



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

DYDDIAD Y CYFARFOD: DATE OF MEETING:	13 June 2024
TEITL YR ADRODDIAD: TITLE OF REPORT:	Adroddiad Blynyddol y Gymraeg / Welsh Language Annual Report
CYFARWYDDWR ARWEINIOL: LEAD DIRECTOR:	Alwena Hughes Moakes, Director of Communications & Engagement
SWYDDOG ADRODD: REPORTING OFFICER:	Enfys Williams, Welsh Language Services Manager

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

Ar Gyfer Penderfyniad/For Decision

**ADRODDIAD SCAA
SBAR REPORT**

Sefyllfa / Situation

The Welsh Government is committed to strengthening the provision of Welsh language services to the people of Wales.

Part of how the Welsh Government achieves its commitment is by upholding public sector organisations in Wales to a set of Welsh Language Standards.

Hywel Dda University Health Board (HDdUHB) received its Compliance Notice – Section 44 Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 on 30 November 2018. The compliance notice states the standards within the Welsh Language Standards (No. 7) 2018 Regulations that the Health Board must comply with and by when.

This report focuses on Standard 120 in particular, the requirement to produce an annual report on how the organisation is progressing towards achieving compliance with the Standards.

The Health Board is also required to report its progress against the Welsh Government's Strategic Framework for Welsh Language; 'More than just words'.

Recognising the need for annual reporting, including against HDdUHB's own Welsh language ambitions, as outlined within the Welsh language and Culture Discovery Process, this year's report combines all three reporting requirements into a consolidated paper.

Cefndir / Background

The Welsh Language Standards are a set of statutory requirements relevant to public bodies, including Health Boards. They identify HDdUHB's responsibility to operate and provide excellent bilingual services. Under the Standards, Welsh should not be treated less favourably than English.

The Standards outline how everyone who works at the Health Board has a shared responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Standards and line managers are responsible

for the compliance of their teams. They protect the rights of all individuals - staff as well as patients and our communities.

The Standards enables an environment where working through the medium of Welsh becomes the norm, and that the language is given equal status to English. It ensures that our Welsh speaking population can access services in their language of choice. The Standards form part of the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy, launched in July 2017, that defines the Welsh Government's long-term vision to reach a target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050. To fulfil this vision, the strategy aims to increase the use of the Welsh language and create favourable conditions for the language within all aspects of public life, which in turn will lead to an increase in the overall number of Welsh speakers.

Forming part of the overall Compliance Notice, the Welsh Language Commissioner imposed specific Record Keeping Standards and Standards that deal with Supplementary Matters, one of which being the production of a Welsh Language Annual Report.

The Standard reads as follows:

Standard 120 – Standards which deal with Supplementary Matters

(1) You must produce a report (an “annual report”), in Welsh, in relation to each financial year, which deals with the way in which you have complied with the standards with which you were under a duty to comply during that year.

(2) The annual report must include the following information (where relevant, to the extent you are under a duty to comply with the standards referred to):

(a) the number of complaints that you received during the year in question which related to compliance with the standards with which you were under a duty to comply (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 115);

(b) the number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of the year in question (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 116);

(c) the number (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 117) of new and vacant posts that you advertised during the year which were categorised as posts where—

(i) Welsh language skills were essential;

(ii) Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post;

(iii) Welsh language skills were desirable; or (iv) Welsh language skills were not necessary.

(3) You must publish the annual report no later than 6 months following the end of the financial year to which the report relates.

(4) You must ensure that a current copy of your annual report is available on your website.

More than just words

The new 'More than just words' plan 2022-27 was launched by the Minister for Health and Social Services at the National Eisteddfod in August 2022. The ambitious five-year plan was developed by an expert group, following an independent evaluation of the first More than just words five-year plan. Research showed that, for many Welsh speakers, being able to access services in their own language made a significant positive difference to their overall experience and, in many cases, their health and well-being outcomes.

But it also demonstrated that people often found it difficult to access the services they need and were reluctant to ask when Welsh language services were not offered. At the core of the strategy is the principle of the Active Offer, which places a responsibility on health and social

care providers to offer services in Welsh, rather than on the patient or service user to have to request them.

The Health Board's own Welsh Language and Culture Discovery process was completed and presented in June last year. The forward-looking plan was developed within the Health Board following engagement with staff, our population and various stakeholders.

Asesiad / Assessment

The Welsh Language Annual Report 2023/24 provides an insight into how the Health Board has implemented and promoted the Welsh Language Standards, implemented the actions within More than just words and the first year of the plan following the Discovery process.

Also included in the report is information on the various projects and opportunities presented in order to enhance Welsh language provision across the Health Board, to offer assurance that the Health Board is making steps towards compliance and the vision moving forward into the new reporting year.

The report describes the steps taken to comply with the following group of Standards:

- **Service Delivery Standards;** how we deal with correspondence, telephone calls, meetings, events and external communication channels.
- **Policy Making Standards;** indicate what standards should be considered in policy development and ensure that we give full consideration to how developing and / or implementing specific policies will affect the availability and accessibility of Welsh-medium services.
- **Operational Standards;** how we operate internally including working bilingually, the Welsh language service that you can expect to get in the organisation and advice on compliance.

As per the requirements of Standard 120, the report also includes information and statistics covering the number of complaints received, employee Welsh language skill recorded data and categorised language skill criteria of new and vacant posts advertised over the past year.

The report also touches upon finding from a recent Mystery Shopping exercise that was conducted internally. This builds on previous work carried out by Directorates as part of their self-assessments against the Welsh Language Standards.

Argymhelliad / Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

- **ENDORSE** the report as a reflection of the activity and progress made to enhance and embed the Welsh language and culture at HDdUHB.

Amcanion: (rhaid cwblhau) Objectives: (must be completed)	
Committee ToR Reference: Cyfeirnod Cylch Gorchwyl y Pwyllgor:	3.10 Seek assurances that there is the appropriate culture and arrangements to allow HDdUHB to discharge its statutory and mandatory responsibilities with regard to Welsh language provision (workforce & patient related).
Cyfeirnod Cofrestr Risg Datix a Sgôr Cyfredol: Datix Risk Register Reference and Score:	Risk reference: 1232, risk score: 12
Parthau Ansawdd: Domains of Quality Quality and Engagement Act (sharepoint.com)	6. Person-Centred
Galluogwyr Ansawdd: Enablers of Quality: Quality and Engagement Act (sharepoint.com)	1. Leadership 4. Learning, improvement and research
Amcanion Strategol y BIP: UHB Strategic Objectives:	All Strategic Objectives are applicable
Amcanion Cynllunio Planning Objectives	8d Welsh Language and Culture
Amcanion Llesiant BIP: UHB Well-being Objectives: Hyperlink to HDdUHB Well-being Objectives Annual Report 2021-2022	2. Develop a skilled and flexible workforce to meet the changing needs of the modern NHS

Gwybodaeth Ychwanegol: Further Information:	
Ar sail tystiolaeth: Evidence Base:	Welsh Language Standards (No. 7) Regulations 2018 Compliance Notice – Section 44 Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
Rhestr Termiau: Glossary of Terms:	Included within the report.
Partion / Pwyllgorau â ymgynhorwyd ymlaen llaw y Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Pobl a Datblygu Sefydliadol: Parties / Committees consulted prior to People, Organisational Development & Culture Committee:	Welsh Language & W&OD sub-group All Wales Welsh Language Officers

Effaith: (rhaid cwblhau) Impact: (must be completed)	
Ariannol / Gwerth am Arian: Financial / Service:	HDdUHB staff time to support implementation of the Standards and in some instances to undertake internal training and translation costs. These costs are currently absolved within the Welsh Language Services Team budget and within directorates themselves.
Ansawdd / Gofal Claf: Quality / Patient Care:	Communication is at the heart of everything HDdUHB do therefore treating service users and staff in the language of need is key to the organisation's culture and engagement. There is evidence that high employee engagement can deliver quality patient care.
Gweithlu: Workforce:	All staff have a role to play in implementing the statutory Welsh Language Standards.
Risg: Risk:	Compliance assessment will highlight risks which may apply to each Standard. However, these will be mitigated through a high level of awareness of the standards and a compliance assessment action plan which will be maintained as a 'live' document. This will reduce risks to the health board and provide a mechanism of addressing those risks on a priority basis.
Cyfreithiol: Legal:	Compliance Notice – Section 44 Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 on 30 November 2018
Enw Da: Reputational:	HDdUHB has committed not only to comply with the Welsh Language Standards, but to embrace their spirit.
Gyfrinachedd: Privacy:	Not applicable
Cydraddoldeb: Equality:	The focus of language equality between the Welsh and English languages runs throughout the compliance notice. HDdUHB's Equality Impact Assessment processes will ensure that compliance with the standards is assessed.



MYSTERY SHOPPER SCHEME

December 2023

Internal health board audit on compliance with the Welsh language Standards

Hywel Dda UHB Welsh Language Services Team



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Hywel Dda
University Health Board

Bilingual Services Monitoring Scheme

Results of mystery shopper surveys conducted during December 2023

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Bilingual Services Monitoring Scheme

Results of mystery shopper surveys conducted during December 2023

Summary of Mystery Shopper exercise

Background / Purpose

The Mystery Shopper Scheme is a means to internally audit health board compliance against the Welsh language Standards. The scheme enables us to assess the extent in which a Welsh language service is provided by departments across the health board. This exercise was conducted internal by the health board's Welsh Language Services Team. The results of the Mystery Shopper exercise have been analysed, and a plan of action is currently being developed for areas lacking a bilingual service and needing further support. This exercise mainly concentrates on the first contact, such as reception and telephone handling services; services in which Welsh speaking patients would access on a regular basis.

The main purpose of the Mystery Shopper exercise is to assess if health board services are operating bilingually and are actively offering a Welsh language service to our local population in accordance with legislative requirements i.e. Welsh Language Standards. An internal audit of this nature enables us to identify areas of non-compliance and to work with such teams to improve provision.

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Locations for audit

Main (Acute) Hospitals	Community Hospitals	Health Centres and Clinics	Mental Health
Bronglais Hospital (01970 623131) SY23 1ER	Amman Valley Hospital (01269 822226) SA18 2BQ	Elizabeth Williams Clinic (01267 248674) SA15 3SE	Brynmair (01554 772 768)
Glangwili Hospital (01267 235151) SA31 2AF	Llandovery Hospital (01550 722200) SA20 0LA	Penlan Clinic (Pond St) (01267 248674) SA31 1RT	Swn-y-Gwynt and Towy Valley CMHT (0300 303 6139) SA18 3AS
Prince Phillip Hospital (01554 756567) SA14 8QF	Tregaron Hospital (01974 298203) SY25 6JP	Aberaeron Integrated Care Centre (01545 900100) SA46 0DY	Llys Steffan (01570 422 577)
Withybush Hospital (01437 764545) SA61 2PZ	South Pembrokeshire Hospital (01646 682114) SA72 6SY	Cardigan Integrated Care Centre (01239 801560) SA43 1JX	Bro Cerwyn, St Brynach Day Hospital and Child, Adolescent and Family Unity (01437 773157)
	Tenby Hospital (01834 845400)	Haverfordwest Health Centre (01437 767801) SA61 1RN	
		Pembroke Dock Health Centre (01646 624643) SA72 6DW	
		Milford Haven Health Centre (01646 697000) SA73 2LL	

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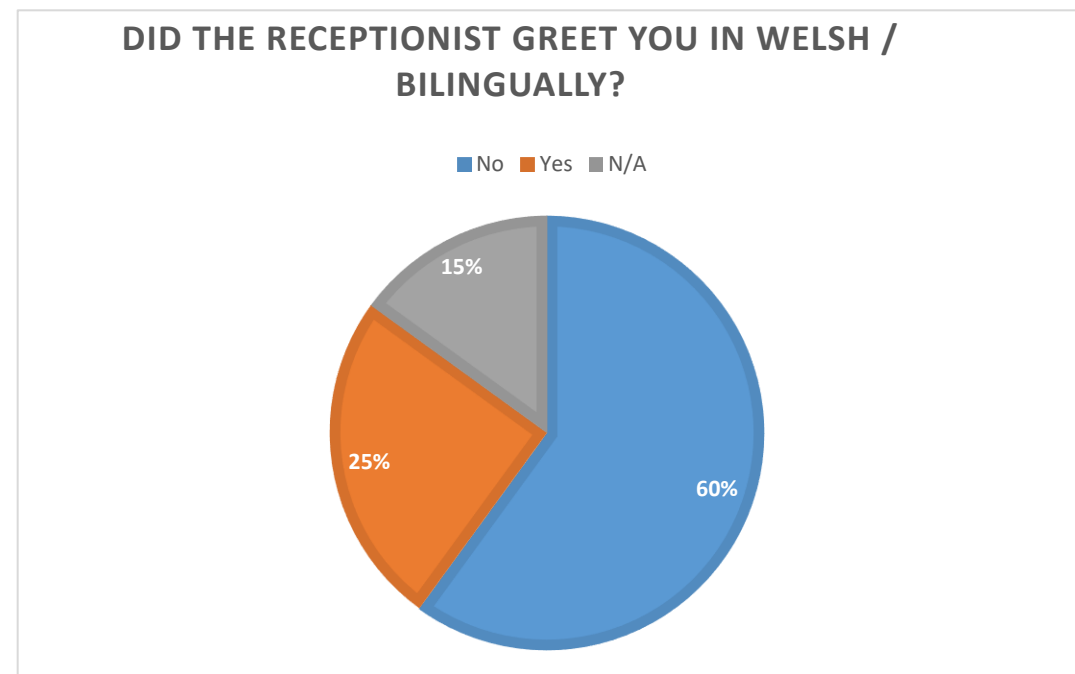
Face-to-face Services (Main Reception)

Face-to-face reception services have been audited at over 20 sites within the health board. These sites were assessed on how they greeted an individual, how they responded to a Welsh speaking individual as well as their use of 'Iaith Gwaith' merchandise within the reception areas indicating that a Welsh language service is available. Below are samples of graphs that show the results of the audits' findings.

Reception is the first point of contact on a patient's arrival at a clinic / hospital and therefore is paramount that patients are greeted bilingually, in line with legislative requirements such as the [Welsh Language Standards](#). Following the recent audit, the graph shows that only 25% of locations greeted patients bilingually, and 15% of the locations audited didn't have a reception service at all.

During the visits, we also looked for various Iaith Gwaith merchandise such as 'Use your Welsh whenever you see this sign' posters, 'Use your Welsh here' posters and if the receptionists were wearing Work Welsh lanyards or badges. Out of the 20 sites visited, only 2

sites displayed visible posters at the reception area. Some locations did not allow patient access to reception areas as doors were locked until a member of staff was available to assist – it therefore wasn't possible to see all visuals at all sites. Work Welsh lanyards were also not worn by reception staff at any of the sites, even though some staff were Welsh speakers.



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Examples of interaction at a reception

On arrival at Brynmair clinic in Llanelli, the member of staff at the reception said "Saesneg os gwelwch yn dda" (English please) when we started the conversation in Welsh. When asked if there was anyone that was Welsh speaking available, the receptionist responded by explaining that there wasn't anyone else. The information leaflet that was given was also in English only.

Another example is the lack of Welsh Language service received at Elizabeth Williams Clinic, Llanelli. The clinic was telephoned for directions to the clinic through the medium of Welsh, but the receptionist wasn't able to respond in Welsh. On arrival, the receptionist shook her head when spoken to in Welsh.

Some sites don't have reception areas but instead have a bell to ring for assistance. A non-Welsh speaking member of staff kindly assisted us at Llys Steffan mental health clinic and explained that they didn't speak Welsh and went to find a Welsh speaking staff member to help.

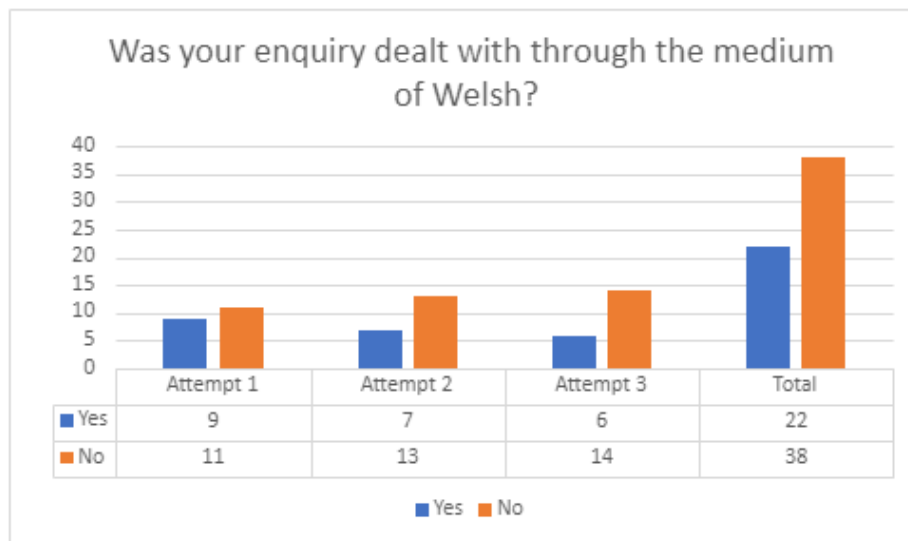
At Bronglais Hospital, a lot of staff were seen to be wearing Welsh speaking lanyards but not the reception staff members. There was also a lack of 'Use your Welsh' posters at the reception. Whilst observing the receptionists, they would also greet patients in English only.

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Telephone Services

A bilingual greeting is expected as a minimum when answering the phone. It is apparent from the mystery shopper exercise that only a small minority of staff were following the bilingual telephone handling protocol, with a large number not putting this requirement into practise.



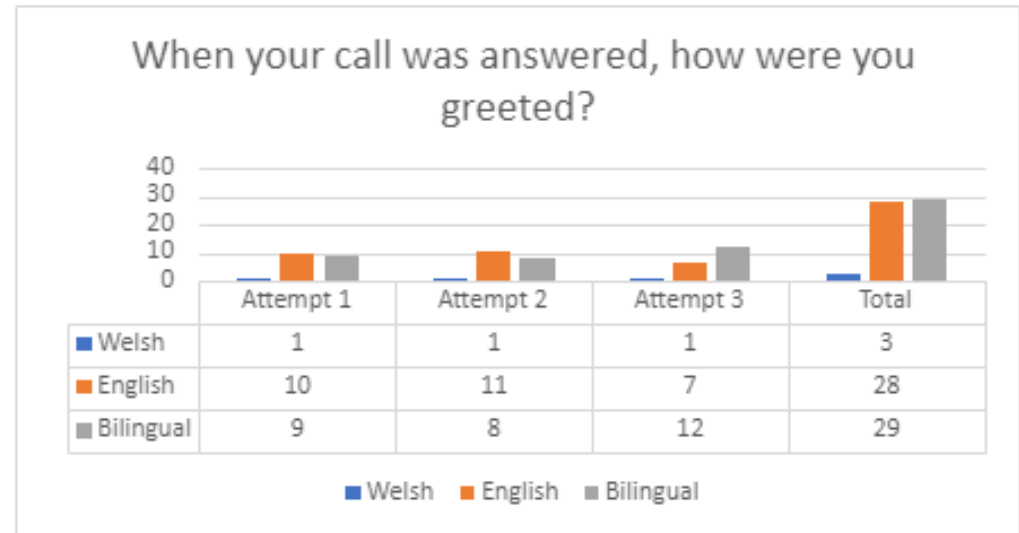
This exercise looked at the bilingual telephone handling of the 20 locations. Each location was phoned on three occasions with a Welsh enquiry. Firstly, they were assessed on how the call was answered. As indicated in the graphs above, a high percentage of phone calls were answered with a bilingual greeting, which is a good reflection on the reception staff, however, a significant number of calls (28 in total) were answered in English only.

The exercise then involved the caller proceeding to continue the call in Welsh. The call handler should explain that they didn't speak Welsh, offer to pass the enquiry on to a Welsh speaking member of staff or offer a Welsh speaking member of staff to return the call later if there wasn't any Welsh speaking staff available. In many instances, the call handler would explain that they didn't speak Welsh and expect the patient to repeat the enquiry in English. Some would transfer the call without an explanation to a Welsh speaking member of the team.

The second graph shows the number of enquiries that were handled through the medium of Welsh. The results show that unfortunately 38 of 60 calls made were handled in English only.

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Results of mystery shopper surveys conducted during December 2023



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Results of mystery shopper surveys conducted during December 2023

Email Correspondence

A number of departments' generic e-mail addresses (see list below) were contacted through the medium of Welsh for this audit. They were assessed on their response, and if they had a bilingual signature and the strapline noting that they welcome correspondence through the medium of Welsh and English (again a requirement of the [Welsh Language Standards](#)).

The response to the Welsh e-mails varied. Some departments fully complied and provided a full Welsh response along with bilingual supporting material, whilst others replied asking for the patient / member of the public to repeat the request again but in English. This is not acceptable as it often leads to a delay in communication and service for the patient or member of the public.

Detailed evidence of these findings can be found in the appendix 1.

Audiology.hyweldda@wales.nhs.uk
Fundraising.HywelDda@wales.nhs.uk
MediaOffice.Hyweldda@wales.nhs.uk
Inclusion.hdd@wales.nhs.uk
NWSSP.payrollhduhb@wales.nhs.uk
hdhb.patientsupportservices@wales.nhs.uk
Hyweldda.Engagement@wales.nhs.uk
IBD.Advice@wales.nhs.uk
apprenticeship.academy@wales.nhs.uk
BrainInjuryAndNeuroTeam.HDD@wales.nhs.uk
podiatry.feet@wales.nhs.uk
SpeechLanguageTherapy.HDD@wales.nhs.uk
tranformation.mailbox@wales.nhs.uk

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Signage

Signage in reception areas and public waiting areas was observed during the mystery shopper exercise. This was due to lack of access to specific areas within buildings. Some locations do not have stereotypical reception areas and as a result of COVID-19 many buildings have locked doors with a doorbell for assistance. It was possible to see more signs within the acute hospital sites, due to being able to walk through the sites.

Our findings show that the majority of permanent signage erected officially by the Estates department are all bilingual; signage such as exit signs, ward names and hospital maps etc. Some locations are newer than others, such as the integrated care centres and these were a good example of best practise in terms of bilingual signage. However, in some hospital sites, where changes have been made to wards in terms of names, locations etc. The English and Welsh estate signs didn't always match up (see appendix 2).

In terms of temporary signage, our findings show that Welsh Government or NHS Wales produced literature is displayed bilingually throughout the locations, however, a large amount of hospital or health board own literature on display was English only. For example, signs that instructed people to ring the doorbell to enter buildings or directions to departments (see appendix 2), or signs made to instruct people where to leave samples, etc. This also includes posters, leaflets, notice boards and some advertising.

Reception areas will need to be contacted by the Welsh Language Services team to remind them to display the Work Welsh sign at reception areas as well as kindly reminding staff of that visual materials need to be bilingual.

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Findings

The above report contains the results of the Mystery Shopper exercise from a sample of acute hospital sites, centres, clinics and individual departments who have been contacted via telephone, e-mail or visited face to face in December 2023. It is important to note that face to face exercises were limited due to the change in how locations now work following the Covid-19 pandemic, such as restrictions within the sites, particularly for Mental Health services and clinics.

Overall, the results of this mystery shopper exercise show that staff may not be aware of their responsibilities to comply with the Welsh language Standards and the need to provide a bilingual service to patients and public. Our findings indicate a lack of compliance with the Standards and an overall poor result in terms of bilingual provision.

Face to face Reception Services

Most reception areas were manned by non-Welsh speakers thus unable to provide a Welsh service. Due to how reception areas operate following the pandemic, there was often only one person on the desk, or this person was only at the desk when needed, often there was a case of 'ring for assistance' which causes a barrier. There was also a lack of visual prompts such as posters, desktop signs, lanyards and badges. This

Telephone

A lot of the phone calls made were answered bilingually, however the findings show that there is a lack of training in how to deal with a Welsh speaking patient when the operator does not speak Welsh, such as how to explain that they don't speak Welsh or how to pass the enquiry on to someone who can speak Welsh. This means that a lot of Welsh enquiries are currently being handled in English.

Email

Several generic email addresses were contacted through the medium of Welsh with various enquiries. We were pleased to find that, overall, the majority of departments responded to the enquiries in Welsh. The responses received did not, however, include a

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Results of mystery shopper surveys conducted during December 2023

strapline 'Welcoming correspondence in Welsh' and many email signatures were not bilingual – this is therefore an area for improvement.

Signage

All signage in reception areas and public waiting areas were observed during the mystery shopper exercise. Our findings show that most of the permanent signage erected officially by the Estates department are all bilingual; signage such as exit signs, ward names and hospital maps etc. In terms of temporary signage, our findings show that most of the Welsh Government or NHS Wales produced literature is displayed bilingually however a large amount of hospital or health board own literature are on display in English only. This includes posters, leaflets, notice boards, direction signage and out of order signs.

Proposed Actions

1. An email to be sent to Managers containing the findings of the Mystery shopper exercise. Signpost Managers to relevant information about the WL Standards and offer support that is specific to individual teams.
2. Increase staff awareness of Welsh language (WL) requirements, patient needs and public rights to receive Welsh Language Services by:
 - Global email promoting the WL Standards / Active Offer / Welsh Language Services.
 - Maintain designated WL pages on intranet and widely promote.
 - Continue to promote the WL Standards and staff responsibilities using the Welsh Taster Sessions
 - WL team to produce and provide posters / flyers on site and distribute across health board sites, especially for frontline staff with limited IT access.
 - Promote learn Welsh opportunities.

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3. Distribute a WL requirement checklist and order form to all reception areas across the health board. This will enable reception staff to measure their compliance with the WL Standards and note areas for improvement. Reception staff will be able to place an order for WL merchandise such as lanyards and badges as well as other helpful merchandise.
4. Bilingual telephone greeting cards / 'Use your Welsh' posters, lanyards and badges to be sent to all front of house areas across the health board. The recent mystery shopper exercise revealed that a very small proportion of staff actively wear their lanyards and badges.
5. Contact Estates team to rectify any non-bilingual signage displayed. Also work with reception areas to provide translation for any English only posters and displays within their areas.
6. Correspondence – Use communication platforms such as Global to remind staff to include bilingual signatures on their emails and to also include the 'Welcome correspondence in Welsh' strapline. Note that there's a translation service available to assist with this e.g translating emails, translating replies and assisting with Welsh email signature.
7. Welsh Language Services team to offer and deliver departmental language awareness sessions. This will hopefully increase staff awareness of the Welsh Language Standards and what is required to provide a bilingual service.
8. Offer specific language awareness sessions for Switchboard and Reception staff. Contact Managers to arrange sessions – an opportunity to practise basic telephone greetings and understand what is required to operate a bilingual reception service. There'll be an opportunity to arrange specific sessions with the Welsh tutor to build staff confidence to use the language more often.

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9. Welsh Language Services team to have more input in the induction process for new starters, so that they are aware of the Welsh Language Standards from the start of their employment, to encourage them to learn Welsh and highlight the importance of the little things that they can do to improve the experience when interacting with a Welsh patient.

Forward Vision

- Increased staff awareness of the Welsh language Standards by the next Mystery Shopper exercise.
- A more positive result during the next Mystery Shopper exercise.
- More staff implementing the Active Offer – offering a Welsh service without the individual having to ask for it.
- More Welsh speaking staff in post to deliver a Welsh language service in reception areas and switchboard.
- More appointing managers to consider Welsh language needs when recruiting.

Appendix 1 - Emails

Example of a non-compliant reply:

From: "IBD Advice (Hywel Dda UHB - Generic Account)" <IBD.Advice@wales.nhs.uk>
Date: 15 November 2023 at 3:56:45 pm GMT
To: <email address removed>
Subject: RE: Ymholiad

Hello <name>,

My apologies I am not very good at Welsh, would you mind conversing in English and I can hopefully help.

Apologies again.

Regards

<name>

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Example of a team following protocol and providing a full response through the medium of Welsh:

From: <email address removed>

Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 2:24 PM

To: <email address removed>

Cc: Fundraising Hywel Dda (Hywel Dda UHB - Strategic Partnerships Fundraising) <Fundraising.HywelDda@wales.nhs.uk>

Subject: Re: Ymholiad

|| Prynhawn Da <name>,

Diolch am dy ebost ac am dangos diddordeb mewn codi arian i Elusennau Iechyd Hywel Dda.

Dwi wedi atodi'r pecyn codi arian i ti ar gyfer syniadau! Mae gennym hefyd nifer o ddiwyddiadau yn y dyddiadur blwyddyn nesaf yn cynnwys sialens llinell sip, hanner marathon Llanelli, Long Course Weekend a hanner marathon Caerdydd. Gwler y linc isod am fwy o wybodaeth am rhain.

[Cefnogwch ni - Elusennau Iechyd Hywel Dda \(gig.cymru\)](http://gig.cymru)

O ran dewis pa adran i'w gefnogi, fel arfer mae pobl yn dewis adran neu achos sy'n agos i'w calonnau, le mae aelod teulu wedi cael triniaeth neu ofal ayyb. Os does dim byd penodol hoffte ti gefnogi, fedri di godi arian i'r pot cyffredinol a mi fydd hwnw wedyn yn cael ei ddefnyddio le mae ei angen fwyaf.

Gobeithio bod hyn yn help ond tyrd nol os oes wyt ti angen unrhyw wybodaeth pellach.

Cofion Cynnes,

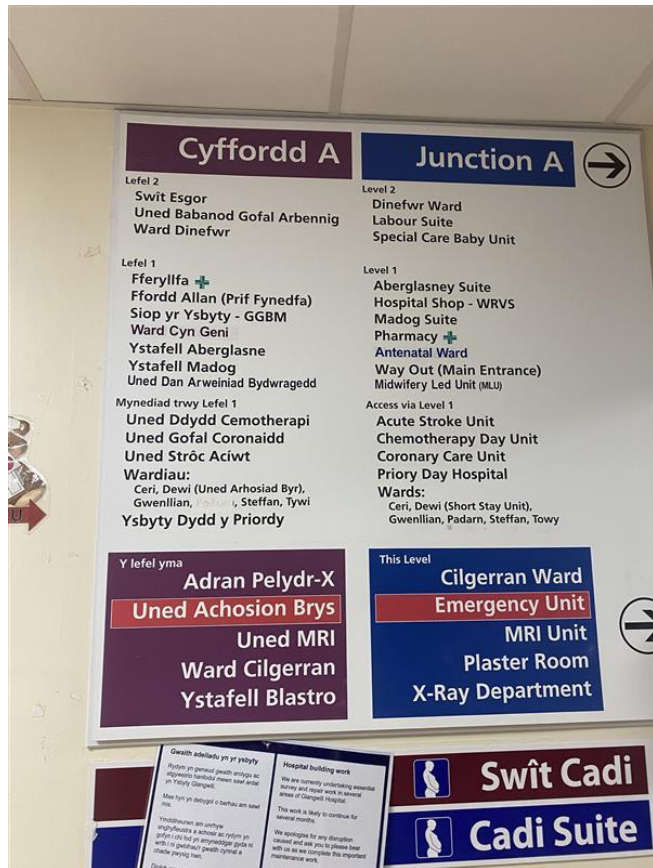
<name>

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Appendix 2 - Signage

Example of the English and Welsh signs not matching for translation:



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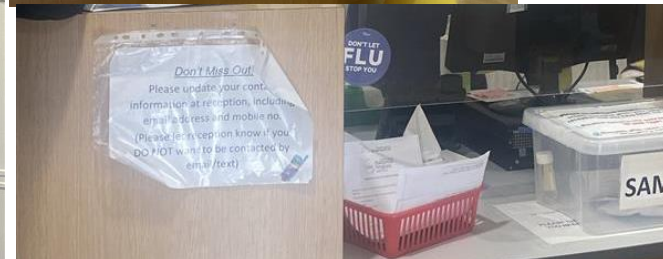
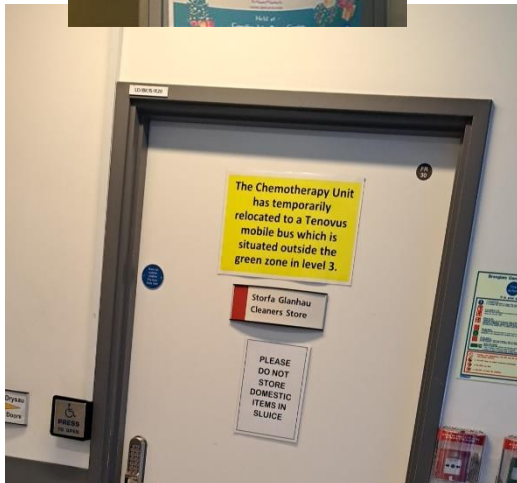
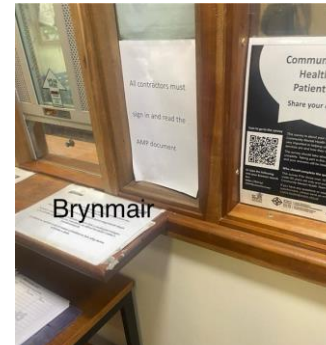
Example of English only directions to departments:



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More examples of signage found across all locations:





Hywel Dda University Health Board Welsh Language Annual Report 2023/24

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Vision for 2024/25

Building on the Welsh language and Culture Discovery process and the passion within the Health Board, we will continue to deliver a Welsh Language plan that supports our ambitions to enhance our Welsh language and culture across the health board and engages and inspires our staff, patients, and broader communities. We will work to support an increase in the number of Welsh speakers at all levels within the health board and seek to achieve the KPIs outlined within the Bilingual Skills policy, Cymraeg 2050, and More than Just Words whilst also striving to comply with the Welsh Language Standards.

Cover image: Siani Sionc at the Health Board's stall at the Urdd Eisteddfod in Llandoverly, May 2023.

1. Introduction

This Welsh Language Annual Report focuses on the work undertaken by Hywel Dda University Health Board during 2023-24.

The health board has strived to achieve the delivery of its goals for developing and enhancing the Welsh Language. Teams across the health board continue to face unprecedented challenges as pressures across our system continue, it has been necessary to adjust priorities to reflect the operational challenges. However, our staff have continued to demonstrate their dedication and commitment to ensuring that our patients receive care in their language of choice and that a bilingual service is provided wherever possible.

During the past year, the Executive Director and Independent Member responsible for developing the Welsh language, supported by the Welsh Language Services team have led and secured further progress in the health board's internal work, as well as building on partnerships with other organisations to promote the language across the health board's three counties. As champions for the Welsh language, the Executive Director and independent member are responsible for ensuring the Welsh language is given a prominent status and that the language is interwoven throughout decision making processes at board level.

The People, Organisational, Development & Culture Committee (PODCC) receives regular updates regarding progress made against the Welsh Language Standards, and offers advice, monitoring, and calls for evidence of improvement made by individual departments within the health board.

The All-Wales Welsh Language Officer Forum, led by Welsh Government, which includes representation from all health boards and trusts across Wales, has continued its role in supporting and developing a programme of promoting the Welsh language across the organisation.

Despite the significant pressures, the Standards have been a set agenda item for discussion for many teams across the health board, with the central team and managers regularly relaying key messages to staff. The Welsh Language Services team has continued to promote the Standards across the health board using various platforms and media including the creation of new materials that are shared online and offline. Staff have adapted to more digital and virtual communication post-pandemic, and digitally accessible materials have continued to be utilised and are readily available for staff to access.

Welsh language awareness sessions have continued to be offered virtually, with a continued reintroduction of some face-to-face sessions. The face-to-face sessions include new Welsh language awareness taster sessions for staff health board wide, which also form part of the health board's new starter corporate induction programme. These sessions are an opportunity to advise and discuss the delivery of

the Standards, and share information about the support available, to ensure all departments operate bilingually.

Being able to engage with staff meaningfully makes a real difference to ability of the organisation to take embed and promote the Welsh Language across the organisation – building confidence in our staff as Welsh speakers, learners, and supporters.

There has been continued collaboration with colleagues in Workforce & Organisational Development to monitor progress with the implementation of the Standards and to discuss the implementation of the Bilingual Skills Policy. The Workforce & Organisational Development directorate has played a significant role in ensuring workforce related standards are implemented. They continue to update their own Welsh language Readiness Assessment Tool, to RAG score the Standards in terms of competency and delivery. This concept has been used and adapted whilst creating the new Compliance Assessment Tool, which was adopted by all Directorates to measure compliance with the Standards. We continue to meet bi-monthly to monitor progress and discuss opportunities for improvement.

Engaging with our community

We were delighted to host a stand at this year's Urdd Eisteddfod in Llandoverly as an opportunity to engage with our community and work alongside colleagues from a diverse range of health board services.

Our Hywel Dda team were joined by special guests to host a broad range of health and well-being focused activities throughout the week for people of all ages.

The week included special appearances from entertainers Tudur Phillips and Siani Sionc who were there to raise awareness of the importance of physical activity and keeping fit and healthy while performing and dancing.



There was an opportunity to take part in a variety of activities and to meet with different teams during the week, including:

- Immunisation and Vaccines Team
- Recruitment Team
- Future Workforce Team
- Learning & Development Team
- Digital Inclusion Team
- Children's Therapies Children's Community Nursing Team
- Children's Disability Health Team
- Play Therapy Services Team
- Heart Failure Team
- Pathology Team
- Carmarthenshire School Nurses
- Pharmacy and Medicines Management
- Design To Smile
- Admiral Nurse Team
- Dementia Wellbeing Team



The Eisteddfod was an opportunity to meet and talk with local people from Carmarthenshire, and visitors to Llandovery, to discuss all things health and well-being in addition to showcasing some of the work we do as a health board to support our local communities. There was something for everyone at our stall – from taking a quick spin on the Google Bike to top tips on developing a rewarding career within the NHS. The event was a great celebration of youth, language, and culture in our local area.

Establishing our calendar of activities

Beyond the Eisteddfod, we continued to promote Welsh celebrations including St David's Day, Diwrnod Shwmae' Day, Welsh Music Day, and St Dwynwen's Day. A series of video and audio clips were released to encourage staff to use their Welsh, in celebration of Shwmae Day.

During the year, a [video by our Director of Workforce and Organisational Development](#), Lisa Gostling was released to mark the NHS's 75th Anniversary. To

mark the occasion, Lisa committed to learning 75 health related words and phrases in Welsh. The video captures Lisa's learning as she recites numerous Welsh words and expressions – demonstrating her support for learning the language as an Executive Director and encouraging others to take up the opportunity to learn or improve their Welsh.



During November, the health board supported a brand-new campaign launched by the Welsh Language Commissioner - 'Defnyddia Dy Gymraeg' (Use Your Welsh) initiative as a means of encouraging people to use the language in their day to day lives. The aim of the initiative is to encourage people to use the Welsh they have, whether they are fluent or not in order to establish the Welsh language as a natural part of their day to day lives. As part of the campaign several short films were produced showing the use of Welsh in different contexts with various public bodies encouraged to spread the message by using the #DefnyddiaDyGymraeg hashtag.

The campaign ran from 27 November until 11 December 2023. As well as promoting the 'Defnyddia dy Gymraeg' materials across the health board, our Welsh Language Services team also worked in partnership with Primary Care Services in particular to hold a 'Defnyddia dy Gymraeg' week for primary care staff. This included virtual language awareness sessions, and an opportunity for primary care staff, including independent contractors, to join Welsh language confidence building taster sessions.

To celebrate St Dwynwen's Day this year, a virtual online session was held for staff; an opportunity to share experiences, practise their Welsh skills, and gain information with regards to upcoming learn Welsh courses. Numerous staff attended the session with some following on with a learn Welsh course. A new MS Teams background was also designed continuing the theme of St Dwynwen's Day and was used widely by staff across the health board. In February we celebrated Welsh Music Day and

devised a Welsh playlist with Welsh music being played throughout the day at the local hospital radio stations.

An information stand was held at each hospital site in celebration of St David's Day this year. Our Welsh Language Services Team were on hand to advise and assist staff with their learn Welsh journeys, supply Welsh language merchandise to support the use of Welsh in the workplace, along with an opportunity for staff to sign up to be a Welsh language champion for their departments. The week of celebrations also included the launch of brand-new Welsh merchandise; 'use your Welsh' door hangers and stickers to help identify Welsh speaking patients and encourage staff to use their Welsh.

The programme of activities also involved the official launch of the second year of short Welsh Language Confidence Building courses, available to staff health board wide, funded by the National Centre for Learning Welsh. The launch was highlighted in a press release that praised the success of the initial first year of the scheme, and announcing further secured funding for year two.

The overall aim of the week-long St David's Day programme of activities was to raise awareness of the various opportunities available for staff within the workplace, to celebrate our history and culture, whilst also ensuring staff are aware of their obligation to ensure that a Welsh language service is available to our Welsh speaking population. St David's Day itself concluded with a video clip from our Chief Executive, Dr Phil Kloer, thanking staff for their participation in the week-long programme of activities.

An exciting project over this past year has been the collaboration of work between the health board's Welsh Language Services team and the newly launched Primary Care and Community Services Academy. The Academy was established in March 2023 to develop and support the health board's multi-professional primary and community services workforce to deliver the best outcomes for patients, through:

- Access to education and training opportunities, including inter-professional learning opportunities.
- Workforce planning, development and sustainability programmes.
- Placement opportunities and work aimed at growing the number and range of trainers, mentors and supervisors.
- 'New to Primary Care' programmes that help induct, support and retain staff.
- Resources to develop the Welsh language skills of the workforce, working with the Welsh Language Services team.

As part of the first phase of the Academy's development, they ran a training, education and learning needs survey during October and November 2023. The survey was open to everyone working in primary care and community services - clinical and non-clinical, administrative and management. One of the key themes from the survey was the need for Welsh language support in terms of learn Welsh opportunities and support to understand the legal obligations to comply with Welsh

legislation. Therefore, supporting the delivery of primary care services through the medium of Welsh has been one of our key priorities over the past year.

The Primary Care Academy, along with the support from the Welsh Language Services team have developed a programme to support health board staff working in primary care and the primary care independent contractor workforce to use, develop or learn Welsh language skills.

As part of this programme, we have created resource packs with practical ideas and information about training and learning resources to support staff and the primary care independent contractor workforce to comply with statutory requirements in relation to delivering primary care services through the medium of Welsh.

[Welsh Language Standards](#): a resource pack for Hywel Dda University Health Board staff to support the delivery of primary care services through the medium of Welsh, to support compliance with the Welsh Language Standards (available in Welsh and in English).

[Welsh Language Duties](#): a resource pack for primary care independent contractors to support the delivery of primary care services through the medium of Welsh, to support compliance with the Welsh Language Duties (available in Welsh and in English).

The new resource packs were launched and sent to all primary care staff, including independent contractors. Following the launch, a 'Use your Welsh' week was held in November 2023 specifically for primary care staff. This included sessions to learn more about the resource packs, general Welsh language awareness sessions with an opportunity for an open Q&A. Welsh Language Confidence Building taster sessions were also held for both health board primary care staff and independent contractors; an opportunity to meet the tutor and practise their Welsh skills. Following the taster sessions, many staff booked further one-to-one sessions with the tutor to progress their Welsh further.

Looking forward to the year ahead

Despite the operational challenges, the past year continues to see a reinvigoration of the health board's activities to promote the Welsh language and our culture within the health board and our broader community. This provides a firm platform to continue our work for 2024-25. There self assessment work that we carry out to assess where the organisation is against its legal requirements will continue throughout the year as we continue to try and maintain a bilingual service for our population.

2. Vision for 2024/25

Through its strategic planning process, the health board has a clear vision for the development of Welsh language and culture during the next year. A key focus will be on building upon the discovery process that was completed in 2023 to understand the Welsh language and cultural needs and aspirations of our communities – of staff, patients, service providers, and supporters. The follow-up plan reflects our findings and deliver upon the board's priorities.

Despite not having an individual Welsh language planning objective for the coming year the Health Board is still very clear that it wants to continue to:

Building on the Welsh language and Culture Discovery process and the passion within the Health Board, we will continue to deliver a Welsh Language plan that supports our ambitions to enhance our Welsh language and culture across the health board and engages and inspires our staff, patients, and broader communities. We will work to support an increase in the number of Welsh speakers at all levels within the health board and seek to achieve the KPIs outlined within the Bilingual Skills policy, Cymraeg 2050, and More than Just Words whilst also striving to comply with the Welsh Language Standards.

We will do this in conjunction with the service areas during the 2024/25 reporting year:

- Delivering the Welsh Language Standards across the organisation
- Planning the workforce through the implementation of the Bilingual Skills Policy and in light of 2021 Census data
- Implementing the Welsh Government's new Strategic Framework, More Than Just Words, which was launched in the summer of 2022
- Developing and strengthening Welsh Language services within Primary Care in accordance with its action plan and its Academy
- Continue to provide a comprehensive translation service to the whole organisation
- Continue to self assess our delivery against the statutory Welsh Language Standards by implementing the recommendations within our first mystery shopper exercise – Attachment A.

These immediate initiatives draw on the priorities in our annual plan, providing assurance that the health board embraces its legislative requirements, and aims to go beyond statutory requirements in the delivery of bilingual services and enhancing and embracing Welsh culture.

Every effort will be made to ensure that the health board's Welsh language and culture goals will be met during the coming years. However, as the organisation is developing its path out of the pandemic and is building its resilience in dealing with operational pressures, it may be necessary to adjust these priorities as the year

progresses. Staff continue to demonstrate dedication and commitment to ensuring that our patients receive care in their language of choice and that a bilingual service is provided. We are confident that our commitment and renewed focus on the Welsh language through our planning objective will provide a flourishing environment for Welsh language and culture at Hywel Dda University Health Board and look forward to sharing our progress next year.

3. Compliance with the Welsh language Standards

The following pages present further information on the health board's work grouped by the relevant Standard/s.

3.1 Compliance with the Service Delivery Standards

- **Written correspondence** (Standards 1 – 7)
- **Telephone greetings** (Standards 8 – 20)
- **Meetings and events** (Standards 21 – 33)
- **Producing and publishing documents** (Standards 34 – 38)
- **Website, social media, apps** (Standards 39 – 46)
- **Signage** (Standards 47- 49)
- **Reception services** (Standards 50 – 53)
- **Contracts** (Standards 57 – 59)
- **Communications and corporate identity** (Standards 60 – 62)
- **Courses offered by the health board** (Standard 63)
- **Public address systems –** (Standard 64)
- **Primary Care** (Standards 65-68)

Several of the health board's guidelines have been reviewed and continue to be promoted widely to staff - highlighting the compliance requirements for the Standards. The guidance is available on the intranet so that all staff can access them readily. Managers are frequently informed of the guidance available and are asked to advise their teams to familiarise themselves with the information. All new members of staff are directed to the guidance during their induction to the health board.

The Guidelines include:

- protocol for answering the phone bilingually
- a guide for receptionists
- use of Welsh in correspondence
- arranging a meeting open to the public
- writing in Welsh – handy phrases
- templates – signs, forms etc
- rules for the use of social media

The health board has applied a consistent approach in relation to use of headed paper and email signatures and requires all staff to use the health board's bilingual headed paper. This ensures that there is a consistent, bilingual message on all letters. We have also actively encouraged all staff to include a banner on email signatures noting that the individual 'welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English'. This approach has been adopted by many across the health board, encouraging correspondence in the individual's language of choice.

We are pleased that all communication platforms such as social media, press releases, and website information are always prioritised and are available bilingually. All communication work continues to be of priority to ensure that the public and patients have access to information in both Welsh and English. All signage and information leaflets are produced bilingually to the best of our knowledge.

Regular articles are published in the health board's Hywel's Voice newsletter to remind staff about the Standards and refer them to where help and advice can be obtained. The health board continues to promote its Welsh language services by displaying posters, using digital screens at hospital sites, and a banner displayed on the homepage of the intranet site signposting staff to information on the Standards. A quarterly email reminder is also sent, reaching over 10,000 staff, reminding everyone of the requirements of the Welsh language Standards. This is sometimes concentrated on a certain aspect of the Standards if a particular aspect requires greater attention, and it is felt that all staff need to be reminded of how we comply with the Welsh language Standards.

Promoting the Welsh language to our staff

As part of the marketing approach to promote Welsh language services within the health board, the team has produced its own Give it a Go campaign. The campaign consists of a range of merchandise that shares useful phrases in Welsh – displayed on posters, pens, flash cards, table talkers, desk aids and flashcard keyrings. These act as means to encourage and support staff to try and use Welsh in a range of circumstances – with one another and with our patients.



As part of this year's St David's day celebrations, the Welsh Language Services Team produced and launched new merchandise to add to the existing Give it a Go brand; Welsh speaker logo door hangers and stickers.



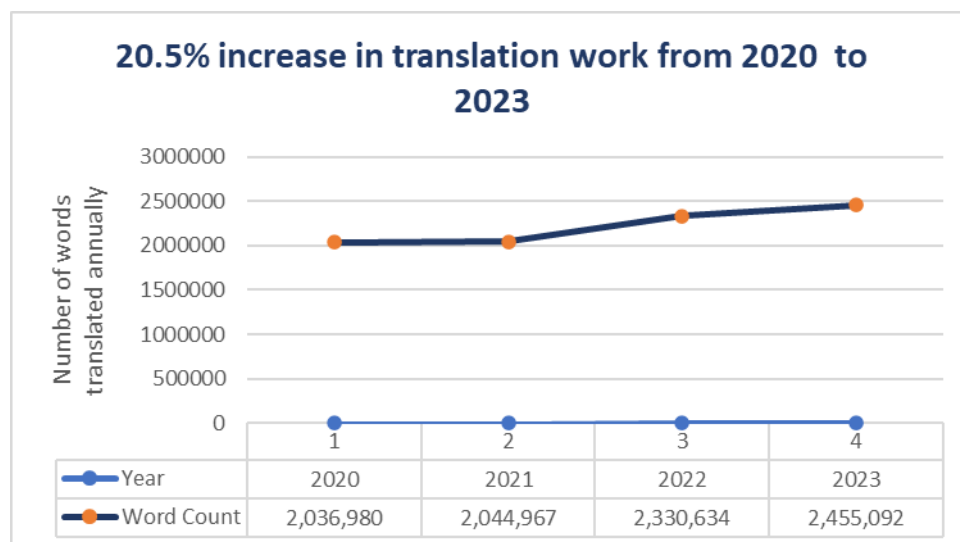
These resources have been created so that staff can:

- Be aware of patient language choice.
- Treat and talk to patients in their language of comfort from first point of contact.
- The stickers are designed to be used on patient notes to identify Welsh speaking patients.
- The door hangers are to prompt staff approaching a room where Welsh speaking patients are present.
- The door hangers are infection control friendly and have space to write notes on the reverse side.
- All are wipeable and can be reused

Demand on translation services

Since the implementation of the Welsh language Standards, the health board's internal Translation Service has experienced a drastic increase in the number and volume of requests for translation of literature.

The demand for translation work is consistently increasing month-on-month compared to previous years. The increase in translation work can be seen as clear evidence of the continuous work to promote and comply with the Standards across the health board, ensuring that all staff are aware of bilingual requirements. An email reminder is sent to all health board staff on a quarterly basis as a reminder that a translation service is available and that all material is to be produced bilingually. The translation service is also promoted in the Welsh language Taster sessions and there's an apparent influx of work received by the translation service team following the sessions. The Welsh Language Services Translation Services team have recently audited various departments such as Radiology to ensure that all literature is available bilingually. The intention is to further this project and work with other departments to ensure literature such as patient letters are all available in Welsh.



In March, our translators attended the Yr Iaith ar Daith workshop held by the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office and the Centre for Digital Public Services. The translation team has since applied information gained at this event to co-create documents in specific fields.

As part of the ongoing work with the Primary Care and Community Services Academy, we've seen a significant increase in the number of Primary Care providers, GP surgeries in particular, who use the Translation Service to obtain translations of signs, notices, and websites. Various Work Welsh merchandise, including lanyards and badges, have been sent to Primary Care Providers and are also available upon request, along with any other learning materials and Give it a Go merchandise.

During the past year, most meetings and events have continued to take place virtually via MS Teams. Guidance on how to conduct bilingual meetings, the requirements of the Standards, and handy meeting phrase sheets are readily available on the health board's intranet site for all staff to access.

A new mandatory All Wales Welsh Language Awareness competency has been assigned to all health board staff, and an e-learning module is available to complete. The course is accessible via the Electronic Staff Record (ESR) and is mandatory for all NHS staff (including staff who have limited or no direct contact with patients / service users). The course will need to be retaken every three years. The training aims to improve awareness of bilingual services, as a need as well as a legal requirement, and shares the experience of patients and why it matters to them.

We want to ensure that our staff are supported to offer services in Welsh, and a crucial element to that is building the necessary knowledge and awareness of why we need to do so and how staff can be supported. Our Health Board is committed to supporting our staff to use Welsh and we are proud of the progress we've made so far in building a bilingual organisation, of which this brief training will be a big part. The course was launched in January 2023 and on 31 March 2024 78% of the health board's workforce had completed the course. Further work will be done to promote and remind individuals of the need to complete the course and ensure compliance.

3.2 Compliance with the Policy Making Standards (Standards 69-78)

All new policies and initiatives produced by the health board are subject to an Equality Impact Assessment, which includes a language impact assessment. This is an opportunity for specific assessment of the Welsh language, where the policy would influence the use of the Welsh language as part of the organisation's service delivery. The Welsh language is embedded in the decision-making processes and is considered in all our work.

The health board's Written Control Document on Policy, as well as the Equality Impact Assessment form were reviewed in June 2021. More criteria relating to the

Welsh language have been included with a view to ensuring that the Welsh language is implicit in all decision-making processes and policy amendments.

3.3 Compliance with the Operational Standards (Standards 79-114)

- **Internal Administration** (Standards 79 – 82)
- **Complaints (Standards 83 – 85)**
- **Disciplinary Cases** (Standards 86 – 88)
- **Information Technology and the Corporate Staff App** (Standards 89 – 95)
- **Developing Welsh language skills** (Standards 96 – 105)
- **Recruiting and appointing** (Standards 106 – 109)
- **Clinical Consultations** (Standards 110-110A)
- **Signage and notices in the workplace** (Standards 111 – 113)

Internal use

Designated pages on the health board's intranet site provide guidance and support on how staff can use the Welsh language for internal communications within the health board. In addition to providing information about the Welsh Language Services team, translation support, and Welsh language Standards, the information encourages staff to learn how the health board supports them to use Welsh in their working lives.

During 2022/23, the health board has continued to actively promote the online resources that help our staff to make greater use of the Welsh language at work. Following a shift to more digital working, our Welsh Language Services Team has produced various information sheets, handy phrase sheets and further developed the 'learn Welsh' pages on the health board's intranet site. The Welsh language spell-check package, Cysgliad, is available on all laptops and PCs and staff are encouraged to make use of this tool wherever possible.

In December 2022, we introduced 'Word of the Week', which is shared via our global email and closed staff Facebook group and spells out useful words and phrases phonetically and as an audio clip. In addition, the team has also actively promoted the range of audio clips available, which help staff to deal with Welsh queries on the phone, together with the guidance on how to chair meetings bilingually. The feedback received on these products shows that these were useful for Welsh learners and Welsh speakers who need additional support to boost their confidence.

A number of templates, which help staff in many areas including responding to Welsh medium e-mail queries, keeping bilingual records, and organising bilingual meetings, are also popular. We hope that these will encourage staff to try to produce their own bilingual emails instead of immediately sending an email for translation.

These resources have been promoted in newsletters for staff and on the Global staff emails, but there are further opportunities to ensure wider engagement and use.

All documentation relating to staff employment, as well as documentation such as performance objectives and career plan documents, are available bilingually. All Wales policies such as Behaviour in the Workplace, Absence from Work, and Health and Well-being at Work are available in both Welsh and English and are published online. As a result of the internal campaigns by Welsh Language Services, staff have an increased awareness of their rights to receive Welsh language services, such as complaints procedures, documentation or meetings relating to disciplinary procedures, and any general correspondence. Complaint procedures have also been adapted; the policies for Raising Concerns, Dignity at Work, Grievance and Disciplinary now have provision within the Policy for staff to be informed of their rights to make a complaint in Welsh or respond to a complaint made about them in Welsh. During the recruitment process, individuals are actively offered their interview in their language of choice and arrangements are made accordingly. On occasions where Welsh speaking recruiting managers are not available, simultaneous translation is organised as an alternative method.

All documents are reviewed annually to ensure that they are up to date and relevant.

Increasing the Welsh language skills of our staff

All staff language skills are recorded on ESR (Electronic Staff Record). Staff are asked to discuss Welsh language learning opportunities during their annual Performance Appraisal Development Review (PADR) meetings, and this is noted on their employee record. If a wish, or need, to learn or improve an individual's Welsh skills is noted on their PADR, the Welsh Language Services team support and identify a suitable course for the individual. Welsh language courses are advertised widely across the health board and places on courses are prioritised for patient facing staff. All courses are advertised on the newly developed Learn Welsh page on the intranet, staff Facebook page and within the Global email sent to all health board staff. The latest information from the language skills audit is available on page 22

Welsh language course providers have continued to adapt their way of delivering training since the pandemic. Face-to-face classroom-based learning is now being offered as well as online virtual learning. Online learning has proven to be a popular means of learning with health board staff as it gives staff greater flexibility, especially while not needing to leave the workplace to attend a class. Many courses offered by the National Centre for Learning Welsh offer both face-to-face and online options, meaning that our staff are more likely to be able to join depending on their workplace circumstances. The majority of staff prefer online virtual learning as this option tends to be more flexible allowing the staff to stay on site and attend more flexibly during their busy work schedules.

A new exciting opportunity was presented to Hywel Dda University Health Board at the beginning of 2023 - the financial support to appoint a new Confidence Building Officer. The Confidence Building Officer was provided as part of the Work Welsh

scheme by the National Centre for Learning Welsh, to provide a series of short confidence building courses for staff. The aim of the Work Welsh scheme is to assist employers to upskill the workforce to use more Welsh at work.

The full-time Confidence Building Officer is employed by one of the Learn Welsh providers, Aberystwyth University, and has been working with us for the past 12 months. The aim of the scheme has been to offer short confidence building courses and work with individuals to change the use they make of the Welsh language with patients. The series of Confidence Building courses was open to all health board staff as well as targeting specific groups of staff such as Receptionists, Apprentices and Nurses - staff who have direct contact with patients.

The purpose of the confidence building courses is to change linguistic habits and improve confidence, so that staff are more likely to use their Welsh to communicate with others and complete tasks in the workplace through the medium of Welsh. These courses offer a unique opportunity to practise all elements of the Welsh language – speaking, reading, listening, and writing, but with particular emphasis on developing confidence to speak the language.

We are extremely proud to be able to report back on the successes of the past year. The confidence building courses have been popular among health board staff with attendance from many areas such as nursing, estates, mental health, children's services, administrative roles and many more.

Increasing the Welsh language skills of the workforce is a priority for the health board, and therefore seeing so many staff eager to commit to these types of sessions is a very positive step in order to improve the patient experience.

Increasing the use of the Welsh language was the main aim of the plan and, with 121 individuals having attended the courses over the past year, we can say with confidence that many more staff now use more Welsh with patients and other colleagues in the workplace.

Del Gwynfyd Harris, Frailty Nurse

Del was born in England and moved to Wales later in life as an adult. Del has been learning Welsh for twenty years but since starting nursing there hasn't been much time to continue learning and therefore has lost the confidence to use the language. Del works with very vulnerable patients and understands the importance of communicating with them in Welsh. Since attending the sessions with Richard, Del has set a new goal in the workplace; to start a conversation in Welsh with patients every day and Del intends to start carrying out assessments for his patients through the medium of Welsh once a week. "I would have never have tried this without attending the Confidence Building Course".

Mark Lawler, Mental Health CBT Traumatic Stress Leader

Mark works as a Senior Cognitive Behavioral Therapist (CBT) helping patients with mental health problems. Mark lived and trained in England for a period of time but since moving back to Wales he has committed to a series of intensive Welsh learning courses and is fully committed to the language. Over 30 hours were spent with Richard over the past year, and as a result of that, Mark now feels more

confident to conduct some therapy sessions in Welsh. Although he felt a little nervous at first, Mark feels great satisfaction at being able to hold therapy sessions in Welsh. In addition to this, Mark also starts conversations in Welsh in the workplace and also sends emails in Welsh to other colleagues.

We're ever so pleased to announce that further funding has been secured and that the tutor will be continuing his work with the health board for a further 12 months this year. The series of Confidence Building courses will again be open to all health board staff as well as targeted groups of staff such as School Nurses, Apprentices, Porters and staff working in the Dementia field; staff who have direct contact with patients. More information can be found on page 23.

Welsh language awareness training sessions continue to be offered virtually over MS Teams and departmental managers are encouraged to organise a session for their staff. Welsh language awareness sessions are advertised via Global email; however, the take up is limited due to service pressures. New staff continue to be encouraged by their line managers to contact Welsh Language Services for advice and support in their new roles. Iaith Gwaith lanyards and badges are given to Welsh speaking staff, and learner lanyards and badges are given to staff who are actively learning.

The Welsh Language Services team have been working on an ongoing project with the Learning & Development department to provide new 'Welsh language taster sessions' for staff. Over the past year, the team have held monthly one-hour face-to-face sessions that include a short Welsh language awareness session, patient focused case studies, video clips, information on learn Welsh courses and mainly an opportunity for staff to practise useful terminology and greetings. The sessions are advertised health board wide and are booked via the ESR system. The sessions are available to new and existing staff. Over the past year, 54 members of staff have attended the sessions, staff from various departments health board wide; radiologists, dementia well-being, consultants, mental health workers, administrative staff and many more.

The face-to-face Taster sessions were initially held in Glien House, Carmarthen as a pilot project but due to the success and demand for the sessions, the intent is to hold the sessions in each county. Work is underway to arrange and promote the new sessions.

Other Welsh Language Awareness sessions were held over the past year include sessions with the Speech & Language Therapy Services team. These particular sessions involved a focus on matters relating to the Welsh Language Standards and how to ensure compliance is met. A further session was arranged for hospital-based Speech and Language Therapist with a particular focus on patient need and patient language choice.

The Welsh Language Services team have also secured a regular place on the Community Induction Programme for Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and

Pembrokeshire – an induction programme for health care support workers and carers in the community. This again involves a Welsh Language Awareness session and an opportunity to highlight the importance of patient language choice.

An exciting opportunity was presented to the Welsh Language Services team in February 2024 – an opportunity to meet with healthcare students from NorQuest College, in Alberta, Canada. Coleg Ceredigion have been working with the executive team at Alberta Health Services, the public health system equivalent to our NHS that serves the Alberta population, to enable the students to study different healthcare models.

In February, Coleg Ceredigion hosted a small number of students and staff from NorQuest College, Canada for a week at Aberystwyth. The visitors participated in classes to better understand the health and social care system in Wales, attend a session with the nursing team at Aberystwyth University, a visit a local GP surgery to see how primary care works in this country, and a visit to Bronglais hospital; all with an emphasis on the use of the Welsh language and meeting the needs of the local Welsh population. The Welsh Language Services team held a presentation for the Canada students discussing Welsh culture, Welsh government legislation, patient experiences whilst also learning from the experiences of the Canada students. A great and beneficial experience was had by all.



A great deal of work continues to be carried out by the Workforce team in supporting the recruitment of new employees. Recruitment managers are advised to assess the need for Welsh language skills and categorise accordingly. New guidelines and a clear process has been shared with all recruitment managers to ensure the Welsh language is considered throughout the recruitment process. All new posts are advertised bilingually, and applicants can state their language preference on application forms.

Standard 107a(ch) continues to be an area of focus for our Workforce team. This Standard refers to the translation of all job descriptions for advertising new and existing posts. Some progress has been made to assess priority job descriptions where greatest impact can be had. The health board is striving for full compliance with this Standard and has a work plan in place that demonstrates how it will achieve full compliance in the future. In the meantime, assessing priority job descriptions for translation has been a focus area, with the following actions being progressed and prioritised:

- Posts that are deemed Welsh essential are translated and advertised in Welsh.
- Posts that have the most frequent contact with patients/service users.
- Those where services are delivered locally and in our communities.
- Posts that tend to be the most frequently advertised e.g., Band 5 Staff Nurse, Health Care Support Worker (Band 2, 3 and 4), Community Nurse, Nurse Manager (Band 6 and 7), Receptionist and Porter.
- 166 job descriptions are available in the NHS Wales Collaborative Library (approved for sharing across Wales) and 34 generic job descriptions are agreed and already translated. These 34 job descriptions are core job descriptions as identified within the health board.

3.4 Record Keeping Standards (115-117)

- **Complaints** (Standard 115)
- **Record of employee Welsh language Skills** (Standard 116)
- **Record of the new or vacant posts which were categorised** (Standard 117)

Complaints received during 2023/24

(Standard 115) You must keep a record, in relation to each financial year, of the number of complaints received relating to your compliance with Standards.

All complaints received during the reporting period were dealt with in accordance with the health board's Complaints Procedure.

Two Welsh language service complaints were received by the health board during 2023/24, one directly from the Welsh Language Commissioner's office. This complaint in fact was investigated by the Welsh Language Commissioner within the reporting year.

Complaint 1: Standard 110 – A policy and plan on clinical consultation wasn't in place on time in accordance with the compliance notice.

Complaint 2: The second complaint was one from a member of the public on 17 June 2023 regarding a Penalty Charge Notice issued at Prince Phillip Hospital.

3.5 Welsh Language Skills Audit

(Standard 116) You must keep a record (following assessments of your employees' Welsh language skills made in accordance with standard 96), of the number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of each financial year and,

where you have that information, you must keep a record of the skill level of those employees.

The language skills of health board staff are captured and recorded on the Electronic Staff Record (ESR) system. The data below was captured on the system at the end of March 2023. The data below shows that 97.59% of staff have now recorded their Welsh language skills in ESR.

The Welsh language skills questionnaire form continues to be used to capture the data required and is available for download via the intranet. Staff language skill data is also discussed with managers at performance review meetings. Staff language data is also now transferred from NHS Jobs to ESR on appointment to post.

The breakdown of Welsh Language recording as of 31 March 2023 was:

Welsh skill level	Number of employees	%
0 - No Skills / Dim Sgiliau	4,773	39.66%
1 - Entry/ Mynediad	2,730	22.68%
2 - Foundation / Sylfaen	1,084	9.01%
3 - Intermediate / Canolradd	876	7.28%
4 - Higher / Uwch	938	7.79%
5 - Proficiency / Hyfedredd	1,344	11.17%
Not yet recorded on ESR	299	2.41%
Total	12,044	100%

The areas of improvement, and steps we intend to take during the coming months to improve the recording and development of Welsh language skills include:

1. Encouraging staff and managers to review ESR levels where improvement in language ability has been made.
2. Further encouraging those on level 0 to move to level 1. We aim to encourage more staff to complete the 10-hour online taster courses
3. Implementing our strategy to encourage those on level 1 to move to level 2. This is in line with our Bilingual Skills Policy; a commitment to get to 50% at level foundation in 10 years.
4. Reviewing Bilingual Skills policy targets in light of the 2021 Census data

3.6 Recruitment

(Standard 117) You must keep a record, in relation to each financial year, of the number of new and vacant posts which were categorised (in accordance with

standard 106) as posts where— (a) Welsh language skills are essential; (b) Welsh language skills need to be learnt when appointed to the post; (c) Welsh language skills are desirable; or (ch) Welsh language skills are not necessary

The number of new and vacant posts over the past year are as follows:

	Level of Welsh required for each post				Total number of new / vacant posts
	Welsh essential	Welsh desirable	Welsh needs to be learnt	Welsh not necessary	
Hywel Dda UHB	23	2702	0	26	2725

Out of the 2725 posts advertised, 2659 posts were offered and 619 individuals appointed to these posts hold Welsh Language Skills Level 3-5. The Workforce & Organisational Development Team has added a Welsh language skills requirements assessment to the recruiting process. This assists managers to determine whether posts should be advertised as Welsh Essential or Welsh Desirable. The tool ensures that managers follow a set formula that considers the language needs of the population and the current skill mix, and skill gap, within the team. This allows services to recruit individuals with the required level of Welsh language ability to ensure a comprehensive Welsh language service is available. A Top 10 Tips animation continues to be used widely to support recruiting managers in understanding their responsibilities in delivering the aims of the bilingual skills policy.

We continue to make use of Lleol website, a jobs website that promotes roles where Welsh is noted as essential, to advertise the health board’s Welsh essential jobs. Welsh essential posts are also shared to a specific group on Facebook that only advertises Welsh essential posts.

3.7 Learning opportunities provided during 2023-24

The shift to more online learning has continued to be a positive move for health board staff in terms of accessing learning. As a health board we are fortunate to be offered various learning opportunities through the Welsh Government funded initiative Work Welsh - an opportunity for employees to learn Welsh from little or no knowledge, or to further develop their existing language skills. The Welsh Language Services Team are a link between our staff and course providers making the process of finding the best course for our staff as easy as possible.

The Work Welsh scheme offers a range of opportunities from online self-study courses, taster courses, Nant Gwrtheyrn ‘Use’ courses and more recently the Work Welsh Academy which provides training, support and guidance for employers that

will help employers gain a better understanding of how to support learning, and how to plan and increase the Welsh language skills of the workforce. An example of a recent training programme offered is 'Chairing a bilingually and hosting bilingual events', which is again available for any member of staff health board wide.

Confidence Building Courses – Work Welsh programme

The full-time Confidence Building Officer is employed by one of the Learn Welsh providers, Aberystwyth University, for a period of 12 months. The aim again during 2023-2024 was to offer short confidence building courses and work with individuals to change the use they make of the Welsh language with patients. The series of Confidence Building courses has been and continues to be open to all health board staff as well as targeting specific groups of staff such as School Nurses, Dementia staff, Porters and Apprentices; staff who have direct contact with patients.

Who the course is aimed at:

In addition to staff with existing Welsh speaking skills, this year the courses are also available for staff with little or no Welsh skills at all, as the aim is to improve confidence to use the language whatever the level of Welsh.

Aim:

The purpose of these sessions is to change linguistic habits and improve the confidence of reluctant speakers, so that they use Welsh when they would normally use English.

Course details:

Held via virtual classroom, including an opportunity for one-to-one sessions with a tutor for further support, the course supports individuals by providing general guidance or, if staff have specific areas of work they wish to concentrate on e.g. practise a telephone script, or how to write a formal email. A typical course involves two hours of learning per week, and the individual can continue the sessions with the tutor for as long as required or until they feel more confident to use the language.

Many staff from different departments attended the courses over the past year, ranging from Occupational Therapists, Mental Health Workers, Consultants, Staff Nurses and many more.

At the end of the reporting year (31 March 2024) 121 members of staff had completed the courses. This is a fantastic achievement as the set target for the year was to reach 100 members of staff. Current work pressures continues to be a limitation in terms of attendance and drop-off rates, however, the flexibility of the courses and the opportunity of 1:1 sessions helps, and staff always have the opportunity for to re-join at a later date or attend on a 1:1 basis with the tutor.

Further analysis of the confidence Building courses;

Six two-hour long courses were held over 12 weeks which equates to 24 hours of

contact for each course. The one-to-one sessions have been extremely popular with the staff with approximately 478 hours of contact noted by the tutor. The time spent with each individual varies, with some spending up to 12 hours one-to-one with the tutor, and others only needing a few hours to build confidence.

Month	Staff	Number of individuals
February 2023	Apprentices	11
March 2023	Open to all staff members	11
April 2023	Receptionists / Switchboard / Call handlers	8
May 2023	Receptionists / Switchboard / Call handlers	6
June 2023	All staff members	9
July 2023	Nurses	15
August 2023	Nurses	8
September 2023	Nurses	5
October 2023	Open to all staff members/ Apprentices	4 15
November 2023	Open to all staff members/ Apprentices	15 14

A full and detailed account of the programme can be found in the Confidence Building Scheme 2023-2024 report.

Following the success of the scheme during the past year at Hywel Dda University Health Board, a similar scheme is currently being rolled out with other health boards; an opportunity to share experiences and work collaboratively. Work continues with the Work Welsh scheme co-ordinator, and a series of promotional video clips have recently been launched as part of a promotional campaign to further promote the successes of the Confidence Building scheme.

Other opportunities to learn Welsh opportunities

The Welsh Language Services Team continue to be proactive in promoting all Welsh Language learning opportunities to staff, as well as supporting them to choose the most appropriate course for their level of ability. During 2023-2024, the Welsh Language Services team secured funding to offer more short intensive courses at beginner level for health board staff. This type of course proved very popular with staff and the uptake was high with numerous staff on a waiting list in readiness for the next available course.

The following table shows the number of participants enrolled on the various courses offered at the health board during 2023/24.

Course	Level	Location	Number of participants enrolled
Confidence Building Courses	Level 3 and above	Online virtual classroom & 1:1 sessions	121
Welcome to Work Welsh 10 hour online course	Entry	Online self-study	49
6-week short intensive course	Entry – Level 0	Online virtual classroom	15
6-week short intensive course	Entry – Level 0/1	Online virtual classroom	15
One day taster course	Entry – Level 0	Online virtual classroom	15
One day taster course	Entry – Level 0/1	Online virtual classroom	15
Online Self Study course	Entry	Online	5
'Use' course Nantgwrtheyrn	Higher	Face to face	2
'Use' course Nantgwrtheyrn	Intermediate	Face to face	3

4. Further information

For further information about the health board's Welsh Language Services, please contact:

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