



**CYFARFOD BWRDD PRIFYSGOL IECHYD
UNIVERSITY HEALTH BOARD MEETING**

DYDDIAD Y CYFARFOD: DATE OF MEETING:	28 May 2026
TEITL YR ADRODDIAD: TITLE OF REPORT:	Report of the Chair
CYFARWYDDWR ARWEINIOL: LEAD DIRECTOR:	Dr Neil Wooding CBE, Chair
SWYDDOG ADRODD: REPORTING OFFICER:	Dr Neil Wooding CBE, Chair

Pwrpas yr Adroddiad (dewiswch fel yn addas)

Purpose of the Report (select as appropriate)

Er Sicrwydd/For Assurance

ADRODDIAD SCAA

SBAR REPORT

Sefyllfa / Situation

To provide an update to the Board on relevant matters undertaken by the Chair of Hywel Dda University Health Board (the Health Board) since the previous Board meeting.

Cefndir / Background

This overarching report highlights the key areas of activity and strategic issues engaged in by the Chair and also details topical areas of interest to the Board.

Asesiad / Assessment

Chairs Objectives 2026/27

Following on from my annual appraisal on 9 February 2026, I have now received correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care confirming the NHS Wales Chairs' shared objectives for 2026/27, together with my organisation-specific objectives. The objectives align with national priorities across quality and safety, culture and leadership, strategy, and governance, and include specific expectations relating to service delivery, planning, clinical services transformation, and regional collaboration. Full details of these objectives are appended to this report (Appendix 1).

Board Seminar 23 April 2026

Board Maturity Assessment

The Board considered the annual Board Maturity Self Assessment and agreed that overall scores broadly remained stable year on year, reflecting steady progress rather than step change improvement. Members noted that the value lay in the reflective discussions, which highlighted strengths and areas for improvement. The Board noted the past need for command and control leadership and emphasised transitioning to a more empowering model, maintaining clear accountability, discipline, and assurance. The matrix will be presented to Board at the Extraordinary meeting in June 2026.

Delivery for the Year Ahead – the Role of the Unitary Board

The Board discussed the evolving role of the Unitary Board in enabling delivery over the year ahead, noting the need to shift from intensive operational oversight towards strategic leadership, empowerment and clear delegation, while maintaining grip on risk, quality, finance and performance. Members supported the direction of travel towards clearer decision-making, escalation by exception, and strengthened accountability at Clinical Care Group level, underpinned by explicit delivery expectations aligned to the Annual Plan. The Board recognised the need of holding organisational risk during the transition while focusing on strategic leadership and long-term sustainability.

Fragility of Withybush Hospital A&E

The Board discussed the ongoing challenges at Withybush Hospital (WGH) A&E, focusing on medical workforce sustainability, variable staffing, and the associated quality, safety and financial risks. While some improvements in emergency department performance were noted, the service remains fragile due to reliance on temporary staffing and sustained system pressures, including high demand, delayed discharges and limited access to primary care. More broadly, these risks sit within wider Urgent and Emergency Care (UEC) system pressures, where variability in patient flow, capacity and workforce across sites continues to impact resilience. The Board recognised that current short-term mitigations are not sustainable and emphasised the need to align immediate stabilisation actions with the longer-term clinical strategy, alongside robust business continuity arrangements.

Clinical Services Plan: Post-Decision Update

The Board discussed progress following decisions taken under the Clinical Services Plan, noting active work on implementation planning for the eight agreed services and further development of proposals for stroke services. Members were informed that the updated merged stroke option met all criteria, and an eight-week public engagement period is planned to assess support and gather feedback on considered alternatives. The Board noted that Implementation Plans for the eight services are progressing according to three-year planning, beginning with tests using current resources. The importance of maintaining momentum was emphasised, while ensuring engagement, assurance, and alignment with national and political factors.

Transport and Travel

The Board discussed transport and travel as crucial factors affecting access to care, especially in rural and deprived areas with limited public transport. Members noted shared responsibility across organisations and the need for the Health Board to mitigate impact through service design, digital solutions, and collaboration, despite limits to its direct control. The Board supported practical measures to improve access and reduce transport barriers, while noting the need for a clearer strategic position on the extent to which the organisation can address transport-related inequalities within available resources.

Deaths in Service

I am very sad to report the death of three respected colleagues. Michelle Copeman worked as a Service Support Manager, Community Health Services at South Pembrokeshire Hospital, having been employed by the Health Board since 2019. Alun Thomas worked as an Anaesthetic Office Manager in Theatres at Glangwili Hospital (GGH), having been employed by the Health Board since 2018. Kim Davies worked as a Receptionist at Minafon Surgery, Llandysul, having been employed by the Health Board since 2023. I wish to express my sincere condolences on behalf of the Board and the organisation to family, friends and colleagues of Michelle, Alun and Kim.

Mansell Bennett

I would like to record the Board's sincere condolences following the death of Mansell Bennett, who made a significant contribution to health services in West Wales over many years. Mansell brought a strong commitment to public service throughout his career with Hywel Dda, progressing from scientific services to senior management roles, and remained a passionate advocate for patients and communities after his retirement, including through his valued involvement with the Community Health Council (including as Chair) and the independent citizen voice now carried forward through Llais. On behalf of the Board, I extend our thoughts to his family, friends and colleagues, and I would like to place on record our gratitude for his professionalism, integrity and lasting contribution.

Key Meetings

I have attended the following meetings and engagement events:

System Leadership and Regional Engagement

- Chairs' Peer Group meetings (including national Chair leadership responsibilities)
- Together for Change (iUEC) events – Lampeter

Service and Site Visits

- Visits to South Pembrokeshire Hospital, Withybush Hospital, Ty Nant, and Paediatrics (GGH)
- Patient Safety WalkRound WGH

People, Culture and Recognition

- Chair's Commendation Awards
- Long Service Awards
- All-Wales Enfys LGBTQ+ event

External and Stakeholder Engagement

- Diocesan briefing on community initiatives
- Swansea Bay University Health Board (SBUHB) Associate Board Member interview panel

Celebrating Success/Awards

Long Service Awards

In 2019, the Long Service Awards were introduced in recognition of staff who have given the most hours, days and years to serving the local NHS across different professions across Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire. The aim was to celebrate staff who have reached milestones working within the NHS. Our Independent Members have been privileged to meet the following individuals personally to present them with their award, listen to their experiences during their years of service and to thank them on behalf of the Board.

Employee	Number of years' service	Job Title	Base
Stephanie Nicholas	50	Health Care Support Worker	Tenby District Nurses
Paul Howells	43	Maintenance Assistant	GGH
Pat Clark	40	Community Respiratory CNS	Cardigan
Diana McKay	46	Health Visitor	Brynteg Surgery

Jayne Williams	45	Health Visitor	Glan Amman
Kate Gard	42	Senior Sister	Penlan Clinic, Carmarthen
Judith Bowler	42	Senior Sister	Aberystwyth Sexual Health Clinic
Mariwyn Jones	40	Health Visitor	Crymych
Karen Ryan	40	Head of Occupational Health	PPH
Nicola Jane Williams	40	Occupational Health Administrator	WGH
David Edwards	40	Site Lead Superintendent Radiographer	Bronglais Hospital

British Nuclear Medicine Society Conference

The Health Board's Radiology team showcased their work at the British Nuclear Medicine Society Conference (20–22 April 2026). Contributions included a presentation by Kathy Nicholas on paediatric patient experience, with Amy Bishop chairing a session, judging posters, and presenting outreach work. Jo Clegg and Sara Evans presented posters on career transitions and ADHD in brain imaging. The team were also recognised as runners-up for the Nuclear Medicine Innovative Team of the Year Award.

Argymhelliad / Recommendation

The Board is asked to **SUPPORT** the work engaged in by the Chair since the previous meeting and note the topical areas of interest.

Amcanion: (rhaid cwblhau)

Objectives: (must be completed)

Cyfeirnod Cofrestr Risg Datix a Sgôr Cyfredol: Datix Risk Register Reference and Score:	Not Applicable
Parthau Ansawdd: Domains of Quality Quality and Engagement Act (sharepoint.com)	Not Applicable
Galluogwyr Ansawdd: Enablers of Quality: Quality and Engagement Act (sharepoint.com)	1. Leadership 2. Culture and valuing people
Amcanion Strategol y BIP: UHB Strategic Objectives:	Not Applicable

Amcanion Cynllunio Planning Objectives	Not Applicable
Amcanion Llesiant BIP: UHB Well-being Objectives: Hyperlink to HDdUHB Well-being Objectives Annual Report 2021-2022	6. Contribute to global well-being through developing international networks and sharing of expertise 8. Transform our communities through collaboration with people, communities and partners

Gwybodaeth Ychwanegol: Further Information:	
Ar sail tystiolaeth: Evidence Base:	Chairman's Diary and Correspondence
Rhestr Termau: Glossary of Terms:	Included within the body of the Report
Partïon / Pwyllgorau â ymgynhorwyd ymlaen llaw y Cyfarfod Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol: Parties / Committees consulted prior to University Health Board:	Chairman

Effaith: (rhaid cwblhau) Impact: (must be completed)	
Ariannol / Gwerth am Arian: Financial / Service:	No impact
Ansawdd / Gofal Claf: Quality / Patient Care:	Ensuring the Board and its Committees make fully informed decisions is dependent upon the quality and accuracy of the information presented and considered by those making decisions. Informed decisions are more likely to impact favourably on the quality, safety and experience of patients and staff.
Gweithlu: Workforce:	No impact
Risg: Risk:	No impact
Cyfreithiol: Legal:	No impact
Enw Da: Reputational:	No impact
Gyfrinachedd: Privacy:	No impact
Cydraddoldeb: Equality:	No EqIA is considered necessary for a paper of this type.

Jeremy Miles AS/MS
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: MA/JMHSC/1023/26

Dr Neil Wooding
Chair of Hywel Dda University Health Board
Neil.Wooding@wales.nhs.uk

April 2026

Dear Neil,

Thank you for your time recently to discuss your objectives for the coming year, and for your feedback on the renewed appraisal process. Your input is greatly appreciated and will be taken into account as we continue to refine the process for next year.

I wish to also extend my sincere appreciation for your continued dedication to NHS Wales. Your hard work and commitment to delivering high-quality services are highly valued and respected. As I prepare to conclude my tenure, I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for the professionalism you have demonstrated during a period of significant pressure across the health system.

I am acutely aware of these pressures experienced across the service, and I am confident that the Welsh Government will continue to provide the guidance and support necessary to strengthen performance, enhance productivity, and ensure that NHS Wales is equipped to meet the needs of the population it serves.

In March 2025, NHS Chairs' objectives were developed to be strategic and all-encompassing, illustrating the breadth of responsibilities of Chairs. With the exception of a small number of organisation-specific objectives, and acknowledging the differing remits of NHS bodies in Wales, 10 NHS Wales shared objectives were set, that are relevant to all NHS Chairs and reflect a shared ambition to achieve a healthier and more sustainable Wales.

I expect your objectives to be reflected in those you set for your Vice Chair, Independent Members, and Chief Executive. Before the Chief Executive's objectives are agreed upon, they should be shared with Jacqueline Totterdell, NHS Wales Chief Executive for consideration and comment. This ensures alignment with the priorities set by myself and the Welsh Government.

The agreed shared objectives are below for information. You will also receive a template that includes examples of the type of actions we expect to see taken, and the level of reporting we expect to receive in response to each objective. These actions and measures have been renewed for 2026/27 to ensure they remain accurate and aligned with current priorities or renewed policies. Your performance in 2025/26 will be used as a baseline for

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0300 0604400

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Correspondence.Jeremy.Miles@gov.wales

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.

measuring performance in subsequent years, and the template will be used as a basis for the end of year discussion in Spring 2027.

Your organisation-specific objectives are also below, which have been updated for 2026/27. Please take some time to read through carefully, and respond with your agreement to the Welsh Government's HSCEY Performance, Escalation and Intervention Team.

The 2026/27 NHS Wales Chairs' shared objectives:

Quality and Safety

1. Ensure Patient Safety is a priority
2. Seek improved health outcomes, access to services and experiences for the population and patients

Culture and Leadership

3. Promote equality, diversity and inclusion
4. Shape organisational culture
5. Provide strong leadership

Strategy and Planning

6. Improve resource allocation
7. Encourage collaboration with others

Governance and Accountability

8. Monitor performance
9. Ensure robust oversight and accountability mechanisms are in place
10. Promote high ethical standards

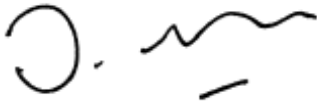
In addition to the above, organisation-specific objectives relevant to your priorities as Chair of Hywel Dda University Health Board are included below:

Organisation Specific

1. Deliver the major programme commitments – planned care, urgent and emergency care, primary care and mental health and a detailed action plan in response to the all-Wales Maternity and Neonatal Assurance Assessment.
2. Deliver the delivery expectations and enabling actions within the NHS Wales Planning Framework.
3. Implement the clinical services plan once agreed, ensuring that all temporary service changes are resolved.
4. Agree with SBUHB – four key deliverables to be completed through the Southwest Wales - Joint Regional Committee that will demonstrate improved patient outcomes.

I would be grateful if you could agree the organisation-specific objectives in writing to PerformanceAndEscalation@gov.wales.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'J' followed by a series of wavy lines and a short horizontal stroke at the end.

Jeremy Miles AS/MS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care

Copy: Chief Executives of Local Health Boards, NHS Trusts and Special Health Authorities
Directors of Governance/Board Secretaries of Local Health Boards, NHS Trusts and Special Health Authorities