BWRDD IECHYD PRIFYSGOLN ANEURIN BEVAN/ANEURIN BEVAN UNIVERSITY HEALTH BOARD

DATE OF MEETING	**Monday 28th September 2026 at 09:00**
VENUE	**Conference Centre, St Cadoc's Hospital and Microsoft Teams**

PRESENT	Andrew Morgan	Chair
	William Smart	Vice Chair
	Paul Deneen	Independent Member (Community)
	Dafydd Vaughan	Independent Member (Digital)
	Neil Patrick	Independent Member (Community)
	Penny Jones	Independent Member (Community)
	Akmal Hanuk	Independent Member (Third Sector)
	Helen Sweetland	Independent Member (University)
	Helen Cunningham	Independent Member (Local Authority)
	Iwan Jones	Independent Member (Finance)
	Vivek Goel	Independent Member (Trade Union)
	Nicola Prygodzicz	Chief Executive
	Leanne Watkins	Chief Operating Officer
	Tracy Daszkiewicz	Director of Public Health
	Jennifer Winslade	Director of Nursing
	Rob Holcombe	Director of Finance & Procurement
	Paul Solloway	Director of Digital
	Hannah Evans	Director of Strategy, Planning and Partnerships
	Sarah Simmonds	Director of Workforce and OD
	Dr Seema Srivastava	Medical Director
	Peter Carr	Director of AHPs and Health Science
IN ATTENDANCE	Rani Dash	Director of Corporate Governance
	Naomi Murtagh	Head of Board Business
	Lisa Charles	Regional Director, Llais Cymru
	Karen Newman	Assistant Director of Communication & Engagement
	Thoko Owino	Aspiring Board Member

APOLOGIES		

	PRELIMINARY MATTERS
ABUHB 2809/01	**Welcome and Introductions** The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular members of the public who had joined the meeting to observe. It was noted that the meeting would be livestreamed and published on the Health Board's website following the meeting.
ABUHB 2809/02	**Declarations of Interest for Noting** There were no declarations of interest raised.
ABUHB 2809/03	**Consent Agenda** The Chair introduced the Consent Agenda and asked if there were any items to be brought forward for discussion. There were no requests made.
ABUHB 2809/04	**Update from the Chair** Andrew Morgan (AM), Chair, provided an update on key activities undertaken since the previous Board meeting. • The Chair reported positive progress in finance and urgent and emergency care, recognising the efforts of staff and Executive colleagues in improving ambulance handovers and patient flow. Whilst performance had improved significantly, operational pressures remained. • The Board heard that Welsh Government and NHS Performance and Improvement had recognised the progress made by the Health Board. Encouraging progress had also been made against financial savings targets, although the underlying financial position remained challenging. • The Chair provided an update on development of the national Well-led framework, which sought to strengthen

	consistency around expectations, escalation and de-escalation arrangements across NHS Wales and was expected to be finalised in the coming months. Paul Deneen (PD), Independent Member, sought assurance regarding the alignment of the Well-led framework with compassionate leadership. The Chair advised that discussions had focused on strengthening collaboration, consistency and accountability, and that Well-led reviews could provide valuable assurance when applied appropriately and consistently. The Board **NOTED** the update from the Chair.
ABUHB 2809/05	**Update from the Chief Executive** Nicola Prygodzicz (NP), Chief Executive, provided an update on key organisational priorities and activities, including: • The Chief Executive recognised the efforts of staff in improving urgent and emergency care through delivery of the Rapid Release Protocol and discharge initiatives, which had contributed to improvements in patient flow, ambulance response times and delayed discharges. Performance and quality indicators continued to be monitored to ensure improvements remained sustainable. • The Chief Executive highlighted cancer services as an ongoing priority, noting that the Audit Wales report had recognised increasing demand and activity whilst identifying challenges across a number of tumour sites. Work had continued to inform the development of the future cancer plan. • The Chief Executive reported that additional Welsh Government funding had been identified to support planned care recovery and diagnostic performance. Positive progress in cataract and endoscopy services had been demonstrated during a recent ministerial visit to Nevill Hall Hospital. The Chief Executive and the Chair had also visited Llantrisant Health Park and discussed future opportunities for the development, particularly in relation to orthopaedic services.

	• The Board heard that place-based care remained a key strategic priority, with continued focus on prevention, community support and reducing avoidable hospital attendance. • The Chief Executive reflected on the recent mental health "Let's Do" summit, which had focused on partnership working and service improvement, with three projects identified for further testing over the next 90 days. • The Chief Executive highlighted recent climate awareness activity and the importance of strengthening understanding of the Health Board's environmental responsibilities. The Board also noted recent staff recognition events and congratulated teams shortlisted for Royal College of Nursing and NHS Wales Awards. The Board **NOTED** the update from the Chief Executive.
ABUHB 2809/06	**Cancer Services: Priority Programme & Review End of Strategy** Leanne Watkins (LW), Chief Operating Officer, presented the Cancer Programme Priority Review and Cancer Strategy Evaluation 2020–2025. LW reported continued growth in demand and variable performance between tumour sites. The Board heard that suspected cancer referrals had continued to increase and that, in some areas, demand had grown faster than improvements in diagnostic and treatment capacity. A cancer recovery plan had been developed, with particular focus on lower gastrointestinal and urology pathways, alongside proposals for a Cancer Command Centre to strengthen oversight, patient tracking and pathway management. Board members sought assurance regarding delivery against trajectories, clinical outcomes, screening inequalities, tertiary pathways, research and workforce sustainability. LW advised that weekly reporting had been introduced for tumour sites



	below trajectory and that a pilot Cancer Command Centre had been planned, subject to funding. The refreshed cancer plan would place greater emphasis on measurable outcomes, prevention, personalised care, research and a sustainable workforce. The Board heard that work had continued to improve information sharing with tertiary providers and distinguish delays arising within and outside the Health Board. The Board **NOTED** the contents of the Cancer Programme Priority Review. The Board **NOTED** the contents of the Cancer Strategy Evaluation 2020–2025.
ABUHB 2809/07	**Priority Programme Review: Place Based Care** Tracy Daszkiewicz (TD), Director of Public Health, presented the Priority Programme Review for Place-Based Care. TD advised that Place-Based Care had been positioned as the delivery mechanism for the Gwent 2035 Strategy, supporting a shift towards prevention, proactive support and community-based partnership working. The programme had built upon existing local structures and sought to improve the use of population data and community intelligence to understand inequalities and local need. Board members sought assurance regarding the move from design to delivery, community leadership and engagement, sustainable funding, the targeted use of resources and avoidance of duplication. TD advised that Integrated Services Partnership Boards had supported community and workforce involvement and that capacity and cost models had been developed to identify existing resources and gaps. The Board heard that Welsh Government had confirmed continued support for health and social care integration, although the value and conditions of future funding had not yet



	been confirmed. Members emphasised that responsibility for prevention extended across the Health Board and would need to remain embedded within clinical and strategic programmes. Nicola Prygodzicz (NP), Chief Executive, emphasised that the next phase would require delivery across the 26 identified places, supported by local data and clearly defined outcomes. The Board **NOTED** the context, policy alignment and framing for the Health Board's strategic programme for Place-Based Care and its pivotal role in driving the Gwent 2035 Strategy forward. The Board **NOTED** the progress made to date. The Board **NOTED** the key next steps and further work required.
ABUHB 2809/08	**Integrated Performance Report** Hannah Evans (HE), Director of Strategy, Planning and Partnerships, presented the operational performance position. Improvement had continued in diabetes care, community pharmacy and optometry activity, ambulance handovers and long waits, although diagnostics, orthopaedics, audiology and outpatient follow-ups had remained areas of challenge. Mental health services had continued to perform positively against key standards. Ambulance handover performance had met the relevant de-escalation criteria. However, pathway of care delays had deteriorated during September and would remain a focus of the Urgent and Emergency Care and Winter Plans. Sarah Simmonds (SS), Director of Workforce and Organisational Development, reported that workforce indicators had remained broadly stable, with reductions in high-cost variable pay. Sickness absence had remained a concern and continued to be addressed through local and national interventions.



	Jennifer Winslade (JW), Director of Nursing, reported positive patient experience, improved incident reporting timescales and mortality within the expected range. Further work had remained necessary to improve incident closure and learning and to address gram-negative and Staphylococcus aureus infections. Safeguarding performance had remained strong. Board members sought assurance regarding pathway of care delays, outpatient follow-up arrangements, 12-hour emergency department waits and stroke performance. The Board heard that improvements in ambulance handovers had not displaced risk elsewhere and that work had continued to improve patient flow, staffing models and alternative pathways. Peter Carr (PC), Director of Allied Health Professions and Health Science, confirmed that stroke patients had received the necessary scans, although performance against the 20-minute standard had remained below the required level. Improvement work had continued with radiology and national partners. The Board **NOTED** the progress against key performance metrics using the latest available validated information. The Board **NOTED** the insight and actions identified in the context of performance achievement. The Board **NOTED** the progress against the planned milestones as at Quarter 1.
ABUHB 2809/09	**Month 05 2026/27, Financial Performance Report** Robert Holcombe (RH), Director of Finance and Procurement, presented the Month 05 2026/27 Financial Performance Report. RH reported a year-to-date revenue deficit of £30 million and a forecast year-end deficit of £41.6 million, both in line with plan. Savings of £11 million had been delivered against a planned £6 million within the £45 million savings requirement, although recurrent savings had remained approximately £8 million below requirement.



	The Board heard that all identified savings schemes had been assessed as green or amber, although delivery had remained dependent upon timing and operational circumstances. Approximately £3 million of additional cost pressures had required mitigation, with risks relating to resident doctors, energy, Joint Commissioning Committee savings and winter costs. Board members sought assurance regarding recurrent delivery and further mitigations. RH advised that work had continued to accelerate workforce savings and strengthen controls over variable pay, procurement and non-pay expenditure. The Board **NOTED** the Month 05 2026/27 financial position, including the year-to-date deficit, forecast year-end position and progress against the savings requirement. The Board **NOTED** the financial risks and further mitigating actions required.
ABUHB 2809/10	**Winter Plan** Hannah Evans (HE), Director of Strategy, Planning and Partnerships, presented the Winter Plan 2026/27 and learning from winter 2025/26. HE advised that attendances and admissions during the previous winter had increased by approximately 10%, contributing to high bed occupancy, increased pathway of care delays and a critical incident in January 2026. The emerging plan had focused on preventing avoidable admissions, protecting acute capacity, accelerating discharge and strengthening system oversight and escalation. No additional Welsh Government winter funding had been expected at that stage, and available resources had already been substantially committed to existing pressures.

	Board members sought assurance regarding demand modelling, surge capacity, pathway of care delays, trusted assessor(s) and available resources. HE advised that modelling for October 2026 to March 2027 would inform surge arrangements. Trusted assessor(s) had not yet been fully implemented across all sites, while finance, workforce and data sharing had remained key delivery risks. The Board **NOTED** the learning from winter 2025/26 and the development of the Winter Plan 2026/27. The Board **NOTED** the proposed priorities, actions and system-wide arrangements for managing winter demand. The Board **NOTED** the risks associated with workforce capacity, funding, pathway of care delays and delivery of the planned interventions.
ABUHB 2809/11	**Maternity & Neonatal Services Annual Report** Jennifer Winslade (JW), Director of Nursing, presented the Maternity and Neonatal Services Annual Report. JW reported improved early access to antenatal care, perinatal optimisation and infection prevention measures. Compliance with the perinatal optimisation bundle for babies born before 34 weeks had increased to 74%. The rate of hypoxic-ischaemic encephalopathy had reduced, while overall maternity experience had been reported positively by 85% of women. Board members sought assurance regarding medical staffing and the potential impact on service safety and culture. JW advised that challenges had remained within the neonatal resident doctor workforce. Seema Srivastava (SS), Medical Director, confirmed that safe staffing arrangements had been in place and that discussions with Health Education and Improvement Wales had continued. Staff listening had also informed a multidisciplinary improvement plan.



	The Board **NOTED** the Maternity and Neonatal Services Annual Report and the progress made in improving access, quality, safety and patient experience. The Board **NOTED** the continuing workforce challenges within neonatal services and the actions being taken to maintain safe staffing and strengthen the position.
ABUHB 2809/12	**Quality Annual Report** Jennifer Winslade (JW), Director of Nursing, presented the Quality Annual Report and outlined progress made during 2025/26 in strengthening the quality management system and embedding the duties of quality and candour. JW highlighted strengthened governance, wider patient feedback, improved incident oversight and increased quality improvement capability, including improvement staff embedded within divisions and 70 staff trained as improvement coaches. Board members sought assurance regarding sustained impact, consistent implementation, timely closure of incidents and audit actions, unwarranted variation and reliable validated data. JW acknowledged that assurance had remained more limited in these areas and advised that the 2026/27 priorities would focus on avoidable harm, deterioration, clinical effectiveness, accessible care, quality intelligence and measurable improvement. The Board **NOTED** the progress made during 2025/26 in strengthening the Health Board's quality management system. The Board **RECEIVED** the Quality Annual Report for assurance. The Board **NOTED** the areas where assurance had remained limited, particularly where sustained impact, consistent implementation, timely action closure, reduced unwarranted

	variation or reliable validated data had not yet been demonstrated. The Board **SUPPORTED** the priorities identified for 2026/27.
ABUHB 2809/13	**Health, Safety & Fire Annual Report** Peter Carr (PC), Director of Allied Health Professions and Health Science, presented the Health, Safety and Fire Annual Report. PC reported strengthened leadership, governance and compliance during 2025/26. Annual fire risk assessments had been completed, although residual risks associated with the ageing estate, fire compartmentation and alarm systems had continued to require investment and remediation. Violence and aggression had remained a significant workforce risk, particularly in emergency care, mental health and community lone working. Board members sought assurance regarding support and prosecution arrangements. PC advised that case managers had supported staff and liaised with police and prosecution services, although outcomes had depended upon the available evidence and willingness of affected staff to proceed. Manual handling compliance had deteriorated and work had commenced to revise the training model and strengthen local accountability. The Board **NOTED** the Health, Safety and Fire Annual Report and the progress made during 2025/26. The Board **NOTED** the residual risks relating to the ageing estate, manual handling compliance and violence and aggression towards staff. The Board **NOTED** the actions being taken to strengthen compliance, workforce safety and fire safety arrangements.



ABUHB 2809/14	**Welsh Language** Sarah Simmonds (SS), Director of Workforce and Organisational Development, presented the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report. SS highlighted progress in bilingual services, staff language development and community and education engagement. Staff had accessed a range of learning opportunities, including the Codi Hyder programme. The Board received a staff story video presentation featuring a neurological physiotherapist, which demonstrated how Welsh-language learning had increased the confidence and vocabulary required to use Welsh with patients, families and colleagues, particularly when supporting people affected by stroke, brain injury, anxiety or memory difficulties. The Board heard that a physiotherapy pilot would increase the availability of Welsh-language clinical consultations and that further work had been planned to promote Welsh-essential recruitment and Welsh-language healthcare careers. Board members emphasised the importance of embedding the active offer within clinical services as part of quality, communication and person-centred care. The Board **RECEIVED** the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report for assurance. The Board **NOTED** the progress made in strengthening bilingual services and supporting staff to use Welsh within the workplace. The Board **SUPPORTED** the continued development of Welsh language clinical services, staff learning and Welsh-essential recruitment.
ABUHB 2809/15	**Key Matters from Committees of the Board**



	Andrew Morgan (AM), Chair, presented the key matters and assurance reports received from the Committees of the Board and invited the relevant Committee Chairs to highlight any matters requiring further consideration. The Committee Chairs highlighted matters considered at their respective meetings, including areas of assurance, matters requiring continued oversight and issues escalated for the Board's attention. The Board heard that concerns regarding the completeness, currency and quality of consultant job plans had arisen across several areas of assurance and required collective Board consideration. AM confirmed that the Board would hold a closed meeting to discuss these concerns. The Board also noted the continued Committee oversight of financial recovery, urgent and emergency care, cancer performance, digital sustainability and the timely completion of audit and improvement actions. These matters would continue to be monitored through the relevant Committees, with any significant concerns escalated to the Board. The Board **NOTED** the key matters and assurance reports received from the Committees of the Board. The Board **NOTED** the matters requiring continued Committee oversight and further Board consideration.
ABUHB 2809/16	**Risk Management and Assurance Framework** Nicola Prygodzicz (NP), Chief Executive, presented the revised Risk Management and Assurance Framework, Risk Appetite Statement and supporting procedures. NP advised that the documents had been strengthened following feedback from the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee and wider governance discussions. The Board considered the proposed risk domains and thresholds and

	emphasised the importance of consistent application and alignment between operational, corporate and strategic risks. The Board **APPROVED** the revised Risk Management and Assurance Framework. The Board **APPROVED** the revised Risk Appetite Statement. The Board **NOTED** the supporting procedures and arrangements for implementation.
ABUHB 2809/17	**Strategic Risk Report, September 2026** Nicola Prygodzicz (NP), Chief Executive, presented the Strategic Risk Report for September 2026. NP advised that six strategic risks had remained outside the Board's agreed risk appetite and that work had continued to strengthen alignment with the supporting corporate risk registers. Board members discussed whether cyber should be recorded as a separate strategic risk. The Board heard that cyber risk had been considered by the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee, incorporated within existing digital and security risks, and would continue to be monitored through Committee and private Board reporting arrangements. The Board **NOTED** the assurance provided that the strategic risks had been appropriately identified, assessed and managed. The Board **NOTED** the six strategic risks that had remained outside the agreed risk appetite. The Board **APPROVED** the transfer of SRR 002A from the Strategic Risk Register to the Corporate Risk Register. The Board **APPROVED** the Strategic Risk Register for September 2026.



ABUHB 2809/18	**Report from Llais, Gwent Region** Lisa Charles (LC), Regional Director, Llais Gwent, presented the report and highlighted recent engagement regarding mental health, urgent and emergency care, Welsh-language services and access to dentistry. The Board heard that engagement with children, young people and communities whose voices had not routinely been represented had continued. Feedback on the 19 Hills Health and Wellbeing Centre had been positive, with suggestions for improved signage, digital access and person-centred arrangements being taken forward. LC advised that Llais had continued to work with the Health Board and primary care to resolve concerns at the earliest opportunity and support individuals through the formal complaints process where necessary. The Board **NOTED** the report from Llais, Gwent Region.
	CONSENT AGENDA
	The Board **APPROVED** the Discretionary Capital Approval Update.
ABUHB 2809/19	The Board **APPROVED** the Draft Minutes of the Health Board Meeting, held on: • **29th July 2026**
	The Board **APPROVED** the Report on Sealed Documents and Chair's Actions.
	The Board **NOTED** the Board Action Log with Updates
	The Board **NOTED** the Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response Annual Report.
	The Board **NOTED** the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment.
	The Board **NOTED** the Executive Committee Chair's report
	The Board **NOTED** the Strategic Partnership Updates: a. Regional Partnership Board b. Public Service Board
	The Board **NOTED** the overview of Joint and Partnership Committee Activity a. NHS Wales Joint Commissioning Committee



	b. NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership Committee
	The Board **NOTED** the Summary of Board Business held In-Committee
	OTHER MATTERS
ABUHB 2809/20	**Any Other Business** Paul Deneen (PD), Independent Member, requested an update on arrangements for monitoring and preventing inappropriate staff access to patient health records. Nicola Prygodzicz (NP), Chief Executive, confirmed that an update had already been scheduled for a future Board meeting. There was no further business raised.
ABUHB 2809/21	**Date of the Next Meeting:** Wednesday 18th November 2026.