



PWYLLGOR

People, Organisation Development and Culture COMMITTEE

DYDDIAD Y CYFARFOD: DATE OF MEETING:	03 April 2023
TEITL YR ADRODDIAD: TITLE OF REPORT:	Level 4 Programme for Therapies Assistant Practitioners
CYFARWYDDWR ARWEINIOL: LEAD DIRECTOR:	Alison Shakeshaft, Director of Therapies and Health Science
SWYDDOG ADRODD: REPORTING OFFICER:	Will Oliver, Assistant Director of Therapies and Health Science

Pwrpas yr Adroddiad (dewiswch fel yn addas)

Purpose of the Report (select as appropriate)

Er Sicrwydd/For Assurance

ADRODDIAD SCAA

SBAR REPORT

Sefyllfa / Situation

Hywel Dda University Health Board (HDdUHB) in partnership with the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) has developed the first Level 4 Therapies Assistant Practitioner programme in Wales. Following the recruitment of the first local cohort, in 2022, discussions are in progress to make this programme a Once for Wales solution available to all Health and Social Care organisations. This report updates the People, Organisational Development and Culture Committee (PODCC) on the development and delivery of this education programme; this programme is a key pillar in assuring the Health Board that the practice of these support workers is underpinned by appropriate education and meets the required all Wales standard.

Cefndir / Background

The Therapy services (physiotherapy, occupational therapy, nutrition and dietetics, speech and language therapy and podiatry) have a long history of employing staff in support roles at Agenda for Change bands 3 and 4. These staff have undertaken a range of therapeutic and technical roles underpinned by a range of education programmes.

When HDdUHB was constituted as a Local Health Board in 2009 there were no band 4 staff (Assistant Practitioners) in nursing roles. For that reason, there was a strong focus on developing level 3 and level 4 education to ensure that new band 4 nursing support roles were introduced with strong education governance wrapped around them. Further attention to this agenda came with the introduction of the NHS Wales Skills and Development Framework for Healthcare Support Workers supporting Nursing and the Allied Health Professions in 2015. This set an expectation that all roles in these professional groupings would be underpinned by appropriate education, specifying both the volume of education (credits) and the educational level (from the Credit and Qualification framework for Wales (CQFW):

Band 2: Minimum of 46 credits at level 2*

Band 3: Minimum of 58 credits at level 3

Band 4: Minimum of 120 credits at level 4

(*It is worth noting that in Therapies there are no band 2 clinical posts).

All Wales scoping work led by the former Workforce Education and Development service (WEDS) commenced in 2015 and it quickly became apparent that the majority of staff in existing assistant therapy roles, while having a range of traditional education and training (e.g. profession specific short courses and local in service training) did not have the requisite qualifications and that profession specific qualifications were not available at either levels 3 or 4. This picture was replicated across all Health Boards in Wales. Supported by WEDS, each all Wales professional peer group commenced developing the appropriate level 3 qualification (given the need to ensure a progression route into level 4) while an all Wales, multi-professional group was convened by WEDS and developed a multi-professional, level 4 diploma that was approved by Qualification Wales in 2017. The larger professions (physiotherapy and occupational therapy) developed their level 3 programmes first, with the level 3 programmes in speech and language therapy still being at the development stage.

In 2019 Welsh Government funded the appointment of Band 4 Therapies Assistant Practitioners (TAPs), particularly to support rehabilitation activities. It became apparent that the approved qualification had not been progressed for delivery by any health or education organisation in Wales. HDdUHB Therapies leads and Workforce and Organisation Development education colleagues entered into dialogue with senior management at UWTSD and developed a Memorandum of Understanding to develop and run the programme. This process was delayed due to the pandemic but gathered pace in 2021 and delivery of the first, 18-month programme commenced in early 2022.

During 2021 and 2022, Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) engaged with a number of providers to provide the programme offered in other areas of Wales. Given the multi-professional nature of the programme, reflected in the number of optional units, no other providers would commit to running the programme without knowing exactly which units would be included prior to student intake. Only UWTSD was prepared to be flexible on this point and an all-Wales Group was established in late 2022 develop this as a Once for Wales programme, delivered by UWTSD.

The group is Chaired by Trish Mathias-Lloyd, HDdUHD Clinical Programme Manager, who was also instrumental in getting the programme running and supporting it in its first year. This approach is supported by The Therapies Directorate in HDdUHB; while it may decrease the number of available places to the Health Board it will lead to a larger pool of applicants in future years and ensure the sustainability of the programme. The Group is taking a consortium approach to deliver the Diploma in collaboration with all the NHS Wales Health Boards (except Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board) and Velindre NHS Trust, Torfaen County Borough Council, Monmouthshire County Council, Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion County Councils, Social Care Wales (SCW) and UWTSD. It is engaging with both primary, secondary, and tertiary care colleagues.

Asesiad / Assessment

The programme was created to support both multi and uni professional Therapies roles. The diploma contains a range of topics which include communication, research, the importance of wellbeing and scientific knowledge. It takes a work-based learning approach with a range of assessment approaches including observations, reflections, self-development and a variety of formal assignments such as essays and reports. The diploma is worth 120 credits. 95 of these credits are delivered by UWTSD over a series of 7 units:

- Study skills
- Developing Therapeutic Relationships
- Professional Practice
- Health Research
- Science in Therapeutic Practice

- Health and Wellbeing
- Clinical Decision Making

Some of these units have been combined to be delivered and assessed together. There is also an additional study skills module that students undertake prior to commencement of the units. The remaining 25 credits are delivered within the workplace.

During the first year there were some teething problems as the programme tried to accommodate staff release days from a number of services and the students acclimatised to the rigours of level 4 education. These issues were addressed promptly, with the University noting that many students were initially anxious about meeting a minimum standard when they were actually exceeding expectations.

Twenty two candidates started on the programme and there are 15 staff still participating:

- 1x Podiatry
- 1x Dietetics
- 5x Physiotherapy
- 1x Occupational Therapy
- 7 Multi-professional Therapies Assistant Practitioners (TAPs).

In terms of the seven who are no longer on the programme, five dropped out for a variety of personal reasons, all of whom plan to re-join when their circumstances allow. The other two left the programme having secured places in-year on new part-time physiotherapy and occupational therapy programmes in Wales

As part of the Once for Wales Level 4 Therapies Assistant Practitioner Diploma HDdUHB is looking to support a further 15-20 candidates this year with an additional 15 candidates coming from other health boards in Wales.

To support this the Health Board is currently appointing to a secondment opportunity for a therapist to work within UWTSD for one day a week to support the development, delivery, assessment and accreditation of the programme.

Following the completion in June 2023 of the first cohort, the Health and Care Professions Council has advised that it will review the programme to establish its use as Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) against part or all of the first year (level 4) pre-registration therapies programmes to facilitate career progression.

Argymhelliad / Recommendation

The People, Organisational Development and Culture Committee is asked to receive assurance that the education underpinning Therapy Assistant Practitioner practice is progressing well within the Health Board. It is also asked to note the Health Board's pivotal role, in partnership with UWTSD in developing this programme on a Once for Wales basis.

Amcanion: (rhaid cwblhau) Objectives: (must be completed)	
Committee ToR Reference: Cyfeirnod Cylch Gorchwyl y Pwyllgor:	Consider the implications for workforce planning arising from the development of the Health Board's strategies and plans or those of its stakeholders and partners, including those arising from joint (sub) committees of the Board.
Cyfeirnod Cofrestr Risg Datix a Sgôr Cyfredol: Datix Risk Register Reference and Score:	NA
Safon(au) Gofal ac Iechyd: Health and Care Standard(s):	2. Safe Care 7.1 Workforce
Amcanion Strategol y BIP: UHB Strategic Objectives:	1. Putting people at the heart of everything we do
Amcanion Cynllunio Planning Objectives	1F HR Offer (induction, policies, employee relations, access to training)
Amcanion Llesiant BIP: UHB Well-being Objectives: Hyperlink to HDdUHB Well-being Objectives Annual Report 2018-2019	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:	Contained within the body of the report.
Rhestr Termiau: Glossary of Terms:	Contained within the body of the report.
Partïon / Pwyllgorau â ymgynhorwyd ymlaen llaw y Pwyllgor Ceisiadau Gofal Sylfaenol: Parties / Committees consulted prior to Committee:	Not Applicable

Effaith: (rhaid cwblhau) Impact: (must be completed)	
Ariannol / Gwerth am Arian: Financial / Service:	The programme sits on the Qualification Wales and as such the UWTSD draws down apprenticeship funding to support the programmes delivery

Ansawdd / Gofal Claf: Quality / Patient Care:	The programme supports safe and effective healthcare delivery in therapies
Gweithlu: Workforce:	The programme supports therapies workforce development
Risg: Risk:	No risks associated with this development
Cyfreithiol: Legal:	NA
Enw Da: Reputational:	NA
Gyfrinachedd: Privacy:	NA
Cydraddoldeb: Equality:	The programme will allow staff to progress their career aspirations and facilitate the development of local staff