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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Aneurin Bevan
University Health Board

2023/24

Annual Equality Report



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Foreword

I am pleased to endorse the publication of Aneurin Bevan University Health Board's 2023-24 Annual Equality Report, which summarises how the Health Board has performed in meeting its legal duties as set out in the Equality Act (2010) and the Human Rights Act (1998).

Through collaboration with our partners, the Health Board is hugely committed to delivering better health outcomes for our disadvantaged communities, increasing the diversity of our workforce, and improving their experiences in the workplace by ensuring that people are at the heart of everything we do.

Our Board members are committed to creating an inclusive environment for the workforce and are actively engaging with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training and initiatives in order to confidently lead this complex and challenging agenda. Individual Board members have also committed to actively promoting equality, diversity and inclusion, as well as championing and sponsoring our staff networks.

I hope that you enjoy reading about the progress we have made over the past year, and as we review our Strategic Equality Plan for the next 4 years, I invite you to get in touch if you have any comments for us on how we can continue to improve.

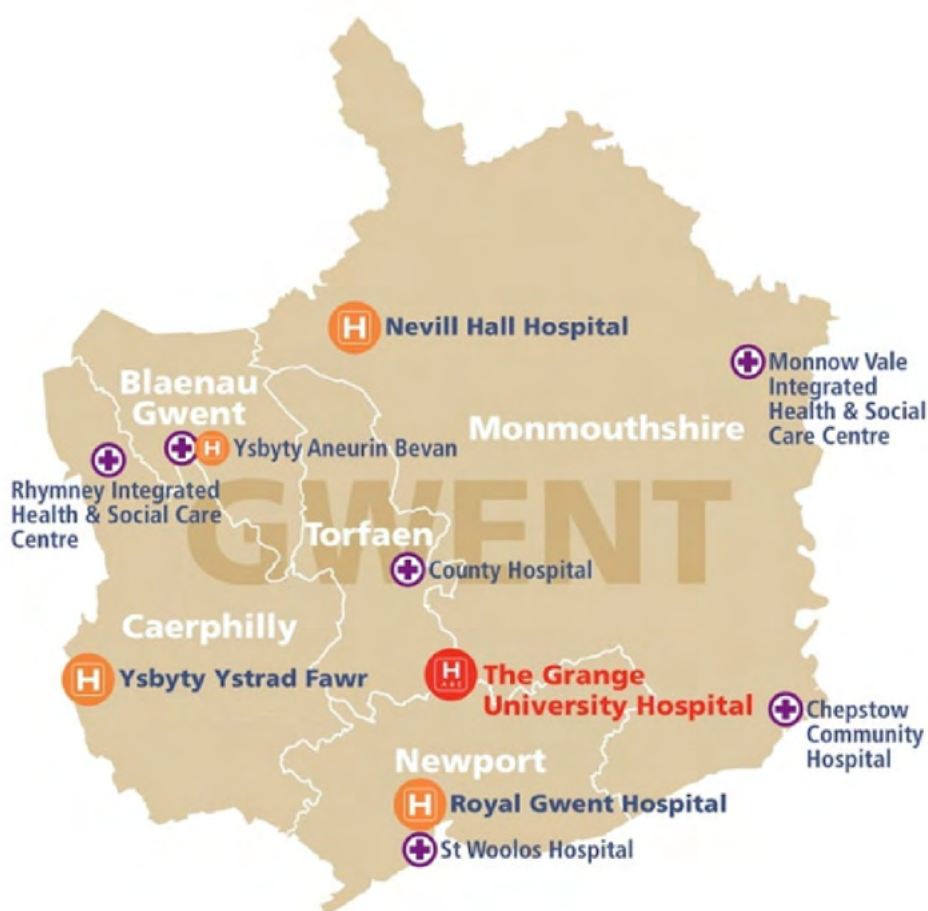
Nicola Prygodzicz

Chief Executive Officer



Our Health Board

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board was established in October 2009 and achieved 'University' status in December 2013. The Health Board's principal role is to ensure the effective planning and delivery of our local NHS system, within a robust governance framework, to achieve the highest standards of patient safety and public service delivery, improve health and reduce inequalities and achieve the best possible outcomes for our citizens, and in a manner that promotes human rights. To fulfil this role, we are required to work with our partners and stakeholders in the best interests of the population we serve. As a Health Board, we serve the population of Gwent which reflects the five local authority areas: Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen. The Demographics of Gwent are varied and include rural countryside areas, urban centres and the most easterly of the south Wales valleys.



Our Legal Requirements

The Equality Act (2010) provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.

It provides Britain with a discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

Section 149 of the Equality Act (2010) requires us to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which places a statutory duty on the Health Board to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

Our Health Board also has a specific duty under the PSED to publish information to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duties, at least annually and set equality objectives, at least every 4 years.

The Equality Act provides protection for people with protected characteristics. These are:

- Disability
- Race
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Sexuality
- Gender reassignment
- Age
- Sex
- Religion and belief
- Marriage and civil partnership

Our Commitment

The Health Board's current Strategic Equality Plan (SEP), was reviewed and published in March 2020, under the Public Sector Equality Duty which supports the Equality Act (2010).

Recognising that promoting equality and human rights is key to securing the best possible life chances and health outcomes for the people we serve. the SEP is committed to supporting a human rights-based approach to how we work, making human rights principles and standards real in practice.



Our Strategic Equality Objectives for 2020 - 2024 are:

1. Work in partnership to reduce all hate crime.
2. Work in partnership to reduce the incidence of domestic abuse, 'honour' based violence and elder abuse.
3. Work in partnership with carers to continue awareness raising, provide information, and improve practical support for carers.
4. Improve the wellbeing and engagement of our staff.
5. Improve patient experience by ensuring services are sensitive to the needs of all and prioritise areas where evidence shows take-up of services is lower or outcomes are worse.
6. Improve the access, experience and outcomes of those who require Mental Health and Learning Disability services.
7. Improve the experience of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) service users and staff.
8. Gender and Pay – Develop a fuller understanding of the reasons for any differences in pay and take the necessary action to address this.

Our Workforce in Numbers

It is both a requirement and good practice to know the composition of our workforce so that issues of under-representation can be addressed and needs can be provided for. Behind every number and statistic, there is a person whose story matters. All figures presented here are based upon data from the NHS ESR (Electronic Staff Record) payroll systems as of the latest snapshot date (31st March 2023). The data relates only to Health Board staff employed on Agenda for Change terms and conditions.

82%

**of the workforce
are female**

Our workforce is predominately female (over 80%), which reflects the majority of NHS Health Boards in Wales.

Gender breakdown by headcount equates to Female – 12189 and Male – 2753, total headcount is 14942.

The data collection continues to improve as only 28.82% of data is Unspecified. The collection of disability data has improved by 22.18% from March 2018. In 2018 only 49% of staff had completed this information compared to 71.18% in March 2023.

3%

**identify as having a
disability**

36%

**of our workforce
are aged over 50**

36% of our workforce are aged over 50 years of age. Employees aged 71 and over have increased this year from 70 to 74 individuals.

16% of our workforce are under 30 years of age.

Over 77% of employees identified as White. 15% have not reported their ethnicity.

Within our workforce database, we have 47 different Ethnic Origins identified which breaks down ethnicity further.

8%

of our workforce identify as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic

37%

of our workforce have identified as Christian

16% of our workforce identify as Atheist., 2% as Muslim. and 1% as Hindu.

10% of the workforce have expressed that they do not want to disclose their religion/ belief and another 23.93% are unspecified.

24% of the workforce have not disclosed their sexual orientation and 2.64% have identified they have declined to provide the information.

Over 70% of the workforce have identified as heterosexual/ straight.

3%

of our workforce identify as LGB+

Further information can be found in the Equality Monitoring Report 2023/24.

Please note, that some individuals feel the ESR data items and values relating to certain protected characteristics do not meet their needs. In addition, data sets can be adversely affected by the proportion of blank entries or the selection of options such as 'I do not wish to disclose'.

Monitoring our Progress

The Chief Executive Officer, together with the Board, is responsible for making sure we meet our legal duties. Progress against our Equality Objectives is reported to our People and Culture Committee.

Our Race and LGBTQ+ Advisory Groups and six Staff Diversity Networks – Carers@ABUHB, Enable@ABUHB, Menopause@ABUHB, Neurodiversity@ABUHB, Pride@ABUHB, Voices@ABUHB – also play a vital role in reviewing and shaping our work going forward.

Our Achievements

This section of our report outlines our progress in the final year of our Strategic Equality Plan, April 2023 - March 2024. During the reporting period, the Health Board achieved a number of milestones to support our Equality Objectives:



- We have continued to meet the communication needs of patients. Staff have access to a range of translation services. These are provided by Language Line, Big Word, Sign Live and The Wales Interpretation and Translation Service (WITS). These services are available 24 hours, 365 days a year and include Telephone and face-to-face; interpretation for Deaf people or hearing-impaired people; and document translation services. For the year 2023 to date, BSL interpretation accounted for the highest rate of interpretation allocation (24%), followed by Arabic, Bengali, Polish, and Romanian.

- We continued to increase our sector-specific equality communications (through newsletters and the reviewed equality staff intranet pages) to promote greater awareness of equality and to share more examples of excellent equality practices internally.
- We engaged with numerous campaigns and events such as Give Racism the Red Card, National Staff Network Day, NHS Wales Equality Week, Pride Month, Black History Month, etc.



- We continued to deliver a suite of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training sessions including Gender Identity Training; Introduction to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; Neurodiversity Awareness; Equality Impact Assessment Training; Reasonable Adjustments Training; etc.
- In April 2023, Race Equality First was commissioned to provide Cultural Awareness training to the Board.
- The EDI and Welsh Language Team have co-facilitated workshops exploring EDI and language on the Nursing and Midwifery Leadership Academy Programme.
- An Inclusive Leadership workshop has been introduced to the Leading People Programme.
- We continue to monitor compliance against mandatory equality training. As of April 2023, we have achieved 85.37% mandatory equality training compliance, an improvement against the 82.10% completion rate achieved in 2021-2022.

- In February 2024, the Health Board launched its Medic Mentor 'buddy' scheme. The Scheme aims to support IMGs (International Medical Graduates) transitioning into the workforce and life in the UK. This well-structured program aims to connect new NHS members with experienced colleagues, fostering a nurturing environment for shared learning and mutual support. By providing personalised guidance from those familiar with the intricacies of the NHS system, this scheme aims to better facilitate the transition of new IMGs into their roles.



- The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Welsh Language Teams were awarded a Widening Participation Grant from Health Education in Wales to develop and deliver a project that aims to introduce Year 6 pupils to the world of medicine and healthcare. This involves the co-development of a 'Health and Social Care Career and Work-related Experience Toolkit' for Teachers that aligns with the Curriculum for Wales for 3 – 16-year-olds.
- A review of our current Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) process has been undertaken during the reporting period to ensure that robust, transparent assessments are produced and monitored for all service and policy developments. EQIA is a tool that helps us to place equality, diversity, cohesion and integration at the heart of everything we do and make sure our strategies, policies, services and functions do what they are intended to do and for everybody.
- In response to the rising cost of living, a Financial Wellbeing Group has been developed to oversee the development and curation of financial wellbeing support and advice resources to support staff and patients in navigating financial hardship.

- We have taken part in national events celebrating the diversity of our people and communities, this has included NHS Wales Equality Week events and Pride Cymru.

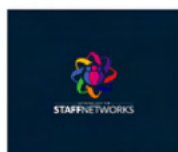


- We have continued to promote our staff networks to encourage confidence in our workplace culture and help people bring their whole selves to work. We have developed a framework for our Staff Networks to ensure that they have robust Terms of Reference and Annual Work Plans. In addition, during the reporting period, we welcomed new Executive Sponsors for each of our Staff Networks to provide visibility and leadership across the organisation.



"The Carers staff network allows a safe space to meet, empathise, discuss experiences, network and support their peers and build a workplace community based on their shared identity. This includes signposting and practical support".

Naheed Ashraf, Regional Strategic Carers Programme Lead

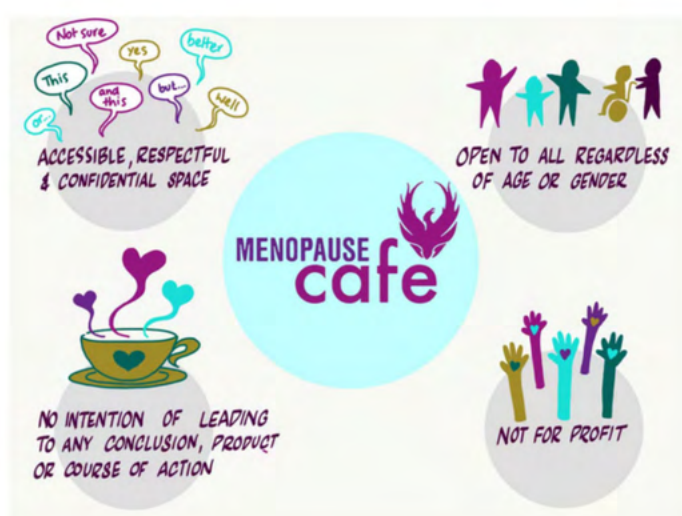


"I have recognised that there is a real lack of awareness in understanding of my own ADHD and personal challenges associated with that, in the work environment. There is a significant amount of work needed to raise awareness of many Neurodiversity challenges and the Network is a critical foundation in supporting this work and creating a safe and empowering employer in ABUHB".

Alyson Turtle, Health Visitor.



- Our comprehensive Employee Wellbeing Service continues to deliver expert clinical support to staff, through individual counselling and therapeutic support <https://aneurinbevanwellbeing.co.uk/>
- Following feedback from staff, we have reviewed our Personal Appraisal and Development Review (PADR) to ensure staff have the opportunity to discuss their wellbeing with their manager.
- During the reporting period, the Health Board has achieved Disability Confident Employer at level 2 of the Disability Confident scheme. Work is underway to achieve level 3.
- The Health Board has continued to raise awareness of shared parental leave, flexible working and agile working across a wider range of roles, developing an Agile Working Toolkit and launching several flexible working pilots.



- 5 workplaces are engaged with Diverse Cymru's Cultural Competency Scheme. Diverse Cymru's Cultural Competence Certification Scheme is an award winning workplace development tool to help organisations implement good workplace practice, ensuring services are fair and equitable for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people in Wales.
- Menopause support for staff has continued during the reporting period. Monthly staff Menopause Cafes have been facilitated, in addition to Menopause Awareness training sessions.

What is the menopause?

What are the symptoms?
How can I manage them?

What treatments are available?
IS HRT safe?

Get answers to all of your questions

Join a **Menopause Awareness Session** with our Menopause experts

E-mail: OAKReferrals.ABB@wales.nhs.uk
or call: **01495 768645** to register!



- In collaboration with our Person-Centred Care Team, we will continue to engage with the people who use the services we provide to ensure that we identify any potential inequalities faced by different groups, which require our focus and action to address them.
- In September 2023, the Health Board's Person-Centred Care Team were declared the winner of the Health and Wellbeing Award at the GAVO Volunteer Awards.



- In June 2023, the Person-Centred Dementia Care Team hosted the Gwent Regional Dementia Conference. Featuring talks from various healthcare professionals including nurses, clinical scientists, dieticians, service managers and even Dragons Rugby's Inclusion Officer, the event focused on sharing knowledge and improving dementia care.



- The Health Board is a key partner of the Southeast Wales Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Partnership Board and in the delivery of the Gwent Regional Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2018-2023.
- The Health Board has continued to raise awareness and understanding among staff of how to report hate crime and support colleagues who are victims of abuse/hate crime. Work continues with multi-agency partners to raise awareness and respond positively to victims of hate crime. This has included sharing information, resources and upcoming events and training opportunities.
- The Health Board has maintained its Corporate Health Standard awards at both Gold and Platinum.



- In July 2023, the Staff Wellbeing Survey introduced questions related to Equality and Inclusion, this will allow the Health Board to gain insights into our employees' experiences and establish programs that foster safer and more inclusive workplaces.
- The Health Board took part in the Volunteer to Career programme. The project funding ended in June 2023, but we have developed a pathway and secured funding to trial a 'Wellbeing Assistant' Volunteer to Career post as 'proof of concept'. We will evaluate this and determine how such an innovative post can be mainstreamed into our workforce plans.



- The Health Board has voluntarily committed to undertake an annual Race Pay Gap Audit. This data set will be collated alongside workforce demography and local population needs assessments to establish an evidence base to inform further the Health Board's implementation plan moving forward.
- The Health Board is working in partnership with Cardiff University, to undertake an analysis of our gender pay gap to inform the action required by the 'equal pay duty', to ensure its effectiveness.
- We continue to maintain membership in the Stonewall Diversity Champions programme.
- A HR Caseload tracker is in development to monitor EDI-related cases. This data will provide a valuable baseline to monitor progress against the equality objectives and inform future planning.
- Funded by the Anti-Racist Wales Culture, Heritage and Sports Fund, the Health Board launched the Seen Project exhibit in February 2024. In partnership with Race Council Cymru, and in collaboration with staff, the local community and schools, the Seen Project aims to use art as a vehicle to drive conversation about representation across the Health Board. Commissioning Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic regional artists to immortalise the contributions of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff, past and present, to health care in Gwent.



Spotlight on...

Visual Impairment Awareness



In December 2023, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team welcomed David Chaffey as a Disability Inclusion Officer.

David has worked for the Health Board for the last 19 years, as part of the Switchboard Team and is an active member of the Disability Advisory Group. David is also a Unison Disability and Young Members Representative, as well as a member of Welsh Ambulance Service Trust's Community Partnership Group.

A key element of David's new role is to deliver Visual Impairment Awareness Training to Health Board staff.

An interactive, practical awareness session, the Visual Impairment Awareness Training, simulates different levels of visual impairment for participants and highlights the fundamental principles that can be reasonably applied to home, work and public places to support wayfinding and accessibility for people with visual impairment.



"Excellent session! It's given me a real understanding of some of the challenges people who are visually impaired face, as well as highlighting their capabilities" - HR Officer.

Spotlight on...

Internationally Educated Nurses



Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs) bring a wealth of skills, expertise, and passion to roles within the NHS. They make an incredible contribution to the Health Board. In May 2023, staff organised an event at the Royal Gwent Hospital to celebrate the work of IENs.

Nurses often leave families abroad for long durations to work. There are approximately 500 Internationally Educated Nurses working across the Health Board, with the majority from the Philippines and India. But with many also from Africa, Pakistan, Fiji Albania, and other EU countries. The first nurses were recruited over 20 years ago in 2001 and again in 2019.

"The first ever IENs event is an initiative project spearheaded by IEN leaders across the health board who are passionate about delivering support, promoting awareness, and creating a safe space for our shared values, celebration of culture and tradition in a diverse working environment like us. We recognise that Internationally trained nurses play a vital role in sustaining a robust workforce in our health board through delivering our core services to our population...With the success of our first-ever IENs event, we look forward to making this an annual event in the future with the support of our Nurse leaders. With our heartfelt gratitude, we are thankful for all the nurses, healthcare professionals and nurse leaders who showed their support and celebrated with us every day of our working lives." - Clinical Research Nurse Specialist, Regina Reyes.

Spotlight on...

LGBTQ+ History



In February 2022, in partnership with Gwent members of the Proud Councils network, the Health Board invited the Gwent public to review and add to the Gwent LGBTQ+ Timeline, curated by Author and Historian Norena Shopland.

The timeline is one in a series of timelines being produced by Hanes LHDT+ Cymru / LGBTQ+ Research Group Wales, to highlight key moments in Wales' LGBTQ+ story

Shopland utilised her Welsh historic material collection on sexual orientations and gender identities to inform the timeline, as well as stories and information from those that contributed to the Hanes LHDT+ Cymru / LGBTQ+ Research Group Wales.

In June 2023, the Gwent Timeline was launched in Caerphilly Pride, the first-ever Pride celebration in the county.

The timeline remains a live document and we are continuously encouraging staff and the public to submit their stories to be included and look forward to continuing to collate the rich and illustrious history of the LGBTQ+ community in Gwent.



Spotlight on...

The Carers Voice



During December 2023, the Carers Network and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team hosted a series of Staff Carers Drop-in sessions to engage with staff members who are unpaid carers.

42 members of staff engaged with the sessions and were signposted to support themselves as unpaid carers or to provide for patients and families in their professional roles.

"I really appreciated having the opportunity to talk with the team about what support was available to me...you don't know what you don't know, and I had no idea what was out there in terms of services and support!"

Having someone listen makes a huge difference, as caring can be very lonely" - Staff Member

Grŵp Iechyd Prifysgol
Amorfael Bevan
University Health Board

Are you an unpaid carer? Do you want to know more about the support available to you?



STAFF CARERS DROP-IN

- Monday 11 December 12:00 - 14:00pm - RGH Canteen
- Tuesday 12 December 12:00 - 14:00 pm NHH Canteen
- Thursday 14 December 12:00 - 14:00pm GUH Canteen
- Friday 15 December 12:00 - 14:00pm Education Centre YYF

Spotlight on...

Dementia



The Person-Centred Dementia Care Team is committed to supporting the workforce to deliver and embed the highest standard of dementia care for patients and carers.

- We have Dementia Companion volunteers to engage and assist patients in meaningful activities
- We have provided over 42 wards with Meaningful Activity Baskets. Included in these baskets are resources such as paints, crafts, Empathy Dolls and sensory objects of comfort, including Assistive Technology Equipment.
- We have a training programme open to all staff
- We have a network of Dementia Champions across the Health Board
- We have Assistive Technology – RITAs, Hugs, Dolls to alleviate anxiety and loneliness
- We have Dementia Friendly Environmental Audits and Action Plans to change the way our wards look and feel
- We have a dedicated team to support the Dementia work
- We have a dedicated email address for direct access to the team – abb.pccctdementia@wales.nhs.uk
- We have a dedicated link for Volunteers and Dementia Companion.

Conclusion & Forward Look



This is the final year of our current Strategic Equality Plan and it is important to recognise that, since its publication in 2020, the world we live in has changed, and so too has the way our NHS operates.

Alongside the 'Black Lives Matter' and 'Me Too' movements and the cost of living crisis, the global COVID-19 pandemic magnified and focused attention on the impact of socio-economic inequality, health inequalities, racism and other discriminatory behaviours and actions on our NHS staff, our key workers more widely, and our diverse communities. To address these differential outcomes, we need to move beyond legal compliance and utilise the power of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion to transform the culture of our organisation. During the reporting period, we have undertaken engagement and consultation to develop a revised Plan to take us from April 2024 - March 2028.

Our reviewed Plan will set our vision, aims and objectives to create a fair, just and equal culture across Aneurin Bevan University Health Board over the next four years.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the contributions of people who worked tirelessly on the projects mentioned within:

- Our Staff Diversity Networks: Carers@ABUHB, Enable@ABUHB, Menopause@ABUHB, Neurodiversity@ABUHB, Pride@ABUHB, Voices@ABUHB.
- Our Race Advisory and LGBTQ+ Advisory Groups.
- Indu Jacob, Elizabeth Tonio and the Internationally Educated Nurses Cafe.
- Disability Inclusion Officer, David Chaffey.
- Regional Strategic Carers Programme Lead, Naheed Ashraf.
- Clinical Research Nurse Specialist, Regina Reyes.
- Aneurin Bevan University Health Board's Medical Education Team and Consultant Physician and Assistant Medical Director, Dr Jaideep Kitson.
- Aneurin Bevan University Health Board's Person-Centred Care Team.
- Aneurin Bevan University Health Board's Workforce & Organisational Development Teams.
- Diverse Cymru.
- Race Council Cymru.
- Race Equality First.

We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to contribute to our Equality Objectives.



Website

<https://abuhb.nhs.wales/>



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