

Three-Yearly Assurance Report on compliance with the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act (NSLWA): Report for Welsh Government 2018 – 2021	
1. Health board	Hywel Dda University Health Board (HDdUHB)
2. Reporting period	<p>The reporting period is 6th April 2018-5th April 2021.</p> <p><i>NB Due to the timeframe for closing serious incident reports, the three-yearly reports that go to Boards in May 2021 will only include data relating to serious incidents closed by 28th February 2021. A final, updated version of the report - including all serious incident reports that occurred prior to April 5th 2021 - which should by then be closed - will be presented to the Board and then Welsh Government in September 2021.</i></p>
3. Requirements of Section 25A	<p><u>HEALTH BOARD DUTY UNDER SECTION 25A OF THE NSLWA</u></p> <p>Section 25A of the NSLWA sets out the responsibilities of each Health Board to ensure that they have robust workforce plans, recruitment strategies, structures and processes in place to make certain that there are appropriate nurse staffing levels across their organisations. This first duty of the Act came into effect in April 2017. The initial focus at this time was on preparing the 30 plus adult medical and surgical wards for the commencement and implementation of Section 25B and C of the Act in April 2018.</p> <p>At the time of commencement of the full requirements of the NSLWA (April 2018) this HDdUHB took the decision that all nurse staffing level reviews, undertaken in any nursing service, should seek to apply the principles of the triangulated approach described within Section 25C of the NSLWA as far as possible. Although the statutory requirement to undertake nurse staffing level reviews in this way only applied to acute medical and surgical adult wards at that time, as reported in the HDdUHB 2018/19 NSLWA annual assurance report (Appendix 1 for link to report), the Health Board endorsed this as the approach to be used as the framework for all reviews of nurse staffing levels.</p> <p>This approach requires that information related to three sources need to be shown to have been taken into account :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient acuity/dependency/workload (using validated tools wherever possible) • Care Quality indicators (pertinent to the service in question) • Professional judgement (as it applies within the particular clinical setting under review); <p>In addition, nationally endorsed professional nursing workforce guidance/standards are used to underpin the review processes wherever they exist.</p> <p>Each of the three NSLWA annual assurance reports to date (see Appendix 1 for links to each Annual Assurance report) have provided detail of the many Health Board nursing services which have undertaken/commenced reviews of their nurse staffing levels using the above approach over the past 3 years, reflecting the Health Board's commitment to its statutory duties under Section 25A of the Act. The catalyst for these reviews has come from a variety of sources e.g. performance in relation to Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) published 'interim nurse staffing principles' (district nursing); a move to a new care environment (neonatal services); challenges in</p>

recruitment to current workforce models (health visiting); changes in patient acuity and dependency profile (community hospital services); changes to service models and patient pathways (stroke and respiratory services); and changes to patient numbers and service demands (emergency departments).

Once undertaken and revised nurse staffing levels have been calculated, these reviews have instigated a variety of responses to ensure that sufficient nursing staff can then be provided in order to care for our patients sensitively. In addition to the obvious response of seeking additional funding and recruiting additional staff if the calculation has shown a requirement for greater nursing workforce capacity, the response have also recognised the challenges posed by the current nursing workforce deficits and so have included more creative responses. These responses have included making changes where appropriate to the skill mix within the team; development of new roles within the Support Worker workforce, using the HEIW All Wales Guidelines for Delegation (2020); improved efficiencies in the way the workforce is utilised and rostered within the service; and making changes to roles within the team and enhancing the clinical leadership capacity of the team.

In addition to these reviews, prompted by specific catalysts arising within individual services, the Health Board had commenced a systematic programme of review of the nurse staffing levels across all its nursing services: Although this has been subject to delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this programme will be recommenced during 2021/22.

The challenging nursing workforce position, nationally as well as locally, during the 2018-21 period has required innovative approaches to nursing workforce planning over the past three years. Over the past three years, the Health Board has taken forward several strategic programmes aimed at addressing the challenge of ensuring a sufficient nursing workforce across all nursing services e.g.

- The Health Board's 'Grow Your Own' programme which aims to support suitably qualified Support Worker employees to undertake registered nurse educational programmes either in a part time capacity (via Open University, Swansea University and University of South Wales flexible programmes) : The Health Board has 73 such students, distributed across all four fields of practice, on one such programme as of February 2021
- In order to address some of the Health Board's specific geographically-driven registered nurse shortages, a strategic collaboration has been developed over the past two years between the Health Board and Aberystwyth and Swansea University's. This collaboration, which has been supported by HEIW, will see the first Ceredigion-based registered nurse degree programme cohort commence their studies in September 2021
- In order to support registered nurse recruitment and retention and for HDdUHB to strengthen its position as an employer of choice, a structured career development programme which builds on the Health Board's robust preceptorship programme for newly qualified nurses, has commenced during 2020/21. The First Five Years programme offers a pathway for registered nurses to develop a strong foundation to their subsequent professional careers
- The STAR leadership development programme, established in 2019, is now recruit into its third cohort of clinical nurse leaders. This programme gives these leaders the opportunity to develop and enhance the skills and knowledge they are then able to utilise creatively within their (increasingly) supervisory and supernumerary leadership roles

- Development of Band 4 Assistant Practitioner roles: there are now around 50 such posts working within and in support of the nursing services across the Health Board, with several more under development using the HEIW (2020) All Wales Guidelines for Delegation as the underpinning framework.
- Clinical healthcare learning opportunities e.g. significantly increased access to appropriate Agored qualifications for Support Workers working in focussed roles such as Frailty or rehabilitation support worker post appointees require a Level 3 qualification on or immediately after appointment
- Apprenticeship Academy: Nearly fifty apprentices started out on the first intake of this (potentially) 8 year programme in 2019. The programme aims to support the participants to become (mainly) registered nurses whilst remaining in Health Board employment and undertaking increasingly complex support worker roles. There was no intake in 2020 due to the pandemic but the success of the first cohort (and their invaluable contribution to the Health Board's COVID-19 response) means that there are no shortage of applicants for the planned September 2021 cohort.
- Many opportunities for new support roles to work either within, or in support of, nursing teams have emerged over the past three years and in particular during the pandemic period. Aimed at enabling nursing registrants to focus on the work that only they can do, roles such as Family Liaison Officers, Administrative Assistants, Pharmacy Technicians and Psychology Assistants are being developed and evaluated to assess the potential contribution they can make as part of a wider nursing team, in delivering high quality nursing care
- A significant suite of resources made available and aimed at supporting staff to maintain and restore their mental health and well-being , particularly during the challenges of the pandemic period

PREPARATIONS MADE BY HEALTH BOARD FOR EXTENSION TO THE NSLWA

In February 2021, the CNO issued confirmation that Senedd Cymru had passed the required regulations to extend the duties under Section 25B of the NSLWA to include paediatric in-patient wards from October 2021. The Health Board has been preparing for this anticipated extension for the past two years and is in a strong position to ensure that it will be able to comply with the requirements for these additional (2) wards when the extension commences.

The paediatric services have been working closely with the corporate nursing team and, through a Task group established within the paediatric services, have been systematically working through an action plan to ensure that: the review and calculation of the required nurse staffing levels using the triangulated methodology has been undertaken; the daily capture of patient acuity data is well embedded; a process for the capture and detailed scrutiny of quality indicators and nursing care complaints is in place; the system to record when nurse staffing levels are not maintained is in place and the data is being captured on a daily basis; the system to inform children and parents about the nurse staffing levels is ready to be implemented; the Operating Framework for the paediatric services has been drafted; the implications of the NSL calculations have been reflected in education commission nurse and the Health Board's IMTP for 2021/22; and that the Board is informed (April 2021) about the state of readiness of the service to meet the new requirements of the Act.

In relation to the preparatory work being undertaken for the extension of the Act to other services, although there are no other imminent extensions planned, the Health Board has sought to very actively support all work streams of the All Wales Nurse Staffing programme over the past three years. Of the five work streams of the national programme, officers of this Health Board currently hold the chair of

two of the Work stream groups, the vice-chair of two of the groups and contribute significantly to the fifth work stream. In addition, the Health Board has led and contributed significantly to several ad hoc Task groups that have been undertaken bespoke pieces of work within the programme over the past three years. This active engagement and support for the whole programme has contributed significantly to the overall progress that NHS Wales is making with the programme of work; and has also enabled the Health Board to participate fully in the development, and any piloting, of tools and guidance being taken forward within the structured work programmes of each of the work streams

HEALTH BOARD COVID-19 RESPONSE IN RELATION TO OVERARCHING DUTY UNDER THE NSLWA

As the requirements of the COVID-19 pandemic emerged in late 2019/20, it became clear that all nursing services were going to be impacted upon and that meeting the overall duty of the NSLWA as laid out in Section 25A was going to be a significant challenge.

The letter issued to Executive Nurse Directors by the Chief Nursing Officer / Nurse Director NHS Wales (CNO) in March 2020 ('Clarity on COVID19 disruption to Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016') recognised the challenge that lay ahead. The letter stated "..... your duty under section 25A of the Act will remain an important factor in how you are deploying your nursing staff across the entirety of your health boards wherever nursing care is provided or commissioned. Even during a period where "providing sufficient nurses" will seem like a foreign concept, your responsibility of minimising risk to patient safety through applying your professional judgement will remain".

In relation to nurse staffing levels-related work the COVID-19 pandemic has required, amongst other thing:

- The rapid establishment of new services, either nurse-led or requiring input by nursing staff, in response to the pandemic i.e. Command Centre, COVID-19 Testing Units; Mass Vaccination Centres and Field Hospitals;
- The establishment of separate critical care environments for COVID-19 and non COVID-19 patients within each acute hospital site with the ability to meet unprecedented level of critical care capacity demand;
- The skills assessment of large numbers of nursing staff to facilitate their effective deployment when services categorised as non-essential were stepped down during the first wave of COVID-19;
- Significant changes in patient pathway at the front door of all acute hospital sites requiring separation of COVID-19 and non COVID-19 patient pathways
- Significant changes to patient pathways and bed numbers in in-patient wards across the Health Board (i.e.in adult, paediatric and mental health settings) including converting some wards to 'COVID-19 only' wards
- Unprecedented levels of community nursing support to maintain elderly patients in their commissioned care placements during COVID-19 outbreaks in care homes affecting both patients and staff

These changes have required the review and reset of the required nurse staffing levels within established services, together with the urgent calculation of the nurse staffing level required for new services all of which has had to take place at speed and often without any underpinning patient acuity, workload or quality data to inform the triangulated approach to these calculations: professional judgement has therefore had to inform the nurse staffing levels in these services to a significant extent.

The Health Board's response to these specific challenges for its major services within the context of the NSLWA was outlined in a paper entitled 'Calculating and Maintaining the Nurse Staffing Levels' which was received and agreed by the Board on May 28th 2020 (see Appendix 1 for link to SBAR)

In order to ensure that the requirement that the Executive Nurse Director exercised their professional judgement to minimise the risks to patient safety during these extraordinary times could be achieved, a series of measures were put in place from the beginning of the 2020/21 period, many of which are ongoing at time of this report. These include:

- weekly contact between the DoNQPE and all professional leads during the peak periods of COVID-19 waves one and two;
- the establishment of a system of regular, 1-2 weekly review of nurse staffing levels between each in-patient/ community Head of Nursing and the Health Board's Nurse Staffing Programme team to provide support for review/ recalculation of nurse staffing levels in response to frequently changing operational circumstances
- the use of the pandemic management governance structures to communicate and agree urgent operational responses to maintain 'sufficient nurses' in response to specific crisis points when all other reasonable steps have been taken e.g. two community hospitals merging to maintain capacity and patient safety;
- regular communication to the Quality and Safety Assurance Committee and the Board regarding the actions being taken to ensure that the statutory requirements of the NSLWA were being maintained
- the detailed review and adjustment of nurse staffing levels for all acute hospital nursing services in March /April 2020 as virtually every patient pathway was affected and many services required the establishment of both COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 patient streams.
- A more conventional approach, including detailed discussions with the DoNQPE, to finalise the agreed nurse staffing levels, in the autumn of 2020 when the usual biannual nurse staffing level review and recalculation cycle of the Section 25B wards took place: This also gave an opportunity to formally reset the designation of wards to which Section 25B pertained (using the guidance contained in a second letter from the CNO ('Update on COVID-19 disruption to NSLWA 2016' issued October 15th 2020) and which reflected the learning that had taken place to date in relation to the inclusion/exclusion criteria underpinning Section 25B of the Act)
- the development of a HDdUHB 'nurse staffing level escalation framework' to ensure appropriate risk assessment, clear decision making and appropriate management steps were in place when escalated nurse staffing levels became inevitable

In demonstrating its response under the overarching duties of the NSLWA, the corporate and operational nursing teams have worked closely with the workforce and organisational development (WOD) directorate teams to assess requirements and support the recruitment initiatives and campaigns that have been led by the WOD directorate. The steps taken have included:

- methodical assessment (using triangulated approach wherever possible) of required nurse staffing levels to identify workforce needs;
- supporting the interviews of hundreds of potential recruits, both registrant and HCSW; and contributing to the induction training of new Support Workers;

- developing new systems for effectively ‘placing’ new recruits to services in greatest need; and
- systematically reviewing performance to support fixed term contract extensions where appropriate.

The teams have worked together to explore opportunities to increase the registered nursing workforce in particular. Some examples of the actions taken include:

- Contacting registrants who returned to the temporary NMC register in Spring 2020 - 18 registrants accepted job offers as a result
- Individual contact with over 150 ‘inactive’ registered nurses who held nurse bank agreements to encourage them into registrant roles during the COVID-19 period at least;
- Individual phone calls to recently retired registrants to explore possible return to work opportunities

These and other actions have resulted in an additional 88 WTE registered nurses in post in January 2021 (compared to January 2020) and an additional 71 registered nurses with nurse bank agreements in place. However, despite these efforts, as the budgeted establishment for registered nurse posts has increased by 65 WTE over this time, the impact on the registered nurse deficit across the Health Board’s nursing services has been small (i.e. a reduction in the deficit by 23 WTE), with the Health Board currently holding 408 WTE registered nurse post vacancies

TABLE 1	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
<p>4.Date annual assurance report of compliance with the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act presented to Board</p>	<p>The HDdUHB received an annual assurance report in relation to the extent of compliance with the NSLWA during 2018/19, on May 30th 2019.</p> <p>In addition, both the Board and the Quality, Safety and Experience Committee (QSEAC) - to whom the Board formally delegated the responsibility for monitoring compliance with the NSLWA – received regular papers outlining the progress being made in strengthening the Health Board’s response to the NSLWA; and the risks</p>	<p>The HDdUHB received an annual assurance report in relation to the extent of compliance with the NSLWA during 2019/20, on May 28th 2020 2019.</p> <p>In addition, both the Board and the Quality, Safety and Experience Committee (QSEAC) - to whom the Board formally delegated the responsibility for monitoring compliance with the NSLWA – received regular papers outlining the progress being made in strengthening the Health Board’s response to the NSLWA; and the risks identified and the actions being taken to mitigate these.</p>	<p>The HDdUHB will receive an annual assurance report in relation to the extent of compliance with the NSLWA during 2020/21, on May 27th 2021.</p> <p>In addition, both the Board and the Quality, Safety and Experience Committee (QSEAC) - to whom the Board formally delegated the responsibility for monitoring compliance with the NSLWA – received regular papers outlining the progress being made in strengthening the Health Board’s response to the NSLWA; the risks identified and the actions being taken to mitigate these; and, specifically in this period, the approach to ensuring continued compliance with the NSLWA during the pandemic period.</p> <p>The date when these various reports were presented, the outcome from the Board/Committees consideration of the paper together with a link to the original report are to be found at Appendix 1 to this report.</p>

	<p>identified and the actions being taken to mitigate these.</p> <p>The date when these various reports were presented, the outcome from the Board/Committees consideration of the paper together with a link to the original report are to be found at Appendix 1 to this report.</p>	<p>The date when these various reports were presented, the outcome from the Board/Committees consideration of the paper together with a link to the original report are to be found at Appendix 1 to this report.</p>	
<p>Number of adult acute <u>medical</u> inpatient wards where section 25B applies</p>	<p>Number of Section 25B medical wards at highest point during year = 19 (May 2018)</p> <p>Number of Section 25B medical wards at lowest point during year = 19 (Nov 2018)</p>	<p>Number of Section 25B wards at highest point during year = 19 (May 2019)</p> <p>Number of Section 25B medical wards at lowest point during year = 18 (Nov 2019)</p>	<p>Number of Section 25B wards at highest point during year = 17 (Nov 2020)</p> <p>Number of Section 25B wards at lowest point during year = 14 (May 2020)</p>
<p>Number of adult acute <u>surgical</u> inpatient wards where section 25B applies</p>	<p>Number of Section 25B surgical wards at highest point during year = 13 (May 2018)</p> <p>Number of Section 25B surgical wards at lowest point during year = 12 (Nov 2018)</p>	<p>Number of Section 25B surgical wards at highest point during year = 12 (May 2019)</p> <p>Number of Section 25B surgical wards at lowest point during year = 12 (Nov 2019)</p>	<p>Number of Section 25B surgical wards at highest point during year = 11 (Nov 2020)</p> <p>Number of Section 25B surgical wards at lowest point during year = 5 (May 2020)</p>
<p>Number of occasions where the nurse staffing level recalculated in addition to the bi-annual calculation for all wards subject to Section 25B</p>	<p>Fourteen wards reviewed / recalculated outside the biannual calculation cycles due to the availability of additional data to support the triangulated methodology in the Summer of 2018 (as reported in 2018/19 Annual Assurance report</p>	<p>Two wards reviewed / recalculated outside the biannual calculation cycles due to concerns relating to the acuity and/or quality indicator data available for these wards (as reported in 2019/20 Annual Assurance report presented to HDdUHB Board meeting in May 2020)</p>	<p>Following a 'desktop' review and recalculation cycle in the Spring of 2020, a further 'professional judgement' review of the nurse staffing levels for all Section 25B wards was undertaken in the summer of 2020 to assess the need for changes as bed numbers on wards were adjusted to accommodate social distancing requirements.</p> <p>In addition, a system of 2 weekly monitoring of the emergence of any triggers that would require a formal review of the NSL for all Section 25B wards was put in place (in addition to the</p>

	<p>presented to HDdUHB Board meeting May 2019)</p>		<p>thrice daily operational systems that are in place to support the need to implement any day to day variations in nurse staffing levels in response to patients' care needs on each ward on any given day).</p> <p>Planned NSL's were revised on the basis of professional judgement and in response to the exceptional operational circumstances that prevailed due e.g. to changes in patient acuity/COVID-19 outbreaks/surge bed requirements etc. on a frequent basis during the COVID-19 second wave.</p>
<p>5.Changing the purpose of the adult acute medical and surgical wards to support the management of COVID ; or opening new COVID wards.</p>	<p><u>IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON HEALTH BOARD DUTIES UNDER SECTION 25B</u></p> <p>During April and May 2020/21, a total of 12 wards (see Appendix 2 for full list) to which Section 25B had pertained throughout 2019/20, were repurposed and re-designated as COVID-19 wards and therefore no longer met the Section 25B inclusion criteria, as directed by CNO in her letter of March 2020 i.e. " wards repurposed as novel wards to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic would be considered an exception under the definition of an adult medical ward and therefore would not be subject to the prescribed triangulated calculation methodology".</p> <p>Thus, for the first three months (i.e. during the first COVID-10 pandemic 'wave') of the 2020/21 reporting period, there were 19 wards (listed in Appendix 2) within this Health Board to which the requirements of Section 25B pertained for the majority of the time. With the exception of one ward (i.e. Dewi Ward, Glangwili General Hospital which had been a rehabilitation focussed ward was re-designated as an acute adult medical ward in April 2020), each of these 19 wards commenced the 2020/21 period with a nurse staffing level which had been calculated (in Autumn 2019) using the prescribed triangulated approach and a nursing establishment funded to provide for a Whole Time Equivalent nursing workforce to be able to deliver the agreed roster.</p> <p>In the Spring of 2020, these 19 wards would normally have been due to undergo one of their twice-yearly formal reviews of their nurse staffing levels, in line with the requirements of the NSLWA. However, the CNO letter referenced above reminded Health Boards that it was 'within (their) respective discretion to proceed with or cease work on the (then) imminently scheduled biannual re-calculation of adult medical and surgical wards'. To that end, this Health Board suspended its Spring 2020 nurse staffing level review/recalculation cycle and instead undertook a 'table-top' review of the quality indicator and patient acuity data for Quarters 3 and 4 of 2019/20 for the 19 Section 25B wards. As a result of this exercise, the nurse staffing levels were revised for a small number of Section 25B wards where pandemic-driven changes were judged to have impacted on the required nurse staffing level. The Health Board were advised of this adapted approach to the 'Spring 2020' nurse staffing level review and recalculation process in the SBAR (Calculating and maintaining the nurse staffing levels during the COVID-19 pandemic) that was presented to the Board in May 2020 (Appendix 1 for link to this paper)</p> <p>It should be noted that both during this first 'wave' and indeed for much of the 2020/21 year, the professional judgement of nursing leaders across the HDdUHB has been relied on significantly in the constantly evolving operational situations that have been encountered. This situation was exactly as anticipated by the CNO in her March 2020 letter to Executive Nurse Directors referenced</p>		

previously. The systems the Health Board put in place and described in Section 3 above have however enabled early recognition of, and response to, the need for variations in the planned nurse staffing levels for Section 25B (and indeed, all other) wards and services throughout 2020/21.

That planned rosters may need to be 'appropriately varied' on 'rare occasions' and in light of the complexities of the clinical environments, is recognised within the NSLWA Statutory Guidance (Paragraph 14). It is this principle which has been applied during 2020/21 as the exceptionality of the circumstances presented by the pandemic have unfolded. This has been particularly true during the two significant 'waves' of the pandemic i.e. March-May 2020 and November 2020-February 2021 when planned nurse staffing levels have had to be adjusted on an almost daily basis in response to COVID-19 outbreaks, staff absences, surge bed requirements, ward mergers etc.

During the period between the two 'waves', there was a period of relative 'calm' within acute adult wards and it was agreed by Executive Nurse Directors that it would be appropriate to go ahead with a national patient acuity data capture exercise for Section 25B wards in July 2020: This data was analysed and shared with the Health Board teams in the usual way by colleagues from the national Nurse Staffing Programme Team

It should be highlighted here that, by the early summer of 2020, it was becoming clear that the guidance on the Section 25B inclusion/exclusion criteria for wards issued by CNO in March 2020 would need to be reviewed in the light of the experiences during the first wave of the pandemic. The revised guidance, issued by CNO in October 2020 and based on learning gained in relation to how patients with COVID-19 were best managed in an acute hospital, meant that Section 25B was now judged to pertain to a much larger cohort of wards than had been the case in April 2020, even though many of these wards were now caring for at least some patients with, or recovering from, COVID-19 infection.

Utilising the July 2020 patient acuity data, together with the care quality indicator data and other patient and staff related data; and reassessing which wards, using the revised inclusion/exclusion criteria, would now fall under Section 25B, a relatively 'normal' nurse staffing level review and recalculation cycle took place in early autumn 2020, the outputs of which were reported to the Board in November 2020. By this point in the year, only 3 in-patient wards were specifically designated as 'COVID-19' wards with 28 wards now designated as Section 25B wards. It should however be noted, that the required nurse staffing levels for many of these Section 25B wards were influenced by 'pandemic-driven' changes that had been made to the patient cohorts they were caring for and thus that the nurse staffing level changes in many wards were likely to be 'temporary' in nature. Appendix 2 lists the wards that were designated as Section 25B in November 2020.

OPENING NEW COVID WARDS/FACILITIES

In critical care services, plans for nurse staffing levels required at various levels of escalated demands on critical care capacity were agreed and issued in a joint statement endorsed across all four UK nations and issued in March 2020 i.e. 'The joint statement on developing immediate critical care nursing capacity'). This statement included the potential of experienced critical care nurses being

asked to work in a coordinating role, leading a team delivering care to several patients at a time: a model for care delivery not previously tested in this care setting.

At the same time, all nursing staff with previous and current skills in intensive or recovery care were required to refresh both their theory and their practical skills in intensive care nursing to be ready to be deployed into critical care as patient numbers increased. Over 150 staff (nurses and physiotherapists) responded and prepared themselves to be deployed in this way.

In the event, during the first wave of the pandemic in HDdUHB, patient levels did not reach the point where the 'team' model of staffing became required and it was possible to maintain staffing levels at standard critical care nurse staffing levels.

Even between the first and second wave of COVID-19 infections, the challenge of providing both COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 pathways for critically ill patients, often in newly created, separate environments to maintain infection prevention standards, have required the additional deployed staff to sustain staffing levels at agreed standards

During the second wave of the pandemic, the CNO issued a second letter advising on the staffing standards expected for critical care nurse staffing (CNO Letter, November 2020 'Critical care nurse staffing ratios') and, reflecting lessons learnt during the first wave, the CNO endorsed the staffing levels proposed jointly by Intensive Care Society and the UK Critical Care Nursing Alliance. Within this Health Board, with the exception of a couple of extremely challenging days, the nurse staffing ratios endorsed in the November 2020 CNO letter were adhered to throughout the second wave, although the operational management challenge of achieving this was immense.

In relation to the nursing care of patients requiring urgent planned surgery during the pandemic, throughout the course of the 2020/21 year, the Health Board maintained many of these urgent patient pathways through commissioning the whole capacity of a private hospital within the Health Board footprint. Specialist outpatient capacity was also commissioned in this venue.

The agreed nurse staffing levels were supported by the private hospital's nursing workforce and supplemented with Health Board nurses to provide specialist expertise and guidance.

The other specific challenge that the pandemic brought and that should be highlighted in this report was the development and opening of three Field Hospital services as in-patient facilities during 2020/21. The staffing levels for these new services were calculated using the principles of the 'triangulated methodology' and the nurse staffing levels arrived at were agreed by the 'Designated Person' (DoNQPE) before being implemented in practice. The nurse staffing levels for the three Field Hospitals which have become functional during 2020/21 were calculated initially using the triangulated methodology (using 'assumed' patient acuity levels) and benchmarked against the nurse staffing levels of our community hospitals. Registered nursing staff for these new facilities were a mix of bank staff, agency staff and 'volunteers' who expressed a willingness to be deployed. The registrant staff were supported by HCSW, many of whom were new recruits during the COVID-19 period, supplemented by more experienced HCSW 'volunteers' who were deployed from other services. These 'patchwork' teams, coming together in the strangest of converted venues (i.e. sports facilities and holiday resorts) required highly effective leadership to support them in establishing themselves as a team. Maintaining staffing levels was, unsurprisingly, a challenge as was rostering to ensure that there were always substantively employed nursing staff available to work alongside the high number of temporary staff who made up the teams.

	<p>However, despite all the challenges, as patients were admitted to the hospitals to receive their care, patient acuity, care quality and professional judgement indicators were monitored on a 2 weekly basis to ensure that any requirement to revise the agreed nurse staffing levels would be identified at an early stage. In the event, the predicted staffing levels appeared to be appropriate; the patient feedback on their experience of a 'stay' in a Field Hospital' has been wholly positive; and the HIW report of their review visit to the Field Hospitals was positive.</p> <p>Two of the three Field Hospitals are now closed, with one site 'mothballed' and the other decommissioned, whilst the third Field Hospitals will close and be 'hibernated' in mid-April 2021, allowing for the potential of it to be put back into use during any third wave of the pandemic.</p> <p>Additional detail relating to other nursing services and their response to the COVID-19 pandemic can be found in the Health Board's NSLWA annual assurance report for 2020/21 (Section 4) (See link in Appendix 1)</p>
<p>6.The process and methodology used to inform the triangulated approach</p>	<p><u>CALCUATING THE NURSE STAFFING LEVELS IN WARDS WHERE SECTION 25B PERTAINS</u></p> <p>As would be expected, during this three year reporting period, the process and methodology to inform the triangulated approach to calculating the nurse staffing levels has evolved as confidence in meeting the requirements of the NSLWA has grown and learning has informed each successive cycle.</p> <p>The processes adopted by this Health Board in seeking to meet the requirements of Section 25B and C of the NSLWA when calculating the Nurse Staffing Levels for all wards to which these Sections pertain are described in the Health Board's policy titled 'Professional nurse staffing standards and escalation plan for in-patient acute services' .</p> <p>This long standing policy was revised to reflect the requirements of the NSLWA in when Sections 25B /C commenced in April 2018. It was further reviewed to reflect the early learning from implementing the NSLWA, in January 2019. It is currently being reviewed again (though the timeline for this has been delayed due the pandemic) to enable an overarching policy to be produced and thus to be able to accommodate the extension to the NSLWA in October 2021 for paediatric in-patient wards. The structure of the policy has been revised during the current review in order to enable the current and any future extensions to the Act to be more readily accommodated. This document clearly states the Health Board's policy to apply a 26.9% uplift (to allow for staff absences for annual sick and study leave) when calculating the required Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) establishments; and to have at least one WTE Senior Sister/Charge Nurse who is supernumerary to the planned roster for each ward. These principles are fully embedded and applied within the processes used across the organisation when calculating the WTE establishments required.</p> <p>The statutory responsibility to calculate the nurse staffing level using the triangulated approach requires that the 'designated person' must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise professional judgement • Use an evidence-based workforce planning tool • Take account of care quality indicators that are sensitive to the provision of nursing care

These requirements are specified within the Health Board's NSLWA 'Operating Framework' policy referred to above. Assurance that the agreed methodology has been complied with is sought by the Health Board's Quality and Safety Assurance Committee to whom the responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the NSLWA within the Health Board was formally delegated in November 2018 (see Appendix 1 for link). The many reports to QSEAC during the reporting period, together with the statutory annual presentation of the Nurse Staffing Levels for all Section 25B wards to the Board itself in November 2018, November 2019 and November 2020 demonstrate the compliance with these requirements (See Appendix 1 for links to all Board and QSEAC papers)

The systematic, 6 monthly cycle of nurse staffing levels review and recalculation that has been established within the Health Board, is led by the Director of Nursing, Quality and Patient Experience (DoNQPE), facilitated by the corporate nursing team and utilises the many tools provided within the NSLWA: Operational Guidance document developed by the NHS Wales Nurse Staffing programme. Over the 6 cycles that have been completed during the reporting period, many improvements have been made to the Health Board processes as well as lessons learnt along the way, as the Health Board seeks to embed the most efficient and effective systems through which to ensure a robust NSLWA process.

In relation to the specific improvements and lessons learnt relating to taking 'all reasonable steps' to maintain the staffing levels, these include :

- Refinement and inclusion of additional guidance/prompts for Senior Sisters/Charge Nurses into the 'Nurse Staffing Level Review template' provided within the Operational Guidance
- Team working with finance colleagues to ensure funding implications are assessed promptly following nurse staffing level reviews
- Evolution of an efficient and clear timetable for data gathering and analysis, engagement/scrutiny meetings with nursing management team and process of professional oversight by DoNQPE
- Embedding a system of daily **patient acuity** data capture in all S25B wards, increasing the reliability and comprehensiveness of the patient acuity data
- Improved timeliness of patient acuity data entry into Health and Care Monitoring System (HCMS) and Senior Nurse 'sign off' to confirm quality and accuracy of data
- Commenced daily capture of data (via the enhanced HCS system launched in July 2020) which will enable comprehensive reporting on 'the extent to which the nurse staffing level has been maintained' for each Section 25B ward from April 2021
- Undertaken a comprehensive review of, and developed an improvement plan for, the scrutiny processes undertaken by operational teams and which aim to identify when 'not maintaining nurse staffing levels' may have contributed to **patient harm incidents**
- Shared lessons learnt from this review with colleagues developing the 'Once for Wales' Incident and Complaints system with aim of increasing consistency of information obtained and then used to inform the professional judgements required within this process
- Identified and facilitated access to a range of workforce information to inform **professional judgement** when reviewing nurse staffing levels

- Developed a Power BI-based Nurse Staffing Levels review **report** which is available to all nurse leaders for each ward: Through this report, much of the required acuity, workforce and quality information needed to inform the review of the nurse staffing level for each ward is available in a single place
- Appointed a Data Analyst into the corporate nursing team, part of whose role will be to support nursing teams with accessing and analysing data to support effective utilisation and analysis of nurse staffing levels
- Commenced the roll out of the Allocate Health Roster system which aims to improve the utilisation of available staff and the reports available from the roster system

It should be noted that, during the reporting period, the Health Board's Internal Audit team conducted a piece of work the objective of which was to evaluate and determine the adequacy of the systems and controls in place within the Health Board for Nurse Staffing Levels, in order to provide assurance to the Health Board that risks material to the achievement of the system's objectives are managed appropriately. The scope of the review was to establish if the Health Board has appropriate processes in place to ensure that it is complying with the requirements of the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016. The review process concluded, in its final report in May 2019, that the Health Board can take substantial assurance that arrangements to secure governance, risk management and internal control in relation to the implementation of the NSLWA are suitably designed and applied effectively. The one area which required some attention to ensure consistency of good practice across the Health Board related to the systems for informing patients of the nurse staffing levels. As a result, a standardised approach to the display of Ward nurse staffing levels and the availability of the nationally produced Patient Information /Frequently Asked Questions relating to the NSLWA were revised and reissued. During the COVID-19 pandemic, these systems – which have been displayed in areas frequented by visitors in particular – have not been effective and true to the spirit of the requirements of the NSLWA. As a result of reflection at the end of the reporting period, the Health Board will consider how to make meaningful information available electronically going forward.

A link to each of the three Annual Assurance reports is provided in Appendix 1. Each report contains a list of the wards that were designated as Section 25B wards during the year in question; and provides a brief rationale for any changes to the ward's inclusion (or exclusion) as a Section 25B ward that occurred during that year

Section 25E (2a) Extent to which the nurse staffing level is maintained

As the nurse staffing level is defined under the NSLWA as comprising both the planned roster *and* the required establishment, this section should provide assurance of the extent to which the planned roster has been maintained *and* how the required establishments for Section 25B wards have been achieved/maintained over the reporting period.

TABLE 2

		2017/2018	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
7.Extent to which the required establishment has been maintained within wards under section 25B	Required establishment (WTE) of S25B wards <u>prior</u> to commencement of the Acts second duty (March 2018) NOTE: 32 WARDS ASSESSED AS MEETING THE INCLUSION CRITERIA OF SECTION 25 B AT THIS TIME	RN: 604.01	No of wards to which Section 25B pertains in: May 2018: 32 November 2018: 31	No of wards to which Section 25B pertains in: May 2018: 31 November 2018: 30	No of wards to which Section 25B pertains in: May 2018: 19 November 2018: 28
		HCSW: 436.76			
	Required establishment (WTE) of S25B wards calculated during first cycle (May)		RN: 642.63	RN: 609.69	RN: 381.25
			HCSW: 535.59	HCSW: 530.29	HCSW: 329.35
	WTE of required establishment of S25B wards funded following first (May) calculation cycle		RN: 604.65	RN: 601.87	RN: 376.20
			HCSW: 445.78	HCSW: 522.71	HCSW: 313.62
	Required establishment (WTE) of S25B wards calculated during second cycle (Nov)		RN: 607.04	RN: 591.46	RN: 550.67
			HCSW: 527.95	HCSW: 525.51	HCSW: 511.21
	WTE of required establishment of S25B wards funded following second (Nov) calculation cycle		RN: 587.60	RN: 594.03	RN: 552.02
			HCSW: 473.61	HCSW: 526.10	HCSW: 482.19

	<p>In Table 2 above, it will be noted that there was a significant gap between the funded WTE establishment and the required WTE establishment at the time that the first calculation of the required WTE establishment was undertaken, using the triangulated approach, immediately prior to the commencement of the NSLWA in April 2018. This position was discussed in detail at the Health Board meeting in May 2018 and following a careful and detailed option appraisal, a decision taken that the Health Board would fund - and seek to recruit into - the required WTE staffing levels in a phased, risk-based approach. This was communicated by the Health Board Chairman to the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services in July 2018 (Appendix 3a). The response from the Cabinet Secretary indicated that the proposed approach was a clear illustration that the Health Board was taking the reasonable steps that the NSLWA required of the Health Board (Appendix 3b). At that stage it was anticipated that implementation of this phased approach would be finalised during 2020/21</p> <p>The intense work programme undertaken by the Health Board over the next 18 months, and illustrated in Table 2 above, demonstrates that, well ahead of the initial timetable, consistency between the 'required WTE establishment' and the 'funded WTE establishment' had been achieved by the end of 2019/20.</p> <p>Over the period, since the commencement of the NSLWA, this Health Board had uplifted the WTE establishments of the 32 wards which were initially (April 2018) assessed as being 'Section 25B wards'. The uplifts are for 23.25 WTE Registered Nurses and 123.08 WTE HCSW. The investment into Section 25B ward establishment budgets over this time has been in excess of £4.75m.</p> <p>As has been stated earlier in this report, changes to the funded establishments for Section 25B wards have not been made in line with changes to the calculated nurse staffing level requirement during 2020/21: the decision relating to this was driven by the very frequent variation in the required nurse staffing levels on wards; the extensive redeployment of staff across sites; and the recruitment and allocation into ward teams of significant numbers of temporary staff specifically employed to assist with the pandemic response. It is recognised that a 'reset' of Section 25B funded establishments is required early in 2021/22 following the Spring 2021/22 nurse staffing level review cycle when any gaps between 'required' and 'funded' WTE establishments will be identified and addressed</p>
<p>8.Extent to which the nurse staffing levels (planned rosters) are maintained within Section 25B wards</p>	<p><u>RECORDING AND REVIEWING THE NURSE STAFFING LEVELS IN WARDS WHERE SECTION 25B PERTAINS</u></p> <p>When the second duty of the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 (the Act) came into force in April 2018, there was no consistent solution to extracting all of the data explicitly required under section 25E, and health boards were using a variety of E-Rostering and reporting systems. Working with Workforce Information team colleagues, attempts were made within this Health Board during the first half of the reporting period, to develop and utilise a report which aimed to monitor the extent to which nurse staffing levels were maintained and which utilised the data available on this Health Board's current E-Rostering system (Roster Pro). This work proved to be subject to enormous accuracy challenges as well as being very resource intensive and so QSEAC agreed that the Health Board officers working on the report invested their time instead to the All Wales efforts to find both short term and longer term solutions to achieve a consistent approach to the reporting requirements of the NSLWA.</p> <p>To that end, during 2019/20 all health boards/trusts in Wales worked as part of the All Wales Nurse Staffing Programme to develop a consistent approach to capturing quantitative data on a daily basis (in lieu of a single Information system solution) to enable each organisation to demonstrate the extent to which the nurse staffing levels across the Health Board.</p>

For the 2018/9 and 2019/20 annual reports, this health board - together with all other health boards/trusts in Wales - provided brief narrative in an effort to describe the extent to which the nurse staffing levels have been maintained, in order to meet its statutory reporting requirement under Section 25E of the Act.

During the reporting period 2020/21 all Health Boards/Trusts in Wales have begun to implement and use the NWIS-delivered enhancements to the NHS Wales Health and Care Monitoring System (HCMS). Designed as an interim solution pending the development of a Once for Wales rostering informatics system, these enhancements, made available to Health Boards/Trusts across Wales on 1st July 2020, do nevertheless mean that HDdUHB now has access to a short term solution through which to capture quantitative and qualitative data, on a daily basis, to enable it to demonstrate the extent to which the nurse staffing levels in Section 25B wards has been maintained.

It is to the enormous credit of operational nursing teams that they began to utilise these enhancements and capture additional data during the pandemic period, although there was some reduction in the completeness of the data recorded during the period of the second wave (November 2020 to February 2021). To enable the data captured to be utilised to inform nurse staffing level decision making, the Information Development team have developed an accessible and easy to read quantitative report which is now (March 2021) available to all nurse leaders via the Health Board's IRIS system. Importantly, the data captured – and reported on - reflects the clinical judgement of the nursing team regarding the appropriateness of the nurse staffing level for every shift to be able to meet the needs of all patients:

During testing of the IRIS reporting template, it was evident that there was in excess of 90% compliance by operational teams with capturing the requested data: In practice this means that there will be evidence relating to whether the planned staffing levels was achieved on over 1700 shifts worked on Section 25B wards every month. Furthermore, it was evident during the testing phase, that a significant amount of qualitative data, explaining the rationale for most of the occasions when staffing levels had not been maintained, was also being recorded. Although time consuming to analyse and interpret, this rich, qualitative data will inform the biannual nurse staffing level reviews and assist in planning of additional steps with the aim of ensuring that planned nurse staffing levels can be maintained. The availability of this report from April 2021, available via the HCMS and IRIS systems initially, represents a significant step forward for the Health Board.

Looking forward into the medium term, NHS Wales is committed to utilising a national informatics system that can be used as a central repository for collating data to evidence the extent to which the nurse staffing levels have been maintained; and to provide assurance that all reasonable steps have been taken to maintain the nurse staffing levels required. It is anticipated that, during the next reporting period (2021-2024) a Once for Wales informatics system (i.e. Allocate Health Roster supported by Safe care) will be introduced within this Health Board as it will be across all Health Boards/Trusts in Wales. The national Nurse Staffing Programme team, together with representatives from each Health Board/Trust, are currently working with the system providers to ensure the system is fully adapted to be able to support the requirements of the NSLWA. Once achieved, this will support this Health Board to meet its statutory reporting requirements in a more efficient manner and to do so consistently with other Health Boards across NHS Wales.

9.Process for maintaining the nurse staffing level for Section 25B wards

MAINTAINING THE NURSE STAFFING LEVELS IN WARDS WHERE SECTION 25B PERTAINS.

The NSLWA Statutory Guidance (2017) articulates what it considers to be included within the national, strategic corporate and operational steps to be taken in order to maintain nurse staffing levels. The NSLWA itself states that the Health Board(s) must take ‘all reasonable steps’ to maintain nurse staffing levels. During the current reporting period, this Health Board considered that the lack of a consensus across NHS Wales bodies in terms of what constituted ‘all reasonable steps’ posed a risk to both HDdUHB and to all NHS Wales Boards / Trusts. To that end, HDdUHB asked the national Nurse Staffing Programme to support a piece of work to give further guidance on this issue. Following a consultation process involving each Health Board and Trust a list of ‘all reasonable steps’ was drawn up and, although not endorsed for inclusion within the NSLWA Operational Guidance document, the content of this list (Appendix 4) was agreed with Executive Nurse Directors and CNO and issued to Boards/Trusts with the advice that the steps be considered for inclusion within each organisations’ ‘Operating Framework’. In HDdUHB, this progress has been reported to QSEAC, the list has been reviewed through the NSLWA Implementation Group and all the steps listed have been considered to be appropriate for inclusion within the Health Board’s ‘Operating Framework’ document. This amendment to the policy will formally take place when the revised ‘Professional Nurse Staffing: Standards and escalation plan for inpatient services’ policy is finalised early in 2021/22.

The Health Board has also devised and/or reviewed several other policies during the reporting period and which are aimed at supporting staff in ensuring that all appropriate and reasonable steps are taken in seeking to ensure that the planned nurse staffing levels are maintained. These include the following

- Procedure for flexible deployment of staff
- Enhanced patient support policy
- Interim guidelines for rostering of nurses and midwives

Much of the detail relating to the steps described as ‘strategic corporate’ applies to actions which impact on the nursing workforce across all areas of the Health Board and as such, account of how these steps have been taken forward has been described under the ‘overarching duty’ section (Section 3) of this report.

In relation to operational steps taken, all the steps listed in Appendix 4 are routinely considered in an effort to maintain the staffing levels in Section 25B wards (and indeed, across the Health Board) throughout this reporting period and, in particular, over the last 12 months during the pandemic period.

Specific examples of these steps taken in practice over the reporting period include :

- Significant utilisation (an average of circa 374 WTE on a weekly basis across the whole of the Health Board services) temporary staff (mainly bank and agency staff with some additional hours and overtime) through effective requesting, authorisation and procurement processes
- Consistent nursing leadership presence at acute hospital patient flow meetings to ensure that nurse staffing levels are taken full account of when assessing clinical risk in individual wards and across the whole site

- 2-3 times daily review of individual ward/ whole hospital site risk; and effective planning and risk management of staffing issues through that forum
- Establishing the use of daily patient acuity assessment to assist with quantifying the nursing workload within each ward
- Reduction in available bed numbers and/or ward closures when nurse staffing levels forecast to be unsustainable
- Authorisation of carefully managed enhanced rate overtime scheme during the COVID-19 second wave when staffing levels became critical
- Utilisation of a HCSW 'pool' across hospital sites whilst required ward-based HCSW posts to achieve required WTE establishments were recruited into
- Establishing of dedicated Rehabilitation and Frailty Support Worker posts within appropriate specialty wards, working as part of and under the direction of the nursing teams
- During the specific challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, recruitment, induction and careful placement of over 344 bank and fixed term HCSW to supplement the established workforce.
- In addition, during the first part of the COVID-19 pandemic, supporting the placement second and third year student nurses as 'employees', ensuring that they both contributed to meeting patient care needs and continued to gain a valuable learning experience

Maintaining the nurse staffing levels across the Section 25B wards has been a significant challenge, given the vacancy rates across the registered nurse workforce, across the reporting period and in particular during the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020/21.

The Health Board is reliant on a temporary workforce in order to ensure appropriate staffing levels to meet the care needs of its patients. The systems established to secure this temporary workforce, led and managed through the Workforce and Organisational Development directorate, have evolved and strengthened significantly over the reporting period. Due to the nursing team vacancy levels within the Health Board as a whole, the Nurse Bank Office team effectively coordinate booking requests for between 200 and 300 WTE bank and agency staff every week. The team is currently rolling out the implementation of a new nursing bank booking system aligned with its new E-Rostering system (Allocate Health Roster) through which it is anticipated that significant further efficiencies both in process and in efficient deployment and utilisation of nurse staffing can be achieved.

Most of the Section 25B wards with significant long term registered nurse vacancy rates make 'block bookings' of registered nurses supplied by All Wales contract agencies. This has been a long standing and effective strategy in order to meet nurse staffing level requirements, especially in the Health Board's more geographically challenged hospital sites.

Taking this one step further in an effort to stabilise its nursing teams, one of the acute hospital leadership teams has put in place a highly effective 'partnership' arrangement with three All Wales contract nurse staffing agencies in order to secure a longer term commitment to supplying a 'regular' temporary workforce.

Over the period from April 2018 to January 2021 (latest data available at time of writing draft report), the total HCSW staff in post in 31* of the wards which were categorised as 'Section 25 B Wards' has increased from 389.6WTE to 489.4 WTE i.e. an increase of

99.8 WTE. Over this period the initial training for newly recruited HCSW has been revised and strengthened in line with the All Wales HCSW Career Framework. The position therefore at the end of the reporting period is of a workforce that is 25% larger than at its start; and which is better trained and skilled to work in support of the nursing team.

Over the same period the number of Registered Nurses employed in the same 31 wards has varied between 403.81 at its lowest (April 2018) and 434.09 (September 2020) at its highest, showing a cyclical fluctuation between these two points during the year, peaking at the time of the new registrant graduates coming into employment in September and March and dipping to its low point in the month or two prior to those times. It is disappointing that, despite huge effort and initiative shown by the Recruitment team that the position has not improved over the past three years.

On a more positive note, leadership capacity within each of the Section 25B wards has increased significantly since 2018. Providing sufficient leadership capacity to enable 7 day a week visible clinical leadership was an explicit priority agreed by the Board in May 2018. As a result, during the 2018/19 period this resulted in each ward being funded to enable the ring-fencing of at least some (0.4 WTE) supernumerary time for every Senior Sister/Charge Nurse. This was taken further in 2019/20 when further investment into each team was made to ensure that every Senior Sister/Charge Nurse was funded to be fully supernumerary to the planned roster.

In addition, where it did not already exist, all Section 25B ward teams who cared for 18 or more patients had a second (Band 6) Sister/Charge Nurse post included within their WTE establishment.

This has resulted in an increase from 46.59 WTE Band 6 Sister/Charge Nurse within the required establishments in April 2018 to 62.64 WTE following the November 2020 nurse staffing level review cycle, an increase of over 16 WTE (34%) clinical leadership roles across these key ward areas.

The investment in the supernumerary Senior Sister/Charge Nurse role has been supplemented with the establishment of the STAR clinical leadership development programme which all leaders of Section 25B wards are expected to undertake. Currently recruiting into its third Cohort, this sought after programme will be formally evaluated during 2021/22.

During the COVID-19 pandemic period, there have been opportunities to think creatively and to test a greater degree of delegation through the necessity to consider new roles. The effectiveness of some of these roles in supporting the work of the ward nursing team e.g. Family Liaison Officer, Administrative Support Worker, Pharmacy Assistants and general Ward Support Worker are currently being examined. In addition, new opportunities for Assistant Practitioner roles within nursing team skill mix have been identified through the increased focus there has, of necessity, been on ensuring an adequate and sustainable nursing workforce over the past 12 months.

This thinking has extended to the registered workforce as well and schemes are currently being developed in order to maintain the significant degree of flexibility that staff across all services have demonstrated during the past year, both in terms of the skills they have and how they use and apply their skills and knowledge where it is required. In addition, the pandemic has shown us that working effectively from home, or at least remotely, is possible, even in a health care setting: Thinking alternatively about offering

flexible working hours would appear to be an essential strategy as we seek to retain experienced and skilled staff who might otherwise retire or leave the profession completely

(*NB one of the initial 32 Section 25B wards has been closed and staff deployed to other wards for the whole of 2020/21 so ward has been excluded to allow for comparison over the full 3 year reporting period to be made)

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Section 25E (2b) Impact on care due to not maintaining the nurse staffing levels in Section 25B wards

(NB All data is currently to end February 2021 : This will be refreshed to end March 2021 prior to report being presented to Board / submitted to Welsh Government)

April 6th 2018 – April 5th 2021

TABLE 3

10. Patients harmed with reference to quality indicators and complaints (*) which are classified as serious incidents and reported centrally <small>NOTE: (*) complaints refers to those complaints made under NHS Wales complaints regulations (Putting Things Right (PTR))</small>	Total number of closed serious incidents/complaints during last reporting period	Total number of closed serious incidents/complaints during current reporting period.	Total number of serious incidents/complaints not closed and to be reported on/during the <u>next</u> reporting period	Increase (decrease) in number of closed serious incidents/ complaints between reporting periods	Number of (closed) serious incidents/complaints where failure to maintain the nurse staffing level was considered to have been a factor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospital acquired pressure damage (grade 3, 4 and unstageable). 		2018/19 = 10 2019/20 = 25 2020/21 = 10 (including 1 carried over from 19/20) TOTAL = 45	2018/19 = N/A 2019/20 = 1 2020/21 = 8 (subject to amendment in final report) TOTAL = TBC		2018/19 = 0 2019/20 = 0 2020/21 = 1 currently under review TOTAL = TBC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Falls resulting in serious harm or death (i.e. 		2018/19 = 6 2019/20 = 16 2020/21 = 9 TOTAL = 31	2018/19 = 0 2019/20 = 0 2020/21 = 5 (subject to amendment in final report) TOTAL = TBC		2018/19 = 0 2019/20 = 1 2020/21 = 4 currently under review

level 4 and 5 incidents).					TOTAL = TBC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medication related never events. 		2018/19 = 0 2019/20 = 0 2020/21 = 0 TOTAL = 0	2018/19 = 0 2019/20 = 0 2020/21 = 0 TOTAL = 0 TBC		2018/19 = 0 2019/20 = 0 2020/21 = 0 TOTAL = 0 TBC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints about nursing care resulting in patient harm (*) (*) This information is not required for period 2018/19 		2019/20 = 34 2020/21 = 32 (Includes 3 where care relates to 19/20 period) TOTAL = TBC	2019/20 = 0 2020/21 = 8 (subject to amendment in final report) TOTAL = TBC		2019/20 = 0 2020/21 = 8 currently under review TOTAL = TBC TOTAL = TBC

Section 25E (2c) Actions taken if nurse staffing level is not maintained

11.Actions taken when the nurse staffing level was not maintained in Section 25B Wards	<p>NB THIS SECTION WILL BE COMPLETED FOR 2020/21 ONCE ALL ABOVE REVIEWS ARE FINALISED, AHEAD OF SUBMISSION OF PAPER TO BOARD MAY 2021</p> <p>For any of the specific incidents listed in Column 5 above, the following detail will be provided in the final report to be presented to Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific lessons learnt and actions taken in relation to maintaining staffing levels which emerged as a result of the investigation of the serious incidents Evidence of any actions taken in response to SI's/Complaints which were impacted on - either positively (e.g. more care delivered out of hospital etc.) or negatively (e.g. actions were delayed, limited etc.) - by pandemic / Covid-19 position within HB <p>No reportable incidents occurred in 2018/29 and one reportable patient fall incident occurred in 2019/20 where a failure to maintain the nurse staffing level was deemed to be a contributory factor in the incident. Action taken by the hospital site where this incident occurred has included significant changes to the way in which cross-site risk assessment of staffing levels is undertaken and the way in which staff redeployment decisions are made. In addition, the staff groups who participate in the review of the impact of any staff redeployment decisions e.g. through a review of patient harm or service disruption incidents, was widened to include those who make the site-wide decisions 'out of hours'. Action was also taken to ensure that all those involved in staff redeployment decision have a clear understanding of the rationale underpinning the NSLWA requirements in relation to the setting and maintaining of nurse staffing levels for each ward area. In addition, a review of the reliability of staff associated with specific agencies has resulted in changes to the temporary staffing suppliers used in this site.</p>
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More general actions taken when nurse staffing levels have not been maintained over the reporting period have been detailed throughout other sections of this report as they relate, in the main, to the longer term strategic workforce developments described throughout the document and so these will not be repeated here.

Examples of other measures taken during this reporting period when it has become clear that there is no 'quick fix' available to maintain the planned nurse staffing level include:

- Changing the patient pathways across the Health Board, enabling consolidation of scarce clinical skills in fewer wards and, through that change, aiming to provide an improved patient experience;
- introducing a 'Home Support Teams' to support earlier discharge and thus reducing the number of staffed beds required; and
- 'cohorting' patients with a lower acuity and creating a new (non-Section 25B) ward which allows an alternative nurse staffing level/skill mix to be appropriately considered.

Short term measures taken when the situation appears reversible in the near future have included many of the measures which have been taken in response to the COVID-19 situation during 2020/21 and have been described elsewhere in this document. Some other, more conventional, actions taken during the 2018-2021 period as a whole have included:

- ward closures/team mergers;
- deployment of registered nursing staff from their (indirect/non-clinical) substantive roles to support direct patient care;
- deployment of additional support workers to mitigate the absence of required level of registrant workforce on a shift by shift basis; and
- temporary patient pathway changes within an acute hospital site.

12. Conclusion & Recommendations

The HDdUHB has embraced the opportunities that the NSLWA has offered from the commencement of the first duty it imposed in April 2017. The commencement of the second duty in April 2018 was used as the springboard by the Health Board to focus on right-sizing its acute adult in-patient ward nursing teams in a consistent manner across all four acute hospital sites.

The structured approach the NSLWA requires when calculating the required nurse staffing levels using the triangulated approach; and then to reviewing it on a biannual basis, has enabled a systematic approach to quickly become embedded across the Health Board Section 25B wards; and for (an appropriate adaptation of) this structured approach to be welcomed by professional nurse leaders across all services of the Health Board. This has been particularly evident during this final year of the reporting period when nursing services have had to reset themselves and their staffing levels, often several times in quick succession.

The timetable for the phased implementation of the increases to nurse staffing establishments for Section 25B wards, anticipated to take up to three years to implement was in fact achieved within less than two with all Section 25B wards fully funded for their required establishments by April 2020: The recruitment of 100 additional HCSW into these newly established, substantive posts over the first two years of this NSLWA reporting period proved to be of huge benefit to the Health Board in providing for a more stable workforce going into the COVID-19 pandemic

The HDdUHB has made a significant contribution to the national Nurse Staffing Programme over the past three years, actively providing and supporting the leadership of all five work streams as well as providing a major contribution to this first phase of operationalising the NSLWA and its statutory guidance across NHS Wales.

The knowledge and expertise that has developed amongst many Health Board officers over the past three years is already serving the organisation well in being well prepared to meet the challenge of extending Section 25B to apply to paediatric in-patient services early in the next reporting period.

There is little doubt that the major challenge as we move forward into the next reporting period is that of securing a stable registrant workforce to ensure the care delivered is of the highest possible standard. Many of the workforce strategies described within this report will not begin to supply the additional, locally-based registered nurses until the third NSLWA reporting period in 2024-2027. The implications of the Health Board's Transformation Strategy will also be emerging into practice at that time, likely giving rise to a more acutely unwell in-patient population as more care is delivered closer to home where that is possible and appropriate. The recommendations for action during the upcoming 2021-2024 reporting period therefore must include planning for what lies ahead in the constantly evolving environment of nurse staffing levels.

In summary then, the key recommendations for the 2021-2024 period in relation to the NSLWA in HDdUHB are :

- Embed all opportunities that the extension of the NSLWA into the paediatric in-patient wards offers
- Reset the Nurse Staffing Levels for all Section 25B wards as services move towards a 'new normal' as the long term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic emerges
- Formally adopt and adapt the structured approach of the triangulated methodology/ regular review cycles to support the 'reset' of nurse staffing levels across all nursing services in the 'COVID-19 recovery period'
- Continue to take forward the many and varied registered nurse / nursing support workforce 'Grow Your Own' strategies to ensure a 'supply' of nursing workforce to support the maintenance of the nurse staffing levels
- Further develop and evaluate alternative role opportunities when reviewing nurse staffing levels and take forward the 'Team around the Patient' model, building on the learning through the COVID-19 period
- Proactively contribute to the All Wales work associated with the procurement of the 'Allocate' Health Roster/ 'Safe Care' systems to ensure maximum possible benefits from the systems as they roll out across the HDdUHB.
- Ensure maximum benefits are gained from the Once for Wales incident and complaints reporting/investigation systems to strengthen the 'quality indicator' element of the triangulated approach to nurse staffing levels calculations.
- Evaluate the impact of the investment in nursing leadership over the first reporting period
- Closely collaborate with all education providers to ensure excellent student nurse learning experiences, embedding the new NMC curriculum.
- Continue to play a major role as a HB in supporting the national Nurse Staffing Programme and leading and contributing to its individual work streams

NSLWA PAPERS RECEIVED AT HDUHB BOARD MEETINGS 2018-2021

Date of HDUHB Board Meeting	Outcome of Discussion	Action	Papers
26/11/20	<p>Annual Presentation of Nurse Staffing Levels for Wards Covered Under Section 25b of the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 report. The Board WAS ASSURED that: Hywel Dda University Health Board (HDdUHB) is meeting its statutory 'duty to calculate' the nurse staffing level in all wards that fall under the inclusion criteria of Section 25B of the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016. HDdUHB is meeting its statutory duty to provide an annual presentation to the Board of the detail of the nurse staffing levels. The actions identified within the attached templates will be progressed and monitored through the Quality, Safety and Experience Assurance Committee (QSEAC).</p>	No Actions	Annual Presentation of Nurse Staffing Levels
24/9/20	<p>QSEAC Report To Board The Board NOTED the QSEAC update report and ACKNOWLEDGED the key risks, issues and matters of concern together with actions being taken to address these.</p>	No Actions	QSEAC report
30/7/20	<p>QSEAC Report To Board The Board NOTED the QSEAC update report and ACKNOWLEDGED the key risks, issues and matters of concern together with actions being taken to address these.</p>	No Actions	QSEAC Report July 20
28/5/20	<p>Calculating and Maintaining the Nurse Staffing Levels The Board was ASSURED that the requirements of the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act – together with the further advice contained in the CNO letter issued on March 24th 2020 – are being reflected in the approach being taken by the Health Board in planning the nurse staffing levels for all key nursing services during the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Nurse Staffing Levels Annual Assurance Report 2019/20 The Board: NOTED the content of the Nurse Staffing levels (Wales) Annual Assurance Report for 2019/20;</p>	<p>No Actions</p> <p>No Actions</p>	<p>Calculating Nurse Staffing levels</p> <p>Nurse staffing Levels Assurance report</p>

	NOTED the plan that QSEAC receives regular updates/assurance reports during 2020/21 which will contain more detailed data analysis, which aims to understand the impact on care quality as a result of changes made to/maintaining (or otherwise) the planned nurse staffing levels.		
28/11/19	<p>Annual Presentation of Nurse Staffing Levels for Wards Covered under Section 25B of the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RECEIVED this report as assurance that the statutory requirements relating to the Act have been complied with; • NOTED that the implementation plan agreed at its meeting in May 2018 is achieved ahead of schedule and within the initially identified costs; • NOTED that further work is being progressed to prepare for extension of the Act in 2020/21. 	To share information from discussions with senior nurses regarding the realities and practicalities of implementing the Act.	Annual Presentation of NSL
25/7/2019	<p>QSEAC Report To Board</p> <p>The Board NOTED the QSEAC update report and ACKNOWLEDGED the key risks, issues and matters of concern together with actions being taken to address these.</p>	No Actions	QSEAC Report
30/5/2019	<p>Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act Annual Report</p> <p>The Board NOTED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The content of the Annual Report; • That the implementation plan will continue to remain a live document subject to continuous review and iteration. Prioritisation and phasing within the implementation plan will, by necessity, be continually monitored by the Director of Nursing, Quality and Patient Experience; • That, as the committee to which Board has delegated responsibility for monitoring compliance with the NSLWA, QSEAC will continue to receive regular updates on the risks which have been identified within the annual report and any impact on care as a result of not maintaining the nurse staffing levels. 	To discuss in more detail at QSEAC the potential correlation between staffing levels and harm.	Nurse Staffing Levels Annual Report
28/3/2019	<p>QSEAC Report To Board</p> <p>The Board NOTED the QSEAC update report and ACKNOWLEDGED the key risks, issues and matters of concern together with actions being taken to address these.</p>	No Actions	QSEAC report
29/11/2018	<p>Update on the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 report</p> <p>The Board NOTED the update provided, SUPPORTED the approach being adopted and formally DELEGATED monitoring of the implementation plan to QSEAC on a bi-annual basis.</p>	No Actions	Update on Nurse Staffing Levels

27/09/2018	QSEAC Report To Board The Board NOTED the QSEAC update report and ACKNOWLEDGED the key risks, issues and matters of concern together with actions being taken to address these.	No Actions	QSEAC Report
26/7/2018	Update on the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 The Board NOTED the update provided and SUPPORTED the approach being adopted.	No Actions	Update on Nurse Staffing Levels
31/5/2018	Implementing the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 within Hywel Dda University Health Board report The Board SUPPORTED the implementation of Option 3, subject to continued debate and discussion and regular updates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that any concerns or complaints which may implicate nurse staffing levels are flagged to QSEAC; • To share Board feedback with colleagues in other Health Boards; To schedule a Board Seminar discussion on the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act; • To expand the list of operational 'all reasonable steps'; • To schedule a discussion on the Act at QSEAC; • To draft a letter to Welsh Government regarding implementation of the Act. 	Implementing the Nurse Staffing Levels
29/3/2018	The Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016: Organisational Preparedness report The Board NOTED the progress made and was ASSURED that the University Health Board will be compliant with the requirements of the Act by April 2018.	No Actions	NSL Organisational Preparedness

Date of QSEAC Meeting	Outcome of Discussion	Action	Papers
13/8/2020 Agenda item	<p>Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act update QSEAC NOTED the content of the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act update and RECEIVED ASSURANCE that the requirements of the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act have been embedded within revised operational processes through which to calculate the nurse staffing levels; and are being fully considered during the Quarter 2 - Quarter 4 workforce/nurse staffing level planning taking place within the Health Board as well as during the day to day operational work to maintain nurse staffing as per agreed levels. QSEAC also NOTED that a further report will be presented for assurance to the Committee when the revised Nurse Staffing Levels Escalation Framework, for use during the remainder of 2020/21, is finalised (NB Subsequent to this meeting, the NSL escalation framework was instead taken through COVID-19 Gold Command for approval)</p>	No Actions	NSL Update
7/7/2020 Agenda item	<p>Nurse Staffing Levels The Committee DISCUSSED the content of the report and RECEIVED ASSURANCE from the actions taken to maintain nurse staffing levels.</p>	No Actions	Nurse Staffing Levels
9/6/2020 Reference	References in agenda item Covid-19 Risk Report	No Actions	Covid-19 risk report
7/5/2020 Agenda item	<p>Nurse Staffing Principles for Covid-19 The Committee: RECEIVED ASSURANCE that detailed modelling work has been undertaken to assist with the workforce calculations which underpin the RN: patient ratios. RECEIVED ASSURANCE that the nurse staffing principles and the triangulated methodology will continue to be used to calculate nurse staffing levels on wards that are deemed 25B wards; these are wards that can be defined as medical or surgical wards. NOTED that RN: patient ratios will change aligned to critical points of escalation in the pandemic as outlined above. The ratios set out within this paper establish the minimum ratios deemed acceptable based upon system risks. NOTED the proposed RN ratio for the field hospital based on patient profiles, is likely to change following further discussion relating to remodelling.</p>	No Actions	Nurse Staffing Principles for Covid-19
7/4/2020	<p>Nurse Staffing Levels Annual Assurance Report 2019/20 The Committee NOTED:</p>	To present a Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales)	NSL Annual Assurance report

Agenda item	The content of the attached draft 2019/20 Nurse Staffing levels (Wales) Annual Assurance Report for 2019/20. The plan that QSEAC receives regular updates / assurance reports during 2020/21 which will contain more detailed data analysis which aims to understand the impact on care quality as a result of changes made to / maintaining (or otherwise) the planned nurse staffing levels.	report to Board in order that Members can understand the expectations and support the approach taken.	
3/10/2019 Agenda item	Nurse Staffing Levels Wales Act Recalculation Update The Committee RECEIVED ASSURANCE that an appropriate process has been put in place in order to arrive at the revised (i.e. reduced) calculations of the WTE required for most wards. In line with statutory requirements, QSEAC will formally update the Board of the changes made and the assurances provided through the Committee's next update report to Board.	No Actions	NSL ACT Recalculation Update
4/6/2019 Agenda item	Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act Update Spring 2019 The Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RECEIVED the 'in year' changes to the nurse staffing levels of several of the medical and surgical wards following the Spring 2019 nurse staffing level calculation cycle; • received ASSURANCE that the nurse staffing levels have been calculated in line with the requirements of the Act; and • AGREED to formally update the Board of these changes through the QSEAC update report to Board. 	To formally update the Board of the 'in year' changes to the nurse staffing levels changes through the QSEAC update report to Board.	NSL Update Spring 2019
4/4/2019 Agenda item	Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act – Annual Report 2018-19 The Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOTED the content of the Annual Report. • NOTED that the implementation plan will continue to remain a live document subject to continuous review and iteration. Prioritisation and phasing within the implementation plan will, by necessity, be continually monitored by the Director of Nursing, Quality and Patient Experience. • NOTED that QSEAC will receive regular updates on the risks identified within the Annual Report and the impact on care as a result of not maintaining the nurse staffing levels. 	No Actions	NSL (Wales) Act Annual Report
5/2/2019 Agenda item	Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act – Risk Update The Committee was ASSURED by the plan for the NSLWA reporting timetable and by the actions taken to continue to manage/ reduce the risks associated with implementation of a number of key aspects of the Act.	To identify the wards which will have funding for 'supernumerary persons' from April 2019. To present the next update of the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales)	NSL (Wales) Act- Risk Update

		Act - Risk Update to June 2019 QSEAC.	
14/8/2018 Agenda item	Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act - Phased Implementation Plan The Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CONSIDERED the update and NOTED the progress against the statutory guidance; • CONFIRMED agreement with the actions being taken during 2018/19 to develop a robust system for ensuring that the Health Board can be made aware of the number/trends of incidents in which not maintaining the nurse staffing level may have been a contributory; and • NOTED the further actions required as set out in the detailed Implementation. 	To include staff morale and wellbeing report in addition to the WODSC update report to QSEAC in October 2018 - Deferred to December 2018 QSEAC meeting to enable inclusion of the NHS staff survey results.	Phased Implementation Plan
20/4/2018 Reference	Welsh Health Circulars Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 – Statutory guidance The Committee was ASSURED from the lead Executive on the management of WHCs within their area or responsibility, particularly in respect of understanding when the WHC will be delivered, any barriers to delivery, impacts of non/late delivery and assurance that the risks associated with these are being managed effectively. In addition it was agreed monitoring of the WHCs will be devolved through to its sub-structure.	To email the tracker to QSEAC Members To include the Sub-Committees which are monitoring the actions on the tracker.	Welsh Health Circulars

HYWEL DDA UNIVERSITY HEALTH BOARD

IDENTITIES OF SECTION 25B WARDS ON ACUTE HOSPITAL SITES 2018-2021

2018-19	BRONGLAIS GENERAL HOSPITAL		GLANGWILI GENERAL HOSPITAL		PRINCE PHILIP HOSPITAL		WITHYBUSH GENERAL HOSPITAL	
	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'HIGHEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'LOWEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'HIGHEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'LOWEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'HIGHEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'LOWEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'HIGHEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'LOWEST' POINT
MEDICAL WARDS	NOV 2018 1.IORWERTH/ CMU 2.YSTWYTH 3.MEURIG 4. Y BANWY	MAY 2018 1.IORWERTH/ CMU 2.YSTWYTH 3.MEURIG	MAY 2018 1.CADOG 2.DEWI 3.GWENLLIAN 4.PADARN 5.STEFFAN 6.TOWY	NOV 2018 1.CADOG 2.GWENLLIAN 3.PADARN 4.STEFFAN 5.TOWY	MAY AND NOV 2018 1.WARD 1 2.WARD 3 3.WARD 4 4.WARD 5 5. WARD 9		MAY AND NOV 2018 1.WARD 7 2.WARD 8/CCU 3.WARD 10 4.WARD 11 5.WARD 12	
SURGICAL WARDS	MAY AND NOV 2018 1.CEREDIG 2.RHIANNON		MAY AND NOV 2018 1.CLEDDAU 2.DERWEN 3.MERLIN 4,PICTON 5.PRESELI 6.TEIFI		MAY AND NOV 2018 1.WARD 6 2.WARD 7		MAY 2018 1.WARD 1 2.WARD 3 3.WARD 4	NOV 2018 1.WARD 1 2.WARD 3
TOTAL NUMBER SECTION 25 B WARDS	MAY 2018 :		32 WARDS (19 MEDICAL WARDS / 13 SURGICAL WARDS)					
	NOVEMBER 2018 :		31 WARDS (19 MEDICAL WARDS / 12 SURGICAL WARDS)					

2019-20	BRONGLAIS GENERAL HOSPITAL		GLANGWILI GENERAL HOSPITAL		PRINCE PHILIP HOSPITAL		WITHYBUSH GENERAL HOSPITAL	
	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'HIGHEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'LOWEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'HIGHEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'LOWEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'HIGHEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'LOWEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'HIGHEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'LOWEST' POINT
MEDICAL WARDS	MAY 2019 1.DYFI* 2.YSTWYTH 3.MEURIG 4.Y BANWY	NOV 2019 1.DYFI* 2.YSTWYTH 3.MEURIG	MAY AND NOV 2019 1.CADOG 2.GWENLLIAN 3.PADARN 4.STEFFAN 5.TOWY		MAY AND NOV 2019 1.WARD 1 2.WARD 3 3.WARD 4 4.WARD 5 5. WARD 9		MAY AND NOV 2019 1.WARD 7 2.WARD 8/CCU 3.WARD 10 4.WARD 11 5.WARD 12	
SURGICAL WARDS	MAY AND NOV 2019 1.CEREDIG 2.RHIANNON		MAY AND NOV 2019 1.CLEDDAU 2.DERWEN 3.MERLIN 4.PICTON 5.PRESELI 6.TEIFI		MAY AND NOV 2019 1.WARD 6 2.WARD 7		MAY AND NOV 2019 1.WARD 1 2.WARD 3	
TOTAL NUMBER SECTION 25 B WARDS	MAY 2019 :		31 WARDS (19 MEDICAL WARDS / 12 SURGICAL WARDS)					
	NOVEMBER 2019 :		30 WARDS (18 MEDICAL WARDS / 12 SURGICAL WARDS)					

2020-21	BRONGLAIS GENERAL HOSPITAL		GLANGWILI GENERAL HOSPITAL		PRINCE PHILIP HOSPITAL		WITHYBUSH GENERAL HOSPITAL	
	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'HIGHEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'LOWEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'HIGHEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'LOWEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'HIGHEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'LOWEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'HIGHEST' POINT	WARD IDENTITIES AT 'LOWEST' POINT
MEDICAL WARDS	NOV 2020 1.DYFI 2.YSTWYTH 3.MEURIG	MAY 2020 1.DYFI 2.MEURIG	NOV 2020 1.CADOG 2.DEWI 3.GWENLLIAN 4.STEFFAN 5.TOWY	MAY 2020 1.CADOG 2.GWENLLIAN 3.PADARN 4.STEFFAN 5.TOWY 6. DEWI	NOV 2020 1.WARD 3 2.WARD 4 3.WARD 5 4.WARD 6 5. WARD 9	MAY 2020 1.WARD 5 2.WARD 6 3. WARD 7	NOV 2020 1.WARD 8/CCU 2.WARD 10 3.WARD 11 4.WARD 12	MAY 2020 1.WARD 7 2.WARD 8/CCU 3.WARD 10
SURGICAL WARDS	NOV 2020 1.CEREDIG 2.RHIANNON	MAY 2020 1.CEREDIG	NOV 2020 1.CLEDDAU 2.DERWEN 3.MERLIN (INCL TYSUL) 4.PICTON 5.TEIFI	MAY 2020 1.CLEDDAU 2.DERWEN 3.PICTON	NOV 2020 1.WARD 7	MAY 2020	NOV 2020 1.WARD 1 2.WARD 3 3.WARD 4	MAY 2020 1.WARD 3
TOTAL NUMBER SECTION 25 B WARDS	MAY 2020 :		20 WARDS (14 MEDICAL WARDS / 5 SURGICAL WARDS)					
	NOVEMBER 2020 :		28 WARDS (17 MEDICAL WARDS / 11 SURGICAL WARDS)					

WARDS TO WHICH SECTION 25B PERTAINED IN AUTUMN 2019 NURSE STAFFING LEVEL REVIEW CYCLE AND WHICH WERE FORMALLY REDESIGNATED AS 'NOVEL COVID-19 WARDS' FOR THE PERIOD OF WAVE 1 OF PANDEMIC (MARCH – JUNE 2020)				
	BRONGLAIS GENERAL HOSPITAL	GLANGWILI GENERAL HOSPITAL	PRINCE PHILIP HOSPITAL	WITHYBUSH GENERAL HOSPITAL
REDESIGNATED COVID WARDS	1.YSTWYTH WARD 2.RHIANNON WARD	1.TEIFI WARD 2.MERLIN WARD 3.PRESELI WARD	1.WARD 1 2.WARD 3 3.WARD 4 4.WARD 9	1.WARD 1 2.WARD 11 3.WARD 12
<p>A TOTAL OF 12 WARDS WHICH HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN 'SECTION 25 B WARDS' WERE FORMALLY RE-DESIGNATED AS 'NOVEL COVID-19 WARDS' DURING WAVE 1 OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. THIS REDESIGNATION WAS BASED ON THE INITIAL GUIDANCE REGARDING 'SECTION 25B INCLUSION/EXCLUSION CRITERIA' PROVIDED BY CNO IN HER LETTER TO NHS WALES IN MARCH 2020</p>				

WARDS TO WHICH SECTION 25B PERTAINED IN AUTUMN 2020 NURSE STAFFING LEVEL REVIEW CYCLE AND WHICH WERE FORMALLY REDESIGNATED AS 'NOVEL COVID-19 WARDS' FOR THE PERIOD OF WAVE 2 OF PANDEMIC (NOVEMBER – FEBRUARY 2020)				
	BRONGLAIS GENERAL HOSPITAL	GLANGWILI GENERAL HOSPITAL	PRINCE PHILIP HOSPITAL	WITHYBUSH GENERAL HOSPITAL
REDESIGNATED COVID WARDS		1.PADARN WARD (CADOG WARD USED INTERMITTENTLY DURING THIS PERIOD ALSO)	1.WARD 1 (WARD 4 USED INTERMITTENTLY DURING THIS PERIOD ALSO)	1.WARD 7
<p>A TOTAL OF 3 WARDS WHICH HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN 'SECTION 25 B WARDS' WERE FORMALLY RE-DESIGNATED AS 'NOVEL COVID-19 WARDS' FOR THE DURATION OF WAVE 2 OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, WITH A FURTHER 2 WARDS BEING RE-DESIGNATED FOR SOME OF THAT PERIOD. THIS RE-DESIGNATION WAS BASED ON THE REVISED GUIDANCE RELATING TO 'SECTION 25B INCLUSION/EXCLUSION CRITERIA' PROVIDED BY CNO IN HER LETTER TO NHS WALES IN OCTOBER 2020</p>				

Ein cyf/Our ref: CH.1392.0718
Gofynnwch am/Please ask for: Habiba Lewis, PA to the Chair
Rhif Ffôn /Telephone: 01267 239637
E-bost/E-mail: Habiba.Lewis@wales.nhs.uk
Dyddiad/Date: 16th July 2018

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Mr Vaughan Gething
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services
Health and Social Services Group
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Email: Correspondence.Vaughan.Gething@gov.wales

Dear Cabinet Secretary

**Re: Implementation of the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 at Hywel Dda
University Health Board**

I am writing on behalf of the Board further to the discussion held at the May 31st Board meeting in relation to the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 to advise the Welsh Government that although the UHB are taking steps to comply with the Act, a number of inherent risks and issues have been identified.

The Board, being fully aware of the statutory guidance issued in November 2017 and the requirements of the Act, recognises the challenges involved in its implementation. It also recognises that these challenges do not provide a legal defence against failure to meet the requirements should an incident occur on a ward without the identified safe staffing level which might result in a legal issue for the UHB.

Having considered some of the major themes arising from the analysis of the Nurse Staffing Level review processes undertaken, three main options were considered. Based upon the information available the Board agreed at its meeting on 31st May 2018 to support a phased, risk based approach to implementation of the Act. In taking this decision the Board recognises the risks associated with such an approach and in particular the need to more

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Carmarthen, Carmarthenshire, SA31 3BB

Cadeirydd / Chair
Mrs Bernardine Rees OBE

Prif Weithredwr/Chief Executive
Mr Steve Moore

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Hywel Dda yw enw gweithredol Bwrdd Iechyd Lleol Prifysgol Hywel Dda
Hywel Dda University Health Board is the operational name of Hywel Dda University Local Health Board

Mae Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Hywel Dda yn amgylchedd di-fwg Hywel Dda University Health Board operates a smoke free environment

clearly define the term set out in the statutory guidance “all reasonable steps” in respect of maintaining the calculated nurse staffing levels. In approving a phased implementation option the Board was clear that the decision was taken in order to move towards meeting its duty in respect of the Act, however this does not necessarily make the Board fully compliant at this stage.

In working towards compliance, the UHB’s current overall vacancy position amongst its registered nursing workforce, together with the number required to meet the nurse staffing calculations in the immediate or short term, is a major factor. The funding required to support implementation of the calculated uplift also presents an added financial pressure for the organisation.

To summarise, the UHB has taken a pragmatic approach, however cannot at this stage demonstrate it will be fully compliant with the Act. This is a significant issue for the Board and the Designated Officer.

I have attached a copy of the paper which was presented to the Board and the unapproved extract of the minutes relating to this item which was discussed on the 31st May 2018, for ease of reference.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bernardine". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Bernardine Rees, OBE
Chairman Hywel Dda UHB

c.c. Jean White, CNO, Welsh Government
OCNOMailbox@gov.wales

Enc

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gwasanaethau
Cymdeithasol
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref VG/02509/18

Bernardine Rees
Chair
Hywel Dda University Health Board

Bernardine.rees@wales.nhs.uk

August 2018

Dear Bernardine,

Thank you for your letter of 16 July regarding Hywel Dda's progress with the implementation of the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act. I appreciate the update and am pleased to see how thorough and considered your approach as a health board has been.

When talking about full compliance with the Act, it is important to clarify that a deployed roster varying from the planned roster for a ward shift does not constitute a failure to comply with the law. The Act requires health boards to calculate a nurse staffing level and to make every possible effort - every reasonable step - to maintain that staffing level. From your board paper it is clear that you have made the necessary calculations, and the phased implementation described within the paper is a clear illustration of the reasonable steps you are taking as a Health Board.

I understand your concerns about the ongoing issue of nurse vacancy rates, and it is a fact that we have introduced this piece of legislation in the midst of a global shortage of nursing staff. We continue to look at ways to tackle this problem and recruit and retain the nurses required to meet the care needs of our patients. There was never an expectation that the implementation of the Act would solve the issues of nurse staffing levels overnight, but we have taken the important first steps that will help steer us in that direction over time. Again, I thank you for your update and your vigilance as Chair over this work.

Yours sincerely,

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

All Reasonable steps

Reasonable steps which should be taken at each of the following levels - national, strategic corporate (Local Health Board/ NHS Trust) and operational – to maintain the nurse staffing levels are considered to be:

National steps

- The sharing and benchmarking of corporate data;
- Leading of regular reviews of workforce and education commissioning requirements;
- Leading national initiatives to aid staff recruitment and retention.

Strategic corporate steps

- Workforce planning for a continued supply of required staff assessed using the Welsh Planning System;
- Active recruitment in a timely manner at local, regional, national, and international level;
- Retention strategies that include consideration of the NHS Wales Staff Survey results;
- Well-being at work strategies that support nurses in delivering their roles;
- Ensure strategic requirements of the Act embedded into the organisations IMTP/annual planning process;
- Robust workforce planning at ward/service level which are reviewed at least annually through IMTP /education commissioning processes;
- Workforce policies and procedures which support effective staff management (e.g. flexible working for staff);
- Robust organisational risk management framework;
- Effective risk assessment processes and systems are in place and utilised as required.

Operational steps

- Use of temporary staff from a nursing bank appropriate to the skill mix set out in the planned roster;
- Use of temporary staff from a nursing agency appropriate to the skill mix set out in the planned roster (once bank staff have been considered);
- Temporary use of staff from other areas within the organisation;
- The temporary closure of beds;
- Consideration of changes to the patient pathway (which should be clinically appropriate);
- Effective resource management, utilisation and deployment of staff e.g. appropriate allocation of annual leave and study leave, staff working overtime (within WTE), additional hours or use of hours owed;
- Use of a robust electronic rostering tool and strong governance systems to monitor and review the rosters and ensure effective utilisation of the nursing workforce (e.g. review the staffing roster on a day to day basis, explore with staff member rescheduling annual leave and/or change of shift, postponing staff training/ study leave);
- Use pool/peripatetic staff made available to provide support to areas where staffing levels vary from planned roster;
- Ward sister/charge nurse to work within the planned roster;
- Other healthcare professionals (e.g. frailty workers, dietetic assistants, therapists) contributing to the delivery of nursing care;
- Regular review of the acuity of the patients on the ward, including the identification and risk management of patients requiring 'enhanced patient support' in line with local policy and professional judgement;
- Appropriate and timely use of the escalation policy relating to nurse staffing and reporting and management of risk