



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

DYDDIAD Y CYFARFOD: DATE OF MEETING:	27 May 2025
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 (WG) is committed to strengthening the provision of Welsh language services to the people of Wales.

Part of how the WG 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 paper 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 WG’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 WG's Cymraeg 2050 strategy, launched in July 2017, that defines the WG'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 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 2024. 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 2024/25 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 also 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 (Appendix 1) also touches upon our recently published action plan against Standard 110 and also the action plan following a statutory investigation into our switchboard services.

Argymhelliad / Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

- **ENDORSE** the Welsh Language Annual Report as a reflection of the activity and progress made to enhance and embed the Welsh language and culture at Hywel Dda.

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	1 Workforce Stabilisation
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.
Partïon / 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 th 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.



Hywel Dda University Health Board Welsh Language Annual Report 2024/25



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Hywel Dda
University Health Board

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Vision for 2025/26

Building on our Welsh language and Culture Discovery process and the passion within the Health Board, we will 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 Key Performance Indicators (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: Shan Lewis, Health Care Support Worker, Withybush Hospital, during Welsh Language week 2025.

1. Introduction

This Welsh Language Annual Report focuses on the work undertaken by Hywel Dda University Health Board during 2024-25.

The Health Board has strived to achieve the delivery of its goals for developing and enhancing the Welsh Language. Despite continued service pressures across our health and care system, our staff continue 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 term of office of Delyth Raynsford, the Independent Member who championed the Welsh language, came to an end at the end of March 2025. During her tenure, Delyth was a great support in promoting the language within the Health Board - encouraging colleagues to give it a go - and provided valuable guidance to the Welsh Language Services team. Thank you, Delyth, for your continued endorsement. From 1 April 2025, Rhodri Evans became the Welsh language champion on behalf of the Board.

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 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 about the importance of supporting the use of Welsh in our workplace. 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.

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. The Health Board is represented at this group by the Welsh Language Services Manager.

Welsh language awareness sessions have continued to be offered virtually, with a continued reintroduction of some face-to-face sessions. The sessions include new Welsh language awareness taster sessions for staff Health Board wide, which are highlighted during the Health Board's new starter corporate induction programme. These awareness 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.

During the year, we introduced four Cwrs Croeso sessions for individuals – as an opening to learning Welsh for individuals who are new to the language. As a follow-on, and with the support of the National Centre for Learning Welsh, we introduced a series of 10-hour Welsh language courses for staff. These courses are available to colleagues who have completed the Cwrs Croeso and provide an introduction to Welsh - enabling individuals to hold basic conversations in Welsh. These will be further developed and embedded during 2025-26.

Being able to engage with staff meaningfully means we can make a real difference to embed and promote the Welsh Language across the organisation – building the confidence of our staff as Welsh speakers, learners, and supporters. The Welsh Language Services have attended numerous conferences and public sector events during the past year such as Enabling Quality Improvement in Practice (EQIIP), annual Nursing Conference, investors in carers events, and careers events. These are great opportunities to engage with staff and stakeholders and promote the language and how individuals can support greater use of Welsh in our workplaces, services, and community.

During the past year, the Welsh Language Services team has facilitated the provision of the confidence building course, and supplemented opportunities for informal use of Welsh through our Cloncan series of in-person and online events. These short sessions enable colleagues from across the Health Board to connect and practice the use of Welsh in an informal and welcoming setting.

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

Recognising our role as a major employer and service provider in mid and West Wales, we continue to work with ARFOR (who support businesses in Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion). Together with the Health Board's Future Workforce team, we attended careers events at 10 secondary schools across the counties to engage with children from years 7-12. Through conversations with pupils and teachers we were able to highlight the various opportunities that Hywel Dda offer to work through the medium of Welsh. Additionally, we advised that Hywel Dda encourages individuals to apply for roles through Welsh and are able to support individuals to hold interviews through Welsh.

Establishing our calendar of activities

Building on our calendar of events, we continued to promote Welsh celebrations including St David's Day, Diwrnod Shwmae, Welsh Music Day, and St Dwynwen's Day.

We continue to use a various communication and marketing materials to support our colleagues to use their Welsh, including encouraging individuals who are new to Welsh to Give it a Go. For example, in support of Diwrnod Shwmae, a series of video and audio clips were released to encourage staff to use their Welsh, enabling greater awareness of basic phrases and pronunciation.

During November 2024, the Health Board supported the Welsh Language Commissioner's campaign - '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, to establish the Welsh language as a natural part of their day to day lives. The campaign ran from 25 November until 9 December 2024. Our Welsh Language Services team worked in partnership with Primary Care Services again this year 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 mark Dydd Santes Dwynwen on 25 January 2025, videos were created to celebrate the day with staff from Glangwili Hospital taking part by saying a word they associate with love. This was shared within the Health Board, using Viva Engage, as a platform for engaging with staff. Linking to the video was a promotion to encourage colleagues to sing-up to the various opportunities to learn Welsh within Hywel Dda.

To celebrate St David's Day this year the Welsh Language Services team used the opportunity to host 'Welsh Week' that focused on doing little things to bring attention to Welsh culture. Seeking alternate ways to increase visibility of the language and key phrases, posters were developed and shared on bathroom doors in a range of locations across Health Board.

The team worked with the Communications team to ensure that St David's day was celebrated on social media with posts including quotes from staff stating why Welsh is important to them in the workplace, which gained significant reach and engagement with the public on the Health Board's social media channels.



Daffodils were also handed out to staff at Glangwili Hospital in the run up to St David's Day and a [video](#) created that was shared on social media. Viva Engage was used to bring attention to the translation services and to remind staff of their duty under the standards of supplying bilingual letters, posters, emails and more. was used to bring attention to the translation services and to remind staff of their duty under the standards of supplying bilingual letters, posters, emails and more.

We also took this week as an opportunity to hold the Health Board's first Eisteddfod for staff and their families, to raise awareness of Welsh culture amongst colleagues and teams. Local businesses kindly donated prizes that were gifted to the successful competition winners. There were 10 categories that ranged from photography to poetry, and included team activities such as best decorated ward. Every category had at least one entry and with some categories being inundated with entries. Staff members were asked to judge. The categories and winners were:

Category	Winner	Prize donated by
Photography (child)	Harlyn Tooby	Siop y Pentan
Photography (adult)	Diana Green	Bluestone
Art (child)	Elsa Burson	Siop y Pentan
Art (adult)	Tricia Rees	Vale of Rheidol
Singing	Gwilym Scourfield	Cawdor, Llandeilo
Dancing	Megan Evans	Folly Farm
Poetry	Mel Storey	Aberglasney

Acostig Poem	Meinir Morris	Scarlets
Speaking (learner)	Laura Hiscox	Ani Bendod
Ward Decorating	Angharad Ward, Bronglais	Castell Howell



Eisteddfod Hywel Dda

Migration to resilience

It was 1972, a life so bleak, impossible to leave.
Until Amin came to power, chasing a dream.
"All Asians must leave in 90 days," he decreed.
Leave the country of our birth? Our home?
The place where we belonged?

We were the backbone of the economy,
Yet harassed, intimidated, faces filled with fear.
What will happen to us? So many questions, no answers.
"Take your suitcases and airfare, nothing more," he ordered.

When your home is on fire, what do you take?
Leave the houses, farms, businesses, and cars.
These now being to ignore, he declared.
The soldiers banged on doors,
Guns waving, voices shouting demands.

On the way to the airport, they took all we had
Money, jewellery, dignity—stripped away.
Women assaulted by their cruelty, hearts heavy with despair,
We boarded flights to nowhere,
Uncertain of what lay ahead.

Winter greeted us with biting winds,
Housed in empty military camps,
A far cry from the warmth we had known.
At least we were together—
British in Britain, though strangers in this new land.

Unaccustomed to charity, we were donated clothes,
Clinging to whatever shred of pride remained.
But we found them in simply being alive.
That was over 50 years ago, and somehow,
The human spirit recovered.

We started over with nothing,
Grit and determination our only currency.
The entrepreneurial spirit, though trapped,
Bubbled up again, refusing to be silenced.
"We can deal with this," we told ourselves,
Not quite believing but trying all the same.

It's been hard to speak of those dark days,
The fear, the loss, the trauma, the injustice.
But today, the memories come alive,
Stories passed down, captured forever.
And yes, it's good to talk.

Wales opened its arms,
Welcoming us with its rugged coasts.
Snow-capped mountains, and castles steeped in history.
Cool Cardiff, stunning Swansea beaches and winding coastal paths.
This land embraced us, it's people too.
And now, it is ours too and we love you back.

Our Wales, our home,
Where resilience took root,
Where the pain of the past turned into the promise of tomorrow.
We belong here,
Hukanna matata
Fy Nghymra
Rwy'n perthyn yma
From migration to resilience,
Our story continues.

Mel Storey



In addition to the prizes awarded to staff who entered the various categories in the Eisteddfod, Ellen Masters was also awarded tickets to the Royal Welsh Spring Fair for being this year's Learner of the Year. Ellen has been self-learning for years and has recently joined the Cwrs Codi Hyder. Richard Jones, the tutor, awarded Ellen, for her dedication to learning but also for being intent on putting what she has learnt into practice in her workplace through use of Welsh in emails and phone calls.

Additionally, and to promote Dydd Gwyl Dewi, daffodils were handed out to staff across the acute site to celebrate all things Cymraeg and remind everyone to do the

little things – encouraging everyone to live the values of St David and “gwnewch y pethau bychain”.

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.

Following on from the success of the collaboration between the Health Board’s Welsh Language Services team and the Primary Care and Community Services Academy the teams continued to hold Welsh Language awareness sessions in June and November.

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. These packs are continuously updated to ensure that they are fit for purpose with all the

latest information on the Welsh Language Standards and Duties and courses available to staff.

[Welsh Language Standards](#) (internal link only): 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](#) (internal link only): 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).

In February 2025, a five-year plan on how the organisation is progressing towards achieving Standard 110 - the required standard in being able to offer clinical consultations through the medium of Welsh – was presented to PODCC. The plan aims to ensure that patients feel more comfortable discussing their health matters in their language of need, improving communication and positive patient outcomes. Current practices may not fully accommodate Welsh speaking patients, and there may be a need for staff training and a review of current resources and procedures.

In discussion with teams that fall within the seven priority groups of the Welsh Government's Strategic Framework, More than just words, the work has started within an individual service initially - Speech and Language Therapy services. The initial plan has been developed so that it may be transferred easily to other services, once piloted and tested. It is a working document and is subject to change as the work progresses during 2025-26.

The plan covers the following 6 areas of work:

- **Baseline assessment of the current situation**
Baseline audit of staff Welsh language skills; forms, letters and patient information available bilingually
- **Training and Development**
Implement a comprehensive Welsh language training plan for staff at all levels to improve staff Welsh language skills focusing on communication skills essential for effective patient interactions at all levels.
- **Recruitment and Retention**
Increase the recruitment of Welsh speaking staff, with an emphasis on explaining the level of Welsh language skills required for each post.
- **Welsh language resources**
Provide and/or develop Welsh language resources from language glossaries to assessments, in order so support staff to deliver services through the medium of Welsh.
- **Patient Awareness and Engagement**
Raise awareness among Welsh speaking patients about their right to receive services through the medium of Welsh

- **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Establish mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the plan, ensuring that Welsh language services are being provided effectively and that patient satisfaction is regularly assessed.

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 2025-26. The 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 2025/26

The Health Board has a clear vision for the development of Welsh language and culture, that links to a number of the Health Board's priorities for 2025-36. A 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.

Building on our Welsh language and Culture Discovery process and the passion within the Health Board, we will 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 continue to do this in conjunction with the service areas during the 2025/26 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
- Continue to implement the Welsh Government's Strategic Framework, More Than Just Words, which was launched in the summer of 2022
- Continue to develop and strengthen 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 mystery shopper exercise
- Deliver and evolve the Safon 110 / Standard 110 plan for enabling clinical consultations through the medium of Welsh.

These 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 deals with financial and 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 focus on the Welsh language 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, utilising Viva Engage, social media, staff team meetings, face to face visits to acute and community sites and utilising our Welsh language champions in order to highlight 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.

During the past year, the Health Board's Hybrid Print and Post project has started to offer appointment letters for patients in an online portal. As part of this development it enables patients to select how they would like to receive correspondence from the health board and to do so either in paper or digital format. This enables patients of certain services to select their preference and, if they choose to do so, receive all their correspondence in either Welsh or English.

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. Numerous messages are shared on our internal social media pages for staff, particularly Viva Engage, highlighting how we need to comply with the standards and pointing to areas of further support available.

Ceinwen Lloyd (Hywel Dda UHB - Welsh Language Suppor...
Mar 25

Seen by 227

Do you know your duty when it comes to the Welsh language standards?

Cyfieithu Ar y Pryd (CAP)

Simultaneous translation

You must ensure that your application forms for posts provide a space for applicants to indicate that they wish an interview or other method of assessment in Welsh and if an applicant so wishes, you must conduct any interview or other method of assessment in Welsh, or, if necessary, provide a simultaneous or consecutive translation service from Welsh to English for that pur... see more



<http://hduhb.nhs.wales/healthcare/services-and-teams/welsh-language-services/welsh-language-documents/welsh-language-compliance-notice/>

Ceinwen Lloyd (Hywel Dda UHB - Welsh Language Suppor...
Mar 18

Seen by 1,974

Do you know the Welsh language standards?

Cyfieithu Ar y Pryd (CAP)

Simultaneous translation

If you have invited more than one person to a meeting, and at least 10% (but less than 100%) of the persons invited have informed you that they wish to use the Welsh language at the meeting, you must arrange for a simultaneous or consecutive translation service from Welsh to English to be available at the meeting

Find all of the standards here: hduhb.nhs.wales/healthcare/services-and-teams/welsh-language-services/welsh-language-documents/welsh-language-compliance-notice/



COMPLIANCE NOTICE SECTION 44 WELSH LANGUAGE (WALES) MEASURE 2011
Hywel Dda University Health Board Issue Date: 30/11/2018

COMPLIANCE NOTICE – SECTION 44 WELSH LANGUAGE (WALES) MEASURE 2011 Hywel Dda University Health Board – Issue Date: 30/11/2018 Standard Number Class of Standard Standard Imposition Day 1 Service Delivery standards If you receive correspondence from a person in Welsh you must reply in

hduhb.nhs.wales

A quarterly email reminder is also sent, reaching over 12,000 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. The Welsh Language Services team have also designed and created new lanyards for Welsh speakers and lanyards for Welsh learners. These lanyards include the Health Board logo and the Work Welsh logo. The purpose of these lanyards is that patients and staff can quickly identify and recognise who they can use their Welsh with.



These lanyards add to the range of Give it a Go merchandise that serves as a visible reminder to staff and patients to use their Welsh, so that staff can:

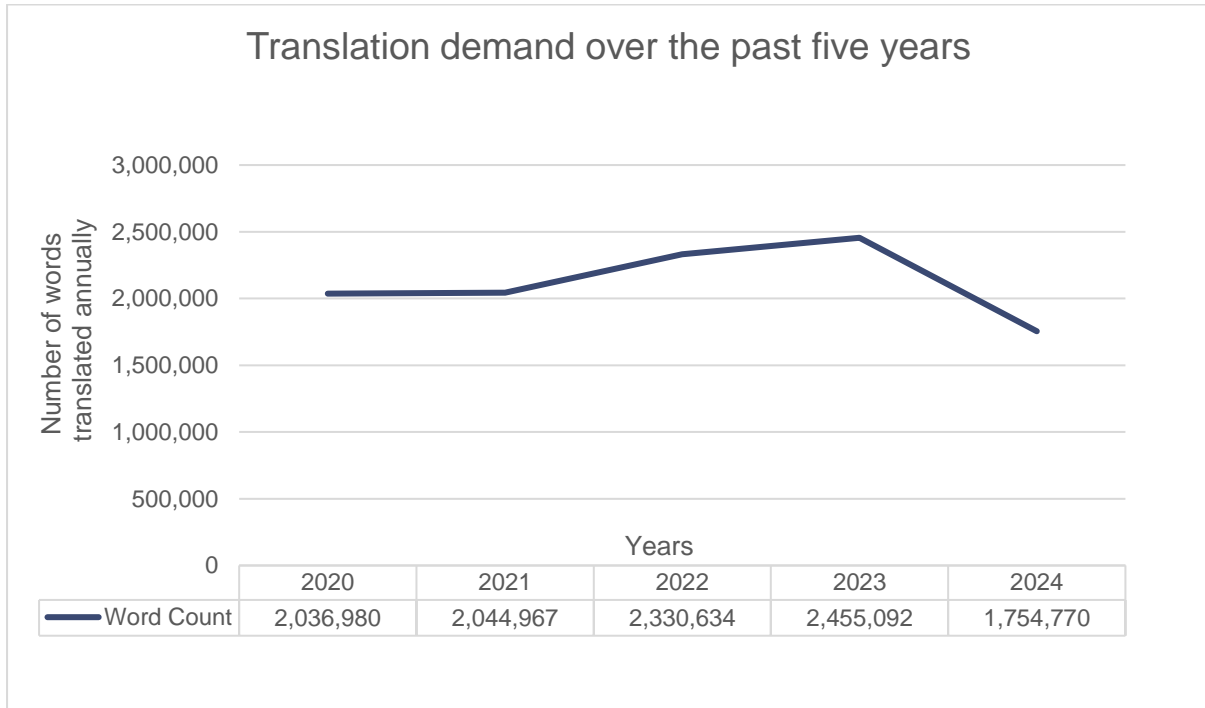
- Be aware of colleague's language choice.
- Enable patients to use their language of comfort from first point of contact.

Demand on translation services

There has been a decrease in the total number of words submitted for translation in 2024-25. Staffing and financial pressures across the Health Board could mean that departments may not have the ability to create new materials, leading to a reduction in translation.

The Welsh Language Service has worked with specific departments in previous years to audit their current files leading to a surge in translation as departments work to catch up on ensuring materials are produced bilingually. In 2025-26 the team aims to work with Workforce and Organisational Development to ensure that their Intranet and SharePoint pages are completely bilingual. This, as well as consultation activities such as Llanelli Minor Injuries Unit and the Clinical Services Plan, where a number of public documents are produced means that the translation requirements will be in-line with previous years during 2025/26.

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 Translation Services team have recently audited various departments such as Radiology and Maternity 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.



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. Primary Care Providers have access to the Welsh Language Services order form and are encouraged by the Primary Care Academy to request 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 2025 86% 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 2024/25, 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.

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 21.

Welsh language course providers have adapted 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.

Since the beginning of 2023, we have been working closely with the National Centre for Learning Welsh to continue to provide the Confidence Building Course to our staff. The Confidence Building Officer, Richard Jones, continues to work as part of the Work Welsh scheme by the National Centre for Learning Welsh, and 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 two years. 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 108 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.

Angharad Evans, Team Secretary

Angharad has been attending the confidence building course with Richard since April 2024. She says that the courses are great and since attending them regularly she uses her Welsh with patients and colleagues. She likes that the courses are online and the flexibility that Richard offers when it comes to her work schedule. Attending the group sessions virtually means that she gets to meet colleagues from all over the Health Board, people she may never have had the chance to converse with previously, and they get to have informal chats to practice together. Angharad would recommend the course to anyone who has some understanding of the language but wants the push to start speaking it with others. Angharad now starts emails in Welsh

and will answer the phone in Welsh confidently, which is something she wouldn't have attempted before joining Richards lessons.

Alan Treharne, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist

Welsh is Alan's second language and before he moved to Ceredigion he didn't use Welsh in the Workplace. He has been very lucky with the support he has received with his colleagues at Bronglais hospital and he says that speaking Welsh is an important part of his consultation with patients. He feels confident enough to start speaking Welsh before English. He says that this helps his connection with Welsh speaking patients and makes them feel more comfortable and that he understands the importance of letting people answer back in their first language.

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, Speech and Language workers and Porters; staff who have direct contact with patients. More information can be found on page 22.

The Welsh Language Services team has 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 online 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, 43 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.

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 Viva Engage; 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.

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.

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 2024/25, one came directly from the Welsh Language Commissioner's office. The complaint involved English only information being displayed in the Pharmacy at Prince Philip Hospital. The Welsh Language Services team visited the department and spoke to the pharmacy manager.

She accepted that the signs were in English, however as the signs held staff only information and were displayed on the door into a staff area, she hadn't realised they needed to also be bilingual. She apologised for the mistake as she realises the information can be seen by the public. The posters were immediately taken down and have been translated by the Translation team.

She noted that all other signage – both temporary and permanent – within the pharmacy department, is bilingual. The reception desk displays the Iaith Gwaith poster, and staff are encouraged to wear Iaith Gwaith badges and lanyards. The internal area of the department also displays the Health Board's own Give it a go merchandise. She also confirmed that staff Welsh Language levels are discussed at all PADR's, and some staff access Welsh Language learning opportunities. The Welsh Language Services team have since shared an updated list of all opportunities available. No further action was taken.

The Welsh Language Commissioner decided to open an investigation into Hywel Dda University Health Board's compliance with the Welsh language Standards, specifically standards 9 and 10 relating to telephone calls. Despite their efforts to highlight the issues and provide opportunities for improvement, there was evidence that there had been no clear improvement in compliance with the telephone standards. As a result of this, the Health Board has now produced an action plan that is being implemented until the end of 2025. *Please see appendix 1*

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. As of March 31, 2025, 97.4% of staff have recorded their Welsh language skills as can be seen in the table below.

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 2025 was:

Welsh skill level	Number of employees	%
0 - No Skills / Dim Sgiliau	4891	40.4%
1 - Entry/ Mynediad	2676	22.10%
2 - Foundation / Sylfaen	1,075	8.90%
3 - Intermediate / Canolradd	884	7.30%
4 - Higher / Uwch	922	7.60%
5 - Proficiency / Hyfedredd	1,355	11.20%
Not yet recorded on ESR	312	2.60%
Total	12,115	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	22	2175	0	288	2485

Out of the 2485 posts advertised, 2616 posts were offered and 529 individuals appointed to these posts hold Welsh language skill levels 3 to 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 also look to hold Welsh Language training sessions with Workforce and Organisational Development to improve knowledge of how they apply to their day to day work.

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 2024-25

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 2024-2025 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 2025) 108 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 continue 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
June 2024	Primary Care Staff	14
September 2024	Apprentices	18
September 2024	Nurses BGH	28
October 2024	Nurses GGH	32
October 2024	Apprentices	3
November 2024	Primary Care Staff	12
December 2024	Pembrokeshire Community Hospitals	6

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. The funding to offer more short intensive courses that was secured last year to offer course at beginner level for Health Board staff proved popular and the uptake was high.

In September 2024, working with the National Centre for Learning Welsh and their provider Aberystwyth University we were able to offer a Welcome to Welsh course to our staff who were complete beginners to learning the language. The course is a one-off session online or 1.5 hours. The tutor, supplied by Aberystwyth University, uses the session to give a taste of what it's like to learn Welsh by looking at linguistic patterns to health-related words. The session also gives an overview of what resources are available to staff if they decide to continue learning Welsh.

Four sessions offered to staff throughout the year and the National Centre for Learning Welsh has confirmed that the courses will run through 2025-26 offering a further six sessions throughout the year to staff.

Following on from the success of the number of participants who attended the Welcome to Welsh course, Aberystwyth University and the Health Board won a tender to trail a 10-hour Welcome course in March 2025. This course is offered to everyone who attended the Welcome to Welsh course and staff are asked to give 1

hour a week of their time for 10 weeks to help them learn conversational Welsh that will help them interact with patients. The course concentrates on health care phrases. We are pleased to confirm that there will be three more blocks of 10 hour courses offered to staff over 2025-26.

The following table shows the number of participants enrolled on the various courses offered at the Health Board during 2024-25.

Course	Level	Location	Number of participants enrolled
Confidence Building Courses	Level 3 and above	Online virtual classroom & 1:1 sessions	108
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	Online virtual classroom	13
6-week short intensive course	Entry – Level 0	Online virtual classroom	22
Cwrs Croeso	Entry – Level 0/1	Online virtual classroom	36
Cwrs Croeso	Entry – Level 0/1	Online virtual classroom	32
Cwrs Croeso	Entry – Level 0/1	Online virtual classroom	27
Cwrs Croeso	Entry – Level 0/1	Online virtual classroom	16
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:

Gwasanaethau'r Gymraeg | Welsh Language Services
Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Hywel Dda | Hywel Dda University Health Board
Hafan Derwen
Parc Dewi Sant
Heol Jobswell | Jobswell Road
Caerfyrddin | Carmarthen
SA31 3BB

welshtranslation.services@wales.nhs.uk

Appendix 1:

Action Plan - Informing Callers about Welsh Language Service (Standard 9):

Action	Progress	Completion Date	Senior Responsible Owner
Automated System: Implement an automated telephone system that informs callers about the availability of a Welsh language service at the start of the call	The designated call channels will be implemented so that the caller will be greeted with a bilingual message and then can choose option 1 for Welsh. This will then be routed to a Welsh speaking operator.	Start Date: January 2025 Completion Date: July 2025	Director of Digital
Staff Training: Ensure all staff are trained to inform callers about the Welsh language service and to start conversations in Welsh	The designated Welsh line into the Switchboard will enable the operator to deal with the call in Welsh, as the automated service will have picked up that this is the caller's preference. The member of staff answering the call will be able to establish the nature of the call, hold an initial conversation and deal with any query that does not relate to a "specific subject" in Welsh.	Start Date: January 2025 Completion Date: March 2025	Director of Digital / Director of Communications and Engagement
Guidance and Protocols: Update all guidance documents to clearly outline the steps staff must take to comply with standard 9	All scripts, policies, and procedures to be reviewed to ensure a consistent bilingual service is delivered by the Switchboard across the Health Board. This will be done in conjunction with the Welsh Language team to ensure compliance with the Welsh language standards.	Start Date: January 2025 Completion Date: March 2025	Director of Digital

Handling Calls in Welsh (Standard 10):

Action	Progress	Completion Date	Senior Responsible Owner
<p>Initial Greeting: Ensure all calls are greeted in Welsh and that staff can handle initial conversations in Welsh</p>	<p>Refresh of operator scripts to include a bilingual Health Board message.</p> <p>Training and confidence building sessions for switchboard operators.</p> <p>All relevant staff to have completed the mandatory Welsh language awareness training on ESR</p>	<p>Start Date: January 2025 Completion Date: March 2025</p>	Director of Digital
<p>Transfer Protocols: Develop protocols for transferring calls to Welsh-speaking staff when necessary</p>	<p>During the initial conversation, if the caller requests to speak with a Welsh-speaking staff member or if the call handler identifies that the caller would be better served in Welsh, the call will be transferred.</p> <p>The call handler will inform the caller that they will be transferred to a Welsh-speaking staff member (where available) and provide a brief explanation of the transfer process.</p> <p>A list of Welsh-speaking staff members will be available to operators and will be maintained and regularly updated.</p>	<p>Start Date: November 2024 Completion Date: December 2024</p>	Director of Digital
<p>Welsh Language Training: Provide ongoing Welsh language training to staff to improve their ability to handle calls in Welsh</p>	<p>Working with the Welsh language team within the Health Board to build on current Welsh language skills of staff and promote confidence in using the Welsh language when answering calls. We will also be undertaking training with staff who have limited Welsh language knowledge to upskill them in call handling through the medium of Welsh.</p>	<p>Start Date: November 2024 Ongoing: Continuous training sessions throughout 2025</p>	Director of Digital / Director of Communications and Engagement

To ensure the successful implementation of the action plan and compliance with Welsh Language Standards 9 and 10, we will establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework. Here are the key components of our progress monitoring strategy:

Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

1. Regular Progress Reviews:

- a. **Monthly Meetings:** We will hold monthly progress review meetings with key stakeholders, including representatives from the Digital team, and Communications & Welsh language services team. These meetings will assess the progress of each action item and address any challenges or delays.
- b. **Quarterly Reports:** Detailed quarterly progress reports will be prepared and shared with senior management within the Health Board. These reports will include updates on the implementation of the action plan, any issues encountered, and corrective actions taken.

2. Performance Metrics:

- a. **Compliance Metrics:** We will establish specific performance metrics to measure compliance with standards 9 and 10 (draft attached in Appendix 1). These metrics will include the percentage of calls informed about the Welsh language service, the percentage of calls handled in Welsh, and the number of staff trained in Welsh language skills.
- b. **Patient Feedback:** We will collect feedback from callers regarding their experience with the Welsh language service. This feedback will be used to identify areas for improvement and ensure that the service meets the needs of our Welsh-speaking patients.

3. Audits:

- a. **Bi-Annual Audits:** Internal audits will be conducted bi-annually to assess compliance with the action plan and Welsh Language Standards. These audits will involve reviewing call recordings, staff training records, and patient feedback.
- b. **Audit Reports:** The findings of the internal audits will be documented in audit reports, which will be shared with senior management and the Welsh Language Commissioner.

4. Continuous Improvement:

- a. **Feedback Loop:** We will establish a feedback loop to continuously improve our Welsh language service. This will involve regularly reviewing patient feedback, audit findings, and performance metrics to identify areas for improvement and implement necessary changes.
- b. **Ongoing Training:** We will provide ongoing Welsh language training to staff to ensure they have the skills and confidence to handle calls in Welsh effectively.

By implementing this monitoring and evaluation framework, we will ensure that the action plan is executed effectively, and that Hywel Dda University Health Board achieves full compliance with Welsh Language Standards 9 and 10.