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Introduction

Allied Health professions encompass thirteen different professions namely:

| | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--|---|---|
|  <p>Physiotherapists</p> |  <p>Occupational Therapists</p> |  <p>Podiatrists</p> |  <p>Speech and Language Therapists</p> |  <p>Dietitians</p> |  <p>Practitioner Psychologists</p> |  <p>Orthotists</p> |
|  <p>Prosthetists</p> |  <p>Orthoptists</p> |  <p>Art Therapists</p> |  <p>Drama Therapists</p> |  <p>Music Therapists</p> |  <p>Paramedics</p> | |

According to the Science Evidence Advice report : NHS Ten years plus (Welsh Government, 2023), Wales is facing some of the biggest population health challenges over the next ten years., This includes a growing, ageing population who will be living longer with multi morbidities including mental health conditions, higher rates of individuals diagnosed with diabetes, dementia and cancer.

The allied professions workforce already work across primary and secondary services within the NHS, Social care, independent and third sectors. “A Healthier Wales “(Welsh Government, 2018) recognised the significant role that AHPs can play in delivering the prevention agenda, supporting individuals to live healthier lives for longer and providing care closer to home. AHPs can support individuals to develop self-care skills to manage their conditions more effectively, and promote healthy lifestyles to prevent development of long term, chronic health conditions.

The National Workforce Implementation Plan: Addressing NHS Wales Workforce Challenges 2023 sets out specific requirements relating to Allied Health Professions (Welsh Government, 2023). An AHP Workforce Development plan was initiated in February 2024 aiming to address the current and future workforce challenges and outlined clear timelines and deliverables over the next 2 years.

The initial plan had been informed through a range of stakeholder events including a dedicated Deliberative Workforce event and 4 regional AHP Roadshows during 2023. The actions developed were aligned to the seven themes of the Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care Wales, and highlighted opportunities to work across existing workstreams within HEIW e.g. education and commissioning. The draft AHP Workforce Development plan went out for consultation with key stakeholders across Wales in March, and feedback has been collated and analysed to inform HEIW workplans over the next two years.

The thematic analysis from the consultation was utilised to develop this AHP Workforce Development Plan and timeframes for delivery have been agreed with workstreams across HEIW. Relevant actions from the AHP Workforce Development Plan will be incorporated into intermediate medium term planning processes.

A benefits realisation map has been created for the AHP Workforce development plan to identify outputs, outcomes and key indicators of success against current policy drivers. The key benefits are underpinned by the duty of quality and incorporate benefits to the AHP workforce and their service users.

An implementation plan has also been created to identify responsibilities from the perspective of HEIW and other key stakeholders in delivering the plan. It also identifies interdependencies, timescales, progress updates and methods of evaluation. This will be updated on a quarterly basis so that we can monitor actions and identify any issues as they occur.

Regular communication through Deputy, Assistant and Clinical Directors of Allied Health Professions and Health Science (DACDAHPHS) has enabled health boards to have sight of developments of this workforce development plan to date.

Once launched, a delivery plan will be agreed with relevant stakeholders and a steering group set up to monitor progress and update the Risks Assumptions Issues Dependencies (RAID) log. Highlight reports will ensure regular updates within HEIW, and key stakeholder forums.

If this AHP workforce plan receives the recognition and buy in from key stakeholders, it has the potential to:

- ❏ Improve knowledge and understanding of the value and impact of Allied Health professionals by other professions
- ❏ Attract and retain AHPs within health and social care services
- ❏ Ensure that AHPs have access to training and development and have equitable leadership opportunities
- ❏ Improve accessibility to AHPs in primary care and community services
- ❏ Underpin the development and success of multiprofessional teams across specialties
- ❏ Improve health outcomes for the general population through health promotion and prevention
- ❏ Meet the changing health needs of the future population through transformation.

Evaluation Methods

A benefits realisation map has been developed for the AHP Workforce Development Plan which identifies measurable key indicators for success. Which can be built into a review process. The implementation plan outlines the methods of evaluation for each action which will be agreed with key stakeholders. A steering group will be established to agree an evaluation framework, monitor progress and ensure timeframes are met.

Next steps

Workforce development plan approved by HEIW executive team.

Set up a stakeholder steering group to develop a delivery plan and agree reporting mechanisms.

Finalise delivery plan and raid log;
Produce regular highlight reports to assure HEIW executives, relevant professional networks and DACDAHPHS.

Combined Feedback from AHP Roadshows and Deliberative Event

| Feedback | Current Resources available within HEIW | Gaps Identified | Key Priorities/Actions | Completion |
|--|--|--|--|---------------------------|
| 1. An engaged and motivated workforce | | | | |
| <p>AHPs require a strong understanding and identity in Wales.</p> <p>AHPs want a distinct identity to inform patients and wider members of the public. UK differences cause confusion. Wider workforce needs greater understanding of what AHPs deliver.</p> | <p>AHP webpages available on HEIW website.</p> <p>Careersville hosts AHP building and has resources for AHPs to download.</p> <p>Gwella leadership portal open to AHPs.</p> <p>Demonstrating the value and Impact of AHPs working group set up and chaired by Kerrie Phipps (Strategic Lead for Primary and Community Care) and Nicky Thomas (Associate Director for AHP Workforce Transformation).</p> <p>Matrix working with Communications, Careersville and digital teams within HEIW.</p> | <p>AHP webpages currently aligned to England and require updating.</p> <p>Lack of promotional materials for AHPs to utilise in recruitment campaigns.</p> <p>Promotion of Gwella.</p> <p>Opportunities to work with Bevan commission to identify AHP projects that demonstrate value and impact of AHPs.</p> | *Produce AHP promotional materials including an AHP visual identifier for Wales. | September 2024- Completed |
| | | | *AHP Website refresh which meets accessibility requirements. | October 2025 |
| | | | *Develop an AHP Communication strategy. | December 2024 |
| | | | Deliver AHP National conference November 2024. | November 2024- Completed |
| | | | *Complete AHP evaluation of value and impact with the Bevan Commission and promote scale and spread funding opportunities. | March 2025 |
| | | | Set up an AHP value network to co-produce a standardised resource to demonstrate value and measurable impact. | April 2024- Completed |
| | | | Identify All Wales core outcome measures to demonstrate value and impact of AHPs. | March 2025 |

Combined Feedback from AHP Roadshows and Deliberative Event

| Feedback | Current Resources available within HEIW | Gaps Identified | Key Priorities/Actions | Completion |
|--|--|---|---|------------------------------------|
| | | | Launch pilot case studies of the clinical outcomes resource at the AHP conference. | November 2024 |
| Commission Research into AHP retention and supply. | <p>A national retention lead post has been recruited to within HEIW.</p> <p>AHPs are already represented across multi-professional national workforce programmes across HEIW.</p> <p>A nursing retention plan has already been developed within HEIW.</p> <p>A multiprofessional retention hub is available on Gwella.</p> | Need to ensure that the needs of AHPs are considered in the development of a multi-professional retention plan. | Work collaboratively with the national retention lead and share feedback from the AHP roadshows to identify key factors impacting retention for AHPs across Wales. This will inform a retention guide for AHPs. | September 2024 Completed |
| | | | Phase 1: Contribute to the supervision resource for professionals working in Mental Health Services on Gwella, introducing multiprofessional frameworks/tools/guides. | March 2025 |
| | | | Phase 2: Expand the supervision resource (if required) to provide additional resources for AHPs working outside of Mental Health Areas on Gwella. | March 2026 |
| | | | An AHP Welsh Clinical Leadership Training Fellowship (WCLTF) project for 24/25 will be linked to workforce deliverables. | September 2024 - 25 In progress |

Combined Feedback from AHP Roadshows and Deliberative Event

| Feedback | Current Resources available within HEIW | Gaps Identified | Key Priorities/Actions | Completion | |
|--|---|--|--|--|---------------------------------|
| 2. Attraction and recruitment | | | | | |
| <p>*Career pathways and career development for all AHPs.</p> <p>Enhanced development of AHP support worker workforce.</p> <p>Greater accessibility for all AHPs to leadership opportunities.</p> <p>AHPs to be considered in workforce planning to meet future population health needs</p> | <p>First cohort of Therapy Assistant Practitioners qualified in 2023.</p> <p>Guidance for Pre-registration AHP education funding developed October 2023. heiw.nhs.wales/files/pre-registration-ahp-degree-funding-route-guidance</p> <p>Monitor quality, diversity and inclusion across all pre-registration courses.</p> <p>All contracts with Health Education Institutions (HEIs) are performance managed with key performance indicators in place for recruitment, attrition, interprofessional education and recruitment to graduate posts within Wales.</p> | <p>Targeted promotional resources for support workers.</p> <p>Lack of information for potential work-based learning opportunities on AHP web pages.</p> <p>Promotion of different training routes available and transfer of qualifications across HEIs.</p> <p>Need for practical skills to undertake workforce planning .</p> <p>Need to understand role design.</p> <p>Promoting leadership opportunities.</p> | <p>Visual learning pathways and videos to be sourced, edited, and launched to promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📌 Support workers 📌 Students 📌 Newly qualified AHPs 📌 Career changers 📌 AHPs in general 📌 Multiprofessional careers. | <p>Phased approach commencing from December 2024 Completion September 2025</p> | |
| | | | <p>Provide links to Information about different AHP career pathways from AHP web pages</p> | | <p>January 2025</p> |
| | | | <p>Promote leadership development opportunities and uptake of resources from Gwella at the AHP conference and presentations to clinical networks</p> | | <p>November 2024- Completed</p> |
| | | | <p>Deliver a bespoke practical workshop focussing on population-based workforce planning.</p> | | <p>April 2025</p> |
| | | | <p>Develop an All Wales leads implementation group in relation to the enhanced, advanced and consultant framework with AHP</p> | | <p>January 2025</p> |

Combined Feedback from AHP Roadshows and Deliberative Event

| Feedback | Current Resources available within HEIW | Gaps Identified | Key Priorities/Actions | Completion |
|--|---|--|---|---------------------------|
| | HEIW has developed a workforce observatory to support decision makers in strategic workforce planning. | | representation from all health boards and trusts. | |
| Practice placements need to provide greater community, primary care and multiprofessional opportunities across all sectors and settings. | Commissioned scoping reports to provide recommendations to enhance placement opportunities in Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy. Enhanced opportunities for interprofessional placements and capacity across services. Interprofessional placement conference facilitated. HEIW interprofessional placement principles available on HEIW webpages. | Awaiting recruitment and onboarding for regional Mental health AHP Practice Education Facilitator (PEF) role in North Wales. Lack of interprofessional placements available. | Share recommendations from Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy scoping exercise with leadership networks. | September 2024- Completed |
| | | | *Complete recruitment and onboarding to regional mental health PEF roles. | December 2024 |
| | | | Identify relevant stakeholders and responsibilities for implementing the scoping recommendations. | January 2025 |
| | | | Explore opportunities to further expand Multiprofessional AHP PEF roles support of the education and training plan commissioned numbers. | January 2025 |
| | | | Complete evaluation of the interprofessional placement conference and identify next steps in support of the education and training plan commissioned numbers. | December 2024 |

Combined Feedback from AHP Roadshows and Deliberative Event

| Feedback | Current Resources available within HEIW | Gaps Identified | Key Priorities/Actions | Completion |
|----------|---|-----------------|------------------------|------------|
| | <p>Interprofessional placement working group set up with AHP representation.</p> <p>Engagement with all AHP professions to map and gap any practice placement issues across all sectors in Wales.</p> <p>Two Mental Health AHP PEFs appointed to central Wales and Southwest.</p> <p>Paramedic PEF already in post.</p> | | | |

Combined Feedback from AHP Roadshows and Deliberative Event

| Feedback | Current Resources available within HEIW | Gaps Identified | Key Priorities/Actions | Completion |
|--|--|---|--|-------------------------|
| 3. Seamless workforce models including public health roles | | | | |
| <p>*The importance of Multi-Disciplinary Team working and multiprofessional frameworks.</p> <p>*AHPs form part of multiprofessional services including public health roles. Expansion of roles needs to align to population health needs trajectory.</p> | <p>Multiprofessional working groups set up to develop frameworks/guidance documents in production:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📌 Supervision 📌 Research strategy 📌 Preceptorship. <p>Multiprofessional Continuing Professional Development strategy already developed – awaiting consultation feedback update.</p> <p>The Professional Framework for Enhanced, Advanced and Consultant Clinical Practice in Wales has been developed and published .</p> | <p>No central repository for multiprofessional frameworks.</p> <p>Understanding and accessing information about population health needs regionally to inform multiprofessional workforce planning.</p> <p>Job planning where AHPs require a clear identity within relevant multiprofessional workstreams.</p> | *HEIW to map across to Strategic programme for Primary and community care in terms of AHP numbers. | March 2025 |
| | | | *Ensure AHPs are represented across all multiprofessional development areas within HEIW. | October 2024-ongoing |
| | | | *Ensure role of AHPs is clearly embedded in emerging workforce models. | March 2025 |
| | | | Lead the adoption of 5 workforce models piloted through AHP pathfinders in Mental Health Services. | March 2026 |
| | | | Pilot of e-learning modules for health inequalities with pre-registration students. | December 2024-Completed |
| | | | Deliver learning events on health inequalities. | January 2025 |
| | | | Develop an AHP population health-based workforce planning approach for AHP leads across Wales. | March 2026 |

Combined Feedback from AHP Roadshows and Deliberative Event

| Feedback | Current Resources available within HEIW | Gaps Identified | Key Priorities/Actions | Completion |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| 4. Enhanced opportunities for support workers | | | | |
| <p>*Expand the support worker workforce and develop a national approach for competencies that support multi professional working.</p> <p>Sustainable learning pathways.</p> <p>Innovative part-time learning routes are a key priority.</p> | <p>Work based learning and accelerated programmes have commenced through the therapy support worker qualification.</p> <p>The work based learning and apprenticeship teams continue to scope and support innovative approaches to collaborative delivery models, including development of faculty to support once for Wales approaches. This encompasses all modes of delivery and their associated funding options.</p> <p>When identifying routes for learning all options for delivery and funding are considered that support a once for Wales approach.</p> | <p>Certain AHP professions do not have training available in Wales.</p> <p>For example: Technical skilled roles such as Orthotists and prosthetists could have increased support worker expansion.</p> <p>Orthoptists also have no access to training in Wales.</p> <p>Progression routes for support workers who have undertaken level 4 accredited qualification not mapped to level 4 pre-registration degree programmes</p> | <p>* HEIW will scope the generic core accredited learning for AHP support workers to enable career progression.</p> | <p>January 2026</p> |
| | | | <p>*Scope current learning pathways for each of the 13 AHP professions to identify gaps in learning pathways.</p> | <p>Commence December 2024- March 2025</p> |
| | | | <p>Prioritise developments for learning from gap analysis. Developments to be reflected in upcoming Integrated Medium-Term Plan 2025/2026.</p> | <p>March 2025</p> |

Combined Feedback from AHP Roadshows and Deliberative Event

| Feedback | Current Resources available within HEIW | Gaps Identified | Key Priorities/Actions | Completion |
|--|---|--|---|----------------------------------|
| 5. Building a digitally ready workforce | | | | |
| <p>*The need for the AHP workforce to be digitally confident and competent.</p> <p>Take up of the digital capability framework has been slow amongst all groups. Greater awareness amongst AHP Leaders to map out skillsets and training needs for digital capabilities is required.</p> | <p>The digital capability Framework on Ty Dysgu was launched in 2023 and enables all staff to carry out a self-assessment of their digital skills and identify training.</p> <p>Each Health Board has their own Office 365 skills development offer accessed through the learning and organisational development teams.</p> <p>DHCW provide training to undergraduate AHPs about the importance of data.</p> <p>Masters' modules available to AHPs in digital transformation.</p> | <p>Lack of take up of the Digital Capability Framework by AHPs despite sharing widely across AHP networks.</p> <p>No training available for current registered and unregistered AHP staff about the importance of digital competency and data.</p> <p>Accessible digital training modules that are applicable to practice areas.</p> | <p>Launch the mapping of the Digital Capability Framework against the AHP framework and the Enhanced, advanced and consultant level framework.</p> | <p>October 2024</p> |
| | | | <p>*HEIW to target dedicated AHP events to increase uptake and engagement in the digital capability framework. Also to support leaders to use this resource as part of the Performance Appraisal and Development Review process within teams.</p> | <p>November 2024 In progress</p> |
| | | | <p>*Promote digital skill development opportunities and uptake of resources on Ty Dysgu from the AHP webpages.</p> | <p>January 2025</p> |
| | | | <p>Encouraging HEIs to incorporate digital innovations and data literacy into pre and post registration education to enable the AHP workforce to work in a technological enabled way.</p> | <p>March 2026</p> |

Combined Feedback from AHP Roadshows and Deliberative Event

| Feedback | Current Resources available within HEIW | Gaps Identified | Key Priorities/Actions | Completion |
|----------|---|-----------------|---|------------|
| | | | Work with Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies and education providers to redesign and commission the curricula to include genomics, Artificial Intelligence and digital skills. | March 2026 |
| | | | Support and pioneer research into digital innovations, specialising in AHP roles, enabling AHPs to be early adopters and change makers. | March 2026 |

Combined Feedback from AHP Roadshows and Deliberative Event

| Feedback | Current Resources available within HEIW | Gaps Identified | Key Priorities/Actions | Completion |
|--|--|---|---|------------|
| 6. Excellent education and learning | | | | |
| Call for a national approach to preceptorship, training and development in terms of CPD. | An All-Wales nursing preceptorship framework has been developed, including animations. A multi professional CPD strategy has been developed and is awaiting consultation feedback outcomes. | No specific multiprofessional preceptorship or supervision framework. | *Contribute to the supervision resource for professionals working in Mental Health Services on Gwella, introducing multiprofessional frameworks/tools/guides. | March 2025 |
| | | | Expand the supervision resource (if required) to provide additional resources for AHPs working outside of Mental Health Services, on Gwella. | March 2026 |
| | | | *HEIW to roll out the final multiprofessional CPD strategy. | June 2025 |

Combined Feedback from AHP Roadshows and Deliberative Event

| Feedback | Current Resources available within HEIW | Gaps Identified | Key Priorities/Actions | Completion |
|---|---|--|--|-------------------|
| 7. Leadership and succession | | | | |
| <p>*Equal opportunities for AHPs to apply for senior roles with inclusive Job descriptions and funding sources.</p> <p>Removing the ceiling to career progression and greater flexible working opportunities.</p> <p>*The need for national role design planning for.</p> | <p>HEIW provide a range of multidisciplinary clinical compassionate leadership training programmes and resources.</p> <p>These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❏ Wales Clinical Leadership Programme ❏ Advanced Clinical Leadership Programme ❏ Senior Leadership Experience. <p>HEIW provide an executive leadership development suite and aspiring executive director talent pipeline for Therapies and Health Care Science as one of the 13 executive portfolios.</p> | <p>Skills mapping and gapping across AHPs in terms of leadership and career development pathways.</p> <p>Gaps in AHP strategic skillset which impact on ability to apply for senior and national roles.</p> <p>Lack of awareness of AHPs as to the resources and leadership opportunities available.</p> | <p>*Enhanced and advanced education project group in HEIW to influence leadership module development for AHP strategic skillset.</p> | <p>March 2025</p> |
| | | | <p>*Multi-professional mapping of enhanced practice and associated roles to identify gaps in leadership roles occupied by AHPs.</p> | <p>March 2025</p> |
| | | | <p>*Development of a dedicated area within the workforce planning community of practice in Y Ty Dysgu.</p> | <p>March 2026</p> |

Combined Feedback from AHP Roadshows and Deliberative Event

| Feedback | Current Resources available within HEIW | Gaps Identified | Key Priorities/Actions | Completion |
|---|---|-----------------|--|----------------------|
| <p>Support and pioneer research into digital innovations, specialising in AHP roles, enabling AHPs to be early adopters and change makers.</p> <p>Greater opportunities for Advanced Practice development amongst AHPs.</p> | <p>HEIW provide an executive leadership development suite and aspiring executive director talent pipeline for Therapies and Health Care Science as one of the 13 executive portfolios.</p> <p>HEIW has developed an aspiring executive director Success Profile outlining the skills, competencies, traits, and stretch need to move into an executive leadership role.</p> <p>HEIW's application process to leadership development is inclusive and person centred, to ensure fair representation on national leadership programmes across all professions.</p> <p>Gwella provides a range of compassionate leadership resources available to all.</p> | | <p>*Level 7 modules are in the process of being commissioned across the 4 pillars of practice which include AHPs.</p> | <p>December 2024</p> |
| | | | <p>HEIW will be developing in partnership a management and leadership competence framework with underpinning curriculum 2024-25.</p> | <p>March 2025</p> |
| | | | <p>A Deputy Director Success Profile will be developed 2024-5.</p> | <p>March 2025</p> |
| | | | <p>Embedding recommendations from the professional framework for enhanced, advanced and consultant practice into service delivery.</p> | <p>March 2026</p> |
| | | | <p>Promoting career development pathways that will retain staff.</p> | <p>March 2026</p> |
| | | | <p>Continued support for AHP Welsh clinical leadership fellows within HEIW.</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> |

Combined Feedback from AHP Roadshows and Deliberative Event

| Feedback | Current Resources available within HEIW | Gaps Identified | Key Priorities/Actions | Completion |
|----------|---|-----------------|------------------------|------------|
| | <p>HEIW provides free membership to the UK Institute of Health and Social Care Management (IHSCM) where additional resources, conferences, webinars and round table discussions can be accessed.</p> <p>HEIW will be piloting a 'leadership at all levels' programme 2024 aimed at aspiring leaders and managers.</p> <p>Opportunities for AHPs through the Welsh clinical leader's fellowship.</p> | | | |

Combined Feedback from AHP Roadshows and Deliberative Event

| Feedback | Current Resources available within HEIW | Gaps Identified | Key Priorities/Actions | Completion |
|--|---|--|--|-----------------------------|
| 8. Workforce Supply and Shape | | | | |
| <p>Job structuring to inform demand and capacity.</p> <p>The lack of accurate workforce and service data was the strongest theme amongst stakeholders.</p> | <p>None identified in terms of job planning.</p> <p>HEIW has established an AHP Data Steering group. The first meeting commenced on the 29th of January and includes HB representation, shared services, and digital colleagues.</p> <p>HEIW has consulted with relevant stakeholders including Occupational Therapy, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy and dietetics leads to identify coding around roles and tertiary areas of work for AHPs.</p> | <p>Lack of understanding of designing AHP roles to meet local population need.</p> <p>The ability to map the national and local AHP workforce across NHS and Social care services.</p> | * Deliver a bespoke practical workshop focussing on population-based workforce planning. | April 2025 |
| | | | Stakeholder task and finish group will agree data quality indicators for multi-professional roles. | September 2024 Completed |
| | | | HEIW will develop a data quality AHP Electronic Staff Record (ESR) dashboard for Occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech and language therapists and dietitians so that the AHP workforce can be accurately mapped across Wales. | December 2024 |
| | | | HEIW will expand the ESR data quality dashboard to include Orthotists, prosthetists, podiatrists and art therapists. | March 2025 |
| | | | Share the ESR work undertaken across the 4 nations to provide standardisation to make recruitment easier across boundaries. | March 2026 |

*actions that overlap with AHP Framework Programme Action Plan.