

## Y PWYLLGOR ANSAWDD, DIOGELWCH A PHROFIAD QUALITY, SAFETY AND EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

<b>DYDDIAD Y CYFARFOD: DATE OF MEETING:</b>	11 April 2023
<b>TEITL YR ADRODDIAD: TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	Update on Health Visiting Service Position – March 2023
<b>CYFARWYDDWR ARWEINIOL: LEAD DIRECTOR:</b>	Andrew Carruthers, Director of Operations
<b>SWYDDOG ADRODD: REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Liz Wilson Lead Nurse Early Years and Health Visiting Services; Lisa Humphrey, General Manager Women & Children and Cancer/Oncology Services; Bethan Lewis, Interim Assistant Director Public Health Directorate.

**Pwrpas yr Adroddiad** (dewiswch fel yn addas)

**Purpose of the Report** (select as appropriate)

Er Sicrwydd/For Assurance

### ADRODDIAD SCAA SBAR REPORT

#### Sefyllfa / Situation:

Staffing challenges remain within the Health Visiting service across the Health Board. The deficits remain greater in the Ceredigion and North Pembrokeshire areas due to the issues of recruiting staff further away from the M4 corridor.

This report will provide an update to the Quality, Safety and Experience Committee (QSEC) on the current position in terms of current staffing levels within Health Visiting and the workforce planning proposed to further stabilise the service.

#### Cefndir / Background:

A risk assessment was undertaken in Ceredigion prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and in Pembrokeshire in 2022, with a focus on the north of the county. This is mainly due to the difficulty in recruiting staff. During the pandemic reduced contacts were recommended by Welsh Government and data on the Healthy Child Wales Programme (HCWP) was not collated by the child health system, making it difficult to estimate how many children had missed crucial HCWP contacts. In Ceredigion the existing staff did not have the capacity to see all of the children that were due their HCWP contacts, and some children had not been seen since the birth visit.

The Directorate Risk Register was updated to reflect the situation: *DATIX 940 – Insufficient Staffing/risk to staff and children*. Scoring a high risk of initially of 20 then reduced to 16 and more recently 12. A risk of increase poor health and wellbeing outcomes and increased high

levels of safeguarding concerns of children and families was identified. This was caused by high staffing vacancies and the inability to recruit throughout the County, compounded by long term sickness and maternity leave.

In response to the staffing situation, the Lead Nurses for the Health Visiting Service produced a detailed report for the Director of Nursing, Quality and Patient Experience in January 2021. The report illustrated the staffing situation at that time and predicted the future staffing challenge within the Health Board due to ongoing vacancies and the age profile of the Health Visiting teams. The outcome of the initial review of the Health Visiting situation was to introduce the skill mix of registered and unregistered workforce and to support the development of a practice development role.

The Health Board wide staffing situation has shown improvement, in regards to the Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (SCPHN) Health Visiting qualified workforce. The SCPHN vacancies position previously shared in QSEC meeting on 11 October 2022 are presented below in table 1.

Table 1.

County	Health Visitor Establishment WTE	Health Visitor Vacancies WTE as at August 2022	Current %staff deficit in Health Visiting per county	Predicted vacancies as at October 2022
Carmarthenshire	41.7	3.1	7.4%	0.5 WTE
Pembrokeshire	26.93	6.73	25%	1.93 WTE
Ceredigion	15.8	7.4	47%	5 WTE

### Assesiad / Assessment:

The successful recruitment of the SCPHN students in October 2022 into the Health Visiting service improved the staff deficit position within all three counties. However, the fragility of the service remains due to the age profile of the current workforce, with 49% of the Health Visiting workforce being over 51 years of age. The age profile is evident across all three counties but has a significant bearing on Carmarthenshire whereby there are 12.6 WTE Health Visitors over the age of 54 years. There is a potential risk during 2023 due to staff reaching retirement age.

The current staffing position, as at March 2023, is illustrated below in Table 2 and shows that the overall vacancy position across the Health Visiting service has remained fairly stable. There are retirements planned for staff in Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion in April 2023 and the projected staffing position is included in the last column. There are a further 3 WTE who have confirmed their intention to retire over subsequent months, however, across these 4.6 WTE retirements there are some plans in place to return to work within the service. This equates to an additional 2.2 WTE returning to practice.

It is important to note the continued fragility within Ceredigion County remains but the successful recruitment into the teams covering the south of the County has resulted in the highest risk is now being faced in Aberystwyth not county wide.

Table 2.

County	Health Visitor Establishment WTE	Health Visitor Vacancies WTE as at October 2022	%staff deficit in Health Visiting per county at October 2022	Health Visitor Vacancies WTE as at March 2023	% staff deficit in Health Visiting per county as at March 2023	Predicted vacancies WTE as at May 2023
Carmarthenshire	41.7	0.5	1.20%	1	2.40%	1.6
Pembrokeshire	26.93	1.93	7.16%	1.57	5.83%	1.57
Ceredigion	15.8	5	31.65%	5	31.65%	6.0

The service vacancy gaps are partially supported by the introduction of bank Health Visitors and the continued availability of this transient workforce has provided some challenges during periods of the year when the cover provided has fluctuated. There is due to be a reduction in the number of bank Health Visitors that have been continually supporting the Aberystwyth region due to a confirmed retirement in March 2023. This bank member of staff has been providing 0.8 WTE cover within the county team. In addition to this, there are 2.6WTE Health Visitors on maternity leave and there is long-term sickness within the teams which equates to a rolling 7.9%. In February 2023, long-term sickness had shown an improvement at 3.05% with short-term sickness again showing a slight increase at 1.02%.

Recruitment of SCPHN students has been successful in 2022/2023. The number recruited across the county teams are shown below in Table 3, and the impact of these within services will be realised in October 2023 when they complete their course. Additional students in Carmarthenshire were recruited due to the age profiles of the current teams and the risk of retirements.

Table 3:

County	Recruited	Actual completion October 2023	Comments
Ceredigion	3 WTE	2 WTE	1 WTE deferred for one year due to sickness
Pembrokeshire	3 WTE	3 WTE	
Carmarthenshire	6 WTE	6 WTE	
Total:	12 WTE	11 WTE estimated to qualify in Oct 2023	

The expected standards for entry onto the Health Visiting course is high due to the complex nature of the role. From 2024 entry level is at Level 7, post graduate diploma and Masters' degree which will lead to the service having to provide the relevant training opportunities for the Community Public Health Staff Nurses to ensure that they have the required academic skills to be able to apply for the SCPHN training and to enable us to continue with our 'Grow Your Own Model'

#### **Actions Underway To Mitigate The Risks:**

HCWP contacts, birth visits, visits with known vulnerable families and those with safeguarding concerns continue to be prioritised. However, for those families that are not seen there remains a risk of missed opportunities for the identification of developmental delay, adverse childhood experiences, maternal mental ill health and indicators or suspicion of abuse.

Additional Health Visitors are redeployed from outside of the County and bank staff are utilised from within and outside the Health Board. Team Leaders continue to provide caseload cover and support.

An additional role of Senior Nurse for Quality Assurance has been implemented to support a more robust leadership and governance structure within the service.

A relief Health Visitor post has been created and has been redeployed to Ceredigion.

An additional Team Leader for South Ceredigion with a background in safeguarding was recruited in April 2022.

The Health Visiting Response Team, which was set up in August 2021 as a pilot in Aberystwyth, has now been rolled out to other areas of Ceredigion and North Pembrokeshire as concentration of this mainly clinic based model in Aberystwyth led to delays in other parts of the county.

Currently there continues to be clinics on a Saturday Morning in Bronglais Hospital as well as clinics since 18 June 2022 in Teifi Ward to address the increasing missed HCWP contacts. In addition to this, a clinic-based model was also set up in Fishguard, Haverfordwest during the week days. A clinic has now been established in Aberaeron Integrated Children's Centre in March 2023.

However the clinic based model does not allow for holistic assessments of children, as the environment the child is living in and the parental capacity in the home is unable to be fully assessed.

External training has now been sourced to develop professional curiosity and assessment processes with a focus on a clinic setting to commence in Ceredigion then Pembrokeshire followed by Carmarthenshire in order to reduce the risk. This has been done in collaboration with the Head of Safeguarding.

Table 4 captures the level of service that has been delivered as a result of the additional Saturday clinics from 7 May to 15 March:

Table 4.

Clinic	No. of clinics	No. of children seen	No of DNA's	No. of cancelled appointments by parent/care giver
Aberystwyth	15	151	27	7
Teifi	22	232	53	19
Total	37	383	80	26

Between 7 May 2022 to 15 March 2023 37 additional clinics were held whereby 368 children were seen, with a total of 55 referrals made to secondary services. Illustrated within table 5 are the outcome destination of the referrals made:

Table 5:

Referral to:	Number of Referrals
Multi Agency Referral (MARF) to Social Care	1
Paediatrics	4
Speech and Language (SALT)	13
Podiatry	2
Audiology	4
Ophthalmology	2
Team Around the Family (TAF)	2
GPs	4
Physiotherapy	4
Additional Family support -Health Visitor Assistant Practitioner (AP)	8
Dietician	6
ALN – Support with Additional Learning needs	2
Dentist	2
Neurodevelopmental Team	1

In addition to this, several children have received one clinic appointment and have been recalled by the Health Visitor for reassessment following advice on areas such as positive parenting and child development as well as healthy eating and immunisation uptake.

A home visiting service also continues to be delivered by out of county Health Visitors for children and families where a need is identified.

For easy access to the support for families in Ceredigion, a duty phone system which was originally managed by the Health Visiting service where calls have been directed to a HUB phone is now operated by the Command Centre in the Health Board.

Continued support from the Safeguarding Team-Looked After Children (LAC) is being received-with health assessments undertaken by the LAC Team.

The development of a Standard Operational Procedure for managing Corporate Caseloads is now finalised and awaiting sign off.

### **Workforce Planning:**

Currently there are 14.3 WTE Community Public Health Staff Nurses within the service with 5.1 WTE of these posts are based within Ceredigion. As part of the continued development of 'GROW YOUR OWN' model, eight of the current Health Visiting students were Community Public Health Staff Nurses within the service before commencing the course. This provides assurance of the success of the 'GROW YOUR OWN' model within the service.

Further development of skill mix has been successful with an increase in Assistant Practitioner posts throughout the service some of which are grant funded. Scope of practice for these roles has been reviewed in line with the All Wales Delegation guidelines to ensure standardisation, governance and safe practice.

Recruitment campaigns are again underway for the SCPHN course and plans to develop a recruitment video with Workforce and Organisational Development. Also, support has been given to Aberystwyth University to submit a tender to Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) for the SCPHN course in September 2023 and if successful the course should be running in 2024/25. This will enable staff who are unable to travel to Swansea University to access the SCPHN course locally and provide the Health Board with a future SCPHN workforce in the Ceredigion area.

Administrative support for the Health Visiting teams include 6.51 WTE administrative posts throughout the service, some of which are grant funded. However there remains a deficit in this area in line with the Impact Assessment work carried out for the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act.

The service is continuing to implement the developed principles for health visiting from the work stream of the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act. There is a level of non-compliance with some of these principles and a financial deficit in the service to maintain our current position as well as compliance. *Datix risk 1624 – Insufficient Budget to maintain a safe service- score 12.*

There is only 1 WTE relief Health Visitor within the service which has been introduced to support the impact of sickness and absences. This requires further review within the overall workforce plan as there was no uplift set within the establishment for Health Visiting core budget.

There continues to be work with the Workforce Wellbeing service within the Health Board where support is being provided to staff including time out for reflection, clinical supervision and culture improvement.

A robust workforce plan for the service has commenced with the Head of Strategic Workforce Planning & Transformation to develop the multidisciplinary model of 'Team Around The Family' and to develop a robust workforce plan to address the ageing workforce challenges and secure the future Early Years services for the children and families of the Hywel Dda population.

Initial discussions have commenced with the Patient Experience Team to implement a questionnaire for families using the CIVICA system.

**Next Steps:**

- Continual review of the Risk Register and Risk Assessments.
- To continue with the clinic based model and implement the learning across the Health Board region.
- To continue to build a more robust workforce plan and have a sustainable service for the future taking into account age profiles, population needs and the demand of the service on teams.
- To continue to capture the experiences of families during this challenging period and make any necessary service improvements.
- To continue to support staff and be solution focused.
- To work with Information Technology (IT) colleagues to implement systems to capture the data and subsequent analysis of that data to improve services as part of the Improving Together work and as part of the transfer of the service to the Women & Children's Directorate.

**Argymhelliad / Recommendations**

QSEC is asked to:

- **NOTE** the continued work underway to mitigate risk to staffing vacancies within the Health Visiting Service and receive assurance from the control measures in place in light of the ongoing staffing challenges.
- **NOTE** the financial implications to ensure a safe, sustainable service for the future as part of 'invest to save' with a focus on early years and early intervention to prevent long term health issues for the future population of Hywel Dda.

**Amcanion: (rhaid cwblhau)**

**Objectives: (must be completed)**

Committee ToR Reference:  
Cyfeirnod Cylch Gorchwyl y Pwyllgor:

3.7 Provide assurance to the Board that current and emerging clinical risks are identified and robust management plans are in place and any

	learning from concerns is applied to these risks as part of this management.
Cyfeirnod Cofrestr Risg Datix a Sgôr Cyfredol: Datix Risk Register Reference and Score:	940 – Risk Score 20 Risk score reduced to 12 Risk -1624 score 12
Safon(au) Gofal ac Iechyd: Health and Care Standard(s):	1.1 Health Promotion, Protection and Improvement 2.7 Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adults at Risk 3. Effective Care 7.1 Workforce
Amcanion Strategol y BIP: UHB Strategic Objectives:	All Strategic Objectives are applicable
Amcanion Llesiant BIP: UHB Well-being Objectives: <a href="#">Hyperlink to HDdUHB Well-being Objectives Annual Report 2018-2019</a>	9. All HDdUHB Well-being Objectives apply

<b>Gwybodaeth Ychwanegol: Further Information:</b>	
Ar sail tystiolaeth: Evidence Base:	Healthy Child Wales Programme
Rhestr Termau: Glossary of Terms:	Contained within the body of the report
Partion / Pwyllgorau â ymgynhorwyd ymlaen llaw y Pwyllgor Ansawdd, Diogelwch a Phrofiod: Parties / Committees consulted prior to Quality, Safety and Experience Committee:	Executive Team

<b>Effaith: (rhaid cwblhau) Impact: (must be completed)</b>	
Ariannol / Gwerth am Arian: Financial / Service:	Noted within report
Ansawdd / Gofal Claf: Quality / Patient Care:	Noted within report



<b>Gweithlu: Workforce:</b>	Noted within report
<b>Risg: Risk:</b>	Noted within report
<b>Cyfreithiol: Legal:</b>	Noted within report
<b>Enw Da: Reputational:</b>	N/A
<b>Gyfrinachedd: Privacy:</b>	Noted within report
<b>Cydraddoldeb: Equality:</b>	N/A