Gwella provides updates and news on leadership development programmes from a range of expert providers including the Open University and The Kings Fund.

Over the coming months, HEIW will be hosting a series of compassionate leadership master classes, webinars and blogs, all of which will be freely available to our health, social care and primary care workforce.

Gwella was recently recognised with [HEIW scooping gold at the 2020 Learning Technologies Awards](#) for the best digital transformation in response to COVID-19.

For further information, or to discuss how the primary care workforce can maximise the leadership opportunities offered by HEIW, please contact Helen Thomas, Assistant Director of Leadership & Succession, [Helen.Thomas30@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Helen.Thomas30@wales.nhs.uk).

## Next Generation GP Wales

HEIW Leadership and Succession Planning Team are excited to announce the launch of Next Generation GP Wales

We are sponsoring this innovative and fully-funded programme that seeks to inspire future leaders in General Practice.

Next Generation GP programme consists of 6 virtual evening events from May to September 2021 via Zoom which aim to:

- **ENERGISE**
- **ENGAGE**
- **EMPOWER**



Applicants are invited to submit a very brief expression of interest outlining their motivation for applying to the programme. Applications are now open via <http://bit.ly/ApplicationformNGGP> and will close at 9pm on Friday 23 April 2021.

A video about the programme can be found at: <http://bit.ly/NGGPvideo>.

For more information, visit you can visit the website, <https://www.nextgenerationgp.co.uk/>, or if you would like to get in touch, you can email [nextgenerationgpwales@gmail.com](mailto:nextgenerationgpwales@gmail.com).

## Rehabilitation

Primary care plays a significant role in maximising the value of rehabilitation and recovery interventions for a wide range of health conditions, including COVID as this is the first contact point with formal service for most people in Wales.

Primary care has the unique opportunity to engage with the people of Wales through early intervention models which seeks to signpost people to the right services at the right time, for the right level of support for the physical, emotional and social impact of illness or injury.

HEIW has been working in partnership with health boards, the Strategic Programme for Primary Care, and Welsh Government to revise and update the [Rehabilitation Guidance, Rehabilitation: a framework for continuity and recovery](#) (published in the summer of 2020). In addition, to develop a [digital resource](#) to support the workforce to see rehabilitation as 'everybody's business' and build confidence in adopting an enabling approach across the health and care system.

Preparations are under way for HEIW to coordinate the implementation of the [Allied Health Professions Framework: Looking Forward Together](#). This framework calls for the transformation of Allied Health Professional (AHP) services in Wales, raising the profile of rehabilitation and other AHP services, improving access to AHP services and delivering better outcomes for the citizens of Wales.

## Good decision making

Clinical staff work in complex situations and have identified the value of a facilitated approach to increase their confidence in relation to advanced clinical decision making. Patients benefit from having open and honest discussions with clinical staff based on what matters to them, while staff feel more equipped to have discussions and to broach subjects which are sometimes difficult and challenging.

A number of staff in primary care, along with peers in secondary care, have undertaken training to support this approach through the Care Aims training programme. The demand for this training has risen significantly over the last two years, therefore HEIW is recruiting four part-time clinicians to roll the programme out across primary and secondary care in Wales under the banner of Integrated Collaborative Decision Making (ICDM).

The programme, aimed at middle grade clinicians, is a powerful framework for professional reasoning in decision-making, understanding Duty of Care, recognising the need to re-balance risk, and accepting when helping will do harm. The programme successfully drives cultural change and is delivered to multi-professional teams.

Please share this newsletter with your colleagues in primary care and the community.

To be added to our mailing list to receive HEIW primary care updates please email:

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