



**PWYLLGOR DIWYLLIANT, POBL A DATBLYGU SEFYDLIADOL  
PEOPLE, ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & CULTURE COMMITTEE**

<b>DYDDIAD Y CYFARFOD: DATE OF MEETING:</b>	13 June 2024
<b>TEITL YR ADRODDIAD: TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	Monitoring of Welsh Health Circulars (WHCs)
<b>CYFARWYDDWR ARWEINIOL: LEAD DIRECTOR:</b>	Lisa Gostling, Director of Workforce and Organisational Development (OD) / Interim Deputy Chief Executive
<b>SWYDDOG ADRODD: REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Rachel Williams, Head of Assurance and Risk

**Pwrpas yr Adroddiad (dewiswch fel yn addas)  
Purpose of the Report (select as appropriate)**

Er Sicrwydd/For Assurance

**ADRODDIAD SCAA  
SBAR REPORT**

Sefyllfa / Situation

This report to the People, Organisational Development and Culture Committee (PODCC) includes updates on progress in relation to the implementation of Welsh Health Circulars (WHCs), which come under the remit of PODCC and its Sub-Committee structure. The Committee is requested to receive assurance from the lead Executive/Director or Supporting Officer on the management of WHCs within their area of responsibility, particularly in respect of understanding when the WHC will be delivered, any barriers to delivery, impacts of non/late delivery and assurance that the risks associated with these are being managed effectively.

Cefndir / Background

WHCs provide a streamlined, transparent and traceable method of communication between NHS Wales and NHS organisations relating to different areas such as estates, finance, governance, health professional letters, information governance, quality and safety, legislation, planning, performance and delivery, policy, public health, research, science, and workforce. WHCs are published on the [Welsh Government \(WG\) website](#).

The Board has requested that WHCs that have not been implemented by the stated timescales should be closely monitored by its committee structure, in order to provide assurance on the compliance and delivery of the outstanding WHC, in addition to an understanding of the impacts resulting from late/non-delivery.

Asesiad / Assessment

WHCs are not always clear in terms of implementation timescales, a result of which previously these were reported as “Amber” (i.e., on schedule). The Assurance and Risk Team seek updates from leads on WHCs to determine the planned date for implementation by the Health Board where a specific date is not provided within the guidance itself, and where appropriate, that a Quality Impact Assessment (QIA) has been undertaken where WHCs are not fully implemented. The following BRAG status is now applied to WHCs:

- **Green** = completed
- **Amber** = a plan is in place and on schedule to be completed by the timescale provided by the Lead Officer
- **Red** = behind schedule to the timescale provided by the Lead officer, or a plan (with date for implementation) is not yet in place
- **Blue** = External i.e., the means to achieve compliance is currently outside the gift of the Health Board

An update from each Supporting Officer, in respect of the WHCs that fall under the remit of PODCC, is attached at Appendix 1.

**The following WHCs have been received and confirmed as having a plan in place, and being on schedule to be completed by the timescale provided (Amber RAG status):-**

WHC Ref	Name of WHC	Date Issued	Lead Executive/Director	Health Board Date for Completion
017-24	<a href="#">Implementation of the Non-pay Elements of the 2022-4 Collective Agreement</a>	28/03/24	Director of Workforce & OD	Jan-25

Progress Update:

The WHC has identified three areas where aspects of the non-pay collective agreement require local action, with specific actions underpinning each area.

Part 1 required assurance to be provided by May 2024 via the submission of a report confirming that relevant measures are in place regarding the relevant aspects of the collective non-pay agreement. The Director of Workforce & Organisational Development (OD) has confirmed that the assurance report was submitted to WG on 29 May 2024.

Part 2 of the WHC required the Health Board to provide a completion report by January 2025 confirming full implementation of the relevant aspects of the collective non-pay agreement.

Part 3 requires the Health Board to produce an outcomes report by January 2025, based on local priority areas and supporting action plan as identified by the local partnership forum. The Director of Workforce & OD has advised that the WHC has been shared with Trade Union and Workforce leads and is due to be discussed at the Health Board Forum meeting scheduled in May 2024. However, it is noted that some of the policies WG are seeking the Health Board's assurance on have not been issued by the All-Wales Partnership Forum. An update/progress report is to be provided to WG by the end of September 2024.

**The following WHC has been received and confirmed as External, i.e., where the means to achieve compliance is currently outside the gift of the Health Board (External RAG status).**

WHC Ref	Name of WHC	Date Issued	Lead Executive/Director	Health Board Date for Completion
046-23	<a href="#">All-Wales Control Framework for Flexible Workforce Capacity</a>	13/12/23	Director of Workforce & OD	Not Known – awaiting external confirmation of revised dates pending All Wales discussion

### Progress Update:

The WHC, which is to be implemented within all Health Boards, is being co-ordinated on an All-Wales basis and is split into three phases, with each phase detailing specific underpinning actions.

Phase 1 required the submission of baseline returns to WG, which the Health Board completed on 19 January 2024 in line with agreed extended deadline.

Phase 2 requires the development of detailed action plan for reduction on the variable pay bill for 2024/25, with underpinning actions to be completed by March 2025.

Phase 3 requires the implementation of agreed action plans, with national reporting mechanisms to be implemented to track organisations' delivery against plans. The Health Board has a Variable Pay Expenditure Reduction and Efficiency Group in place which monitors and supports the action plans linked to the WHC. It is noted that the Health Board is still awaiting clarification from WG on updates to reporting criteria in order to fully implement the requirements of the WHC.

### **WHCs which have been completed (Green RAG status)**

<b>WHC Ref</b>	<b>Name of WHC</b>	<b>Date Issued</b>	<b>Lead Executive/ Director</b>	<b>Progress Update</b>
022-23	<a href="#">Armed Forces Covenant – Healthcare Priority / Special Consideration for Veterans / Ex Armed Forces Personnel</a>	21/06/23	Director of Workforce & OD	The Health Board has implemented this WHC, with additional work being carried out to enhance the process even further and to improve compliance reporting.
013-24	Governance on interim appointments to Executive and Senior Positions	10/04/24	Director of Workforce & OD	The Health Board has implemented this WHC.

### Argymhelliad / Recommendation

The Committee is requested to:

- **TAKE ASSURANCE** from the lead Executive/Director or Supporting Officer on the management of WHCs within their area of responsibility, particularly in respect of understanding when the WHC will be delivered, any barriers to delivery, impacts of non/late delivery and assurance that the risks associated with these are being managed effectively.

### **Amcanion: (rhaid cwblhau)**

### **Objectives: (must be completed)**

Committee ToR Reference:  
Cyfeirnod Cylch Gorchwyl y Pwyllgor:

To seek assurance on the management of Welsh Health Circulars allocated to the Committee and provide assurance to the Board that WHCs are being managed and monitored effectively, reporting any areas of significant concern e.g., barriers to delivery, impacts of

	non/late delivery.
Cyfeirnod Cofrestr Risg Datix a Sgôr Cyfredol: Datix Risk Register Reference and Score:	Not applicable.
Parthau Ansawdd: Domains of Quality <a href="#">Quality and Engagement Act (sharepoint.com)</a>	7. All apply
Galluogwyr Ansawdd: Enablers of Quality: <a href="#">Quality and Engagement Act (sharepoint.com)</a>	6. All Apply
Amcanion Strategol y BIP: UHB Strategic Objectives:	All Strategic Objectives are applicable
Amcanion Cynllunio Planning Objectives	All Planning Objectives Apply
Amcanion Llesiant BIP: UHB Well-being Objectives: <a href="#">Hyperlink to HDdUHB Well-being Objectives Annual Report 2021-2022</a>	10. Not Applicable

<b>Gwybodaeth Ychwanegol: Further Information:</b>	
Ar sail tystiolaeth: Evidence Base:	Underpinning WHC actions on the WHC Tracker from across HDdUHB's services reviewed by the lead Executive/Director or Supporting Officer.
Rhestr Termau: Glossary of Terms:	N/A
Partïon / Pwyllgorau â ymgynhorwyd ymlaen llaw y Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Pobl a Datblygu Sefydliadol: Parties / Committees consulted prior to People, Organisational Development & Culture Committee:	Relevant Lead Executives/Lead Directors or Supporting Officers.

<b>Effaith: (rhaid cwblhau) Impact: (must be completed)</b>	
<b>Ariannol / Gwerth am Arian: Financial / Service:</b>	No direct impacts from report however organisations are expected to have effective monitoring systems in place and take steps to ensure actions are delivered effectively.

<b>Ansawdd / Gofal Claf: Quality / Patient Care:</b>	No direct impacts from report however organisations are expected to have effective monitoring systems in place and take steps to ensure actions are delivered effectively.
<b>Gweithlu: Workforce:</b>	No direct impacts from report however organisations are expected to have effective monitoring systems in place and take steps to ensure actions are delivered effectively.
<b>Risg: Risk:</b>	No direct impacts from report however organisations are expected to have effective audit and assurance mechanisms in place, along with risk management systems in place for any associated risks.
<b>Cyfreithiol: Legal:</b>	No direct impacts from report.
<b>Enw Da: Reputational:</b>	Poor management of WHCs can lead to loss of stakeholder confidence. Organisations are expected to have effective monitoring systems in place and take steps to ensure actions are delivered effectively.
<b>Gyfrinachedd: Privacy:</b>	No direct impacts from report.
<b>Cydraddoldeb: Equality:</b>	No direct impacts from report however each action is outlined in description of overarching actions required.

WHC No	Year	Name of WHC	Link to WHC	Date Issued	Status	Category	Overarching Actions Required	Lead Director	Lead Officer	Date of Expiry / Review	Action required from	Action required by	Status RAG / R - behind schedule / A - on schedule / G - Completed	Assurance reporting	Progress update	Lead Service / Directorate	UHB implementation date	Datix risk reference
046-23	2023	All-Wales Control Framework for Flexible Workforce Capacity	<a href="#">All-Wales control framework for flexible workforce capacity (WHC/2023/046) [HTML]   GOV.WALES</a>	13/12/2023	Action	Workforce / Finance / Delivery	Transparent Agency Reduction Plans – Requirements of this Circular: Phase 1 – Baseline Returns to be returned to WG by 5th January 2024 (Each NHS organisation needs to provide baseline information and progress against their current Agency Reduction Plans). Phase 2 - Enhanced Response December 2023 to February 2024 (detailed action plan for reduction on the variable pay bill for the 24-25 financial year with national action to support organisational work. A format for these plans will be issued in a further Circular in early 2024 and will be developed in social partnership, based on the baseline information and practice identified in Phase 1). Phase 3 - Focussed implementation and Feedback April 2024.	Director of Workforce & OD	TBC	N/A	All health boards	Phase 1: 05/01/2024-19/01/2024 Phase 2: 29/02/2024 Phase 3: April 2024 onwards	External	PODCC	The WHC, which is to be implemented within all Health Boards, is being co-ordinated on an All-Wales basis and is split into three phases:-  Phase 1 (baseline returns to be submitted to Welsh Government) – this element of the WHC was completed on 19th January 2024 as confirmed by the Director of Workforce and OD.  Phase 2 (development of detailed action plan for reduction on the variable pay bill for 2024/25) – there are four key actions for the Health Board to undertake: •Agency Circular Update for 2024-2025 to be issued by end of April 2024; •Oversee recruitment to persistent vacancies by March 2025; •Guidance on rosters adopted to deliver more effective teams by March 2025; and •Review of corporate benchmarking by March 2025.  The All-Wales Group has revised the submission dates of additional reports from April 2024 until May 2024. The submission will only include Nursing and Medical moving forward, with Health Boards managing Allied Health Professionals, Administration and Clerical and any other variable pay staffing. The Health Board is still awaiting clear guidance from Welsh Government.  Phase 3 (implementation of agreed plans) requirements: •Individual organisations to implement agreed plans. •National reporting mechanism to track organisations' delivery against plans. •Organisational accountability through board scrutiny and focussed accountability through NHS Joint Executive Team (JET) and Integrated Planning Quality and Delivery (IPQD) meetings.	Workforce & OD	N/K	
017-24	2024	Implementation of the Non-pay Elements of the 2022-4 Collective Agreement	<a href="https://www.gov.wales/implementation-non-pay-parts-2022-2024-collective-agreement-whc2024017">https://www.gov.wales/implementation-non-pay-parts-2022-2024-collective-agreement-whc2024017</a>	28/03/2024	Action	Workforce	NHS Wales operates an effective and long standing social partnership model which brings Welsh Government, NHS Employers and health unions together to pursue shared priorities and address workforce challenges. The social partnership approach is supported through formal structures both at national level (Wales Partnership Forum) and at local Health Board / Trust / Special Health Authority level. Each of the partners bring their unique perspective and priorities in order seek to coproduce solutions and agree delivery outcomes.	Director of Workforce & OD	Lisa Gosling	N/A	Chief Executives, NHS Wales Health Boards/Trusts/Special Health Authorities Directors of Workforce, Health Boards/Trusts/Special Health Authorities	01/01/2025	Amber	PODCC	The Executive Director of Workforce & OD has advised that the WHC has been shared with the Trade Union and Workforce leads and will be discussed in the All-Wales Partnership Forum in June 2024, although it is recognised that some of the policies Welsh Government (WG) are seeking assurance on have not yet been issued by the All-Wales Partnership Forum.  Each of the partners has their own objectives; the Health Board are actioning their reduction plans linked to variable pay. If the Health Board is not compliant with the WHC, there is a risk to staff morale and reporting via All-Wales Groups of non-compliance, however this will be the same for all Health Boards across Wales.	Workforce & OD	31/01/2025	N/A
013-24	2024	Governance on interim appointments to Executive and Senior Positions	Not yet available	10/04/2024	Compliance	Workforce/Finance	In August 2017 and June 2021, the Director General of Health & Social Services and Chief Executive of NHS Wales wrote to all Chief Executives of Local Health Boards and NHS Trusts advising of the importance of ensuring high standards of governance in recruitment of Executive Directors. This was following the publication of the report of the Auditor General for Wales relating to Cardiff and Vale University Health Board's Contractual Relationships with RKC Associates Ltd and its Owner. A further letter was also issued in December 2018 by the Welsh Government's Director of Workforce and Corporate Business regarding arrangements for remuneration of Executive and Senior Positions (ESP).	Director of Workforce & OD	TBC	N/A - Up to date pay scales will be published on NHS Wales website	Welsh Health Boards & Trusts	Immediate	Red	PODCC	The Director of Workforce & OD has confirmed that the Health Board will adhere to the requirements with immediate effect.  A paper outlining the expectations of the WHC, and the Health Board's position statement, was presented to the Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee (RTSC) on 16 May 2024. The RTSC noted the content of the WHC and noted that procurement training will be provided to new Executive Directors and refresher training for existing Executive Directors as soon as it can be arranged and scheduled into diaries.	Workforce & OD	Jan-25	N/A