



Nye's Board News

Issue 33
December 2020



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Aneurin Bevan
University Health Board

News from the Board

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) held its most recent Board meeting in public on Wednesday, 16 December 2020. The meeting was held virtually through on-line meeting software and was live streamed via the Health Board's channel on YouTube. This briefing sets out the main areas of discussion and decisions. The full report is published on the Health Boards website and can be found [here](#).

Grange University Hospital (GUH) - Early Opening update

The GUH was opened successfully on 17 November 2020, in line with the planned arrangements. A total of 111 patients were safely transferred from our enhanced local general hospital (eLGH) sites to the Grange University Hospital over a three day period.

COVID-19 configurations will always present a challenge but the hospital is currently set up to enable robust screening and separate COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 entrances.

Despite it being very early days and the need to fine tune some areas, there has been encouraging early signs of an acute hospital with a great deal of potential and with the system benefits already being realised both at GUH and the eLGHS.

Quarter 3 and 4 Operational Plan

The Board approved the Quarter 3 & 4 Operational Plan which was submitted to Welsh Government as per the revised planning framework and guidelines for NHS Wales. This quarterly operational plan replaces the Integrated Medium Term Planning process which has been paused in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Quarter 3 & 4 plan describes how the Health Board will meet the unprecedented combined challenges of:

- Ensuring the capacity to respond to COVID-19, consistent with the modelling scenarios set out by Welsh Government
- Ensuring capacity to maintain essential non-COVID-19 services and meet demand of winter pressures
- Commissioning and early opening of the new 470 bed Grange University Hospital, together with the reconfiguration of services in the remaining local general hospitals to enable greater resilience for key services during the winter period.

The Quarter 3 & 4 plan is structured around - our continuing response to COVID-19 (including infection prevention and control), essential services and key quality and safety issues, support plans for care homes and social care interface.

COVID-19 Mass Vaccination Programme.

On 02 December 2020, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency granted the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine temporary authorisation for use based on evidence of safety and effectiveness. The operational model for Gwent consists of using mass vaccination centres as the main vehicle to provide the vaccine with Mobile Units designed for outreach vaccination. The services have been planned to run seven days a week, 12 hours per day. The Welsh national planning team and the national Joint Committee for Vaccinate and Immunisations (JCVI) will prioritise the order by which the population receives the vaccine and venues have been secured in each Local Authority area.

Primary Care and Community Division - Estates Strategy

The Board approved the Estates Strategy for Primary Care and Community which sets a long-term plan with an emphasis on seamless health and social care.

The Transformational model guides the provision of services which focus on early intervention and prevention, triage and sign-posting; provision of direct access services and community connection, a multi-disciplinary primary care workforce model and the enhanced use of technological solutions. The focus is on providing Care Closer to Home and Place Based Care, with multi-agency services clustered around a community or neighbourhood.

The development of a service model across a network of Health and Wellbeing Hubs supported by our local contractors through our established Neighbourhood Care Networks (NCNs) with Enhanced Care Hubs in regional locations, will fully enable the care closer to home strategy and delivery of our service and resource objectives. The Strategy comprehensively outlines the mechanisms by which these plans can be put into action, which includes Integrated Planning Boards in place in each of the Boroughs.

Development of an Urgent Primary Care 24/7 Service

The Board were pleased to hear of the progress made on the development of a model of delivery for Urgent Care Primary Care model that addresses Urgent Primary Care demand at a practice, cluster and pan cluster level is essential in order to provide care closer to home. The COVID-19 pandemic and the increasing challenges with patients accessing services through multiple portals to meet their basic health needs reinforces the need for an Urgent Primary Care model that fits within the overall urgent care system.

The development of an Urgent Care Centre will in part assist in the simplification of the health provision and if linked to 111/Phone First, provide the right portal for a large cohort of patients.

Annual Assurance Report on Compliance with the Nursing Staffing Levels (Wales) Act

The Board received the bi-annual calculation and assessment of the measures taken to assure the Board that the Health Board is meeting the requirements of the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016.

The meeting was informed that there are ongoing difficulties with significant nurse staffing deficits associated with a high vacancy factor, this has been compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic. This risk has also been articulated within the corporate risk register.

Whilst challenging, the report also describes the collaborative, innovative and creative approach to address staffing that has been developed with the introduction of the Core Care Team Model to provide resilience to our nursing workforce and ensure the delivery of quality care for patients.

Finance

The Health Board produced a COVID-19 financial plan during April 2020, which has been updated to reflect the operational plans for Quarter 2 and then Quarters 3 & 4. Financial planning assumptions and forecasts have been based on the latest service and workforce planning assumptions.

The month 7 position is a £395k surplus and the full year forecast is break-even. The Board were also informed of the level of funding required to deliver the operational plan for 20/21, recognising that confirmation of funding assumptions will shortly be sent by Welsh Government to Health Boards.

Performance

The performance reporting of many of the national indicators has been suspended to enable the Health Board to focus on the mobilisation phase of the pandemic. In line with other Health Boards and Trusts across the UK, COVID-19 has impacted on the Health Board's services, resulting in the need to suspend some elective services and undertake major reconfiguration of wards and departments to create COVID-19 and non COVID-19 pathways.

The relaxation of monitoring arrangements included the cessation of all reporting to Welsh Government and consequently the publication of Health Board performance was suspended until the end of September 2020.

Mid-Year – IMTP Organisational Priorities

The Board were pleased to see the progress made on Ten Organisational Priorities set out in the Integrated Medium Term Plan (IMTP), which also set out the focus for action against each of these organisational priorities for the remainder of 2020/21.

The Board were informed that the reality of steering the organisation through the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted on some progress over the past six months. However, the Board were pleased to hear that for some priorities such as the early opening of the Grange University Hospital and greater digitally enabled services have been accelerated in terms of scale and pace of delivery.

Update on preparations for the end of the European Union transition period

The Board received an assurance report on the preparation work undertaken for the end of transition period on 31 December 2020 and established its European Union (EU) Transition Group in November 2018 and have attended numerous local, regional and national meetings working on the preparations for leaving the EU.

Given the uncertainty that remains on achieving a Trade Agreement, the Health Board reviewed the previous risk assessments of a no-deal Brexit, as part of the preparations for the end of the transition period. No new risks have been identified by the Health Board or partners, other than the end of the transition period is in winter, organisations are responding to the Covid-19 pandemic and recognition that further pressure may be experienced by the Health Board workforce and the population it serves.

Resetting Governance

The Board approved the future governance structure of the Health Board, which promotes a leaner Committee structure whilst maintaining effective scrutiny and assurance around the Health Boards strategic decision making, financial accountability and patient outcomes. This approach has been tested through the COVID-19 pandemic where adjusted governance arrangements were put in place and the changes will take effect from 1st April 2021.

Committee and Advisory Group Update and Assurance Reports

Assurance reports were received from assurance reports from Planning and Strategic Change Committee, Audit Committee and the Quality and Patient Safety Committee all of which had met since the last Board Meeting. An assurance report was also received from the external Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee.

The Board extended their heartfelt thanks to the ongoing dedication of all staff who have shown courage, flexibility and compassion in responding to the pandemic and the unprecedented demands on the health and social care services.