

All Wales Nurse Staffing Programme

Health Visiting Workstream Update
January 2022



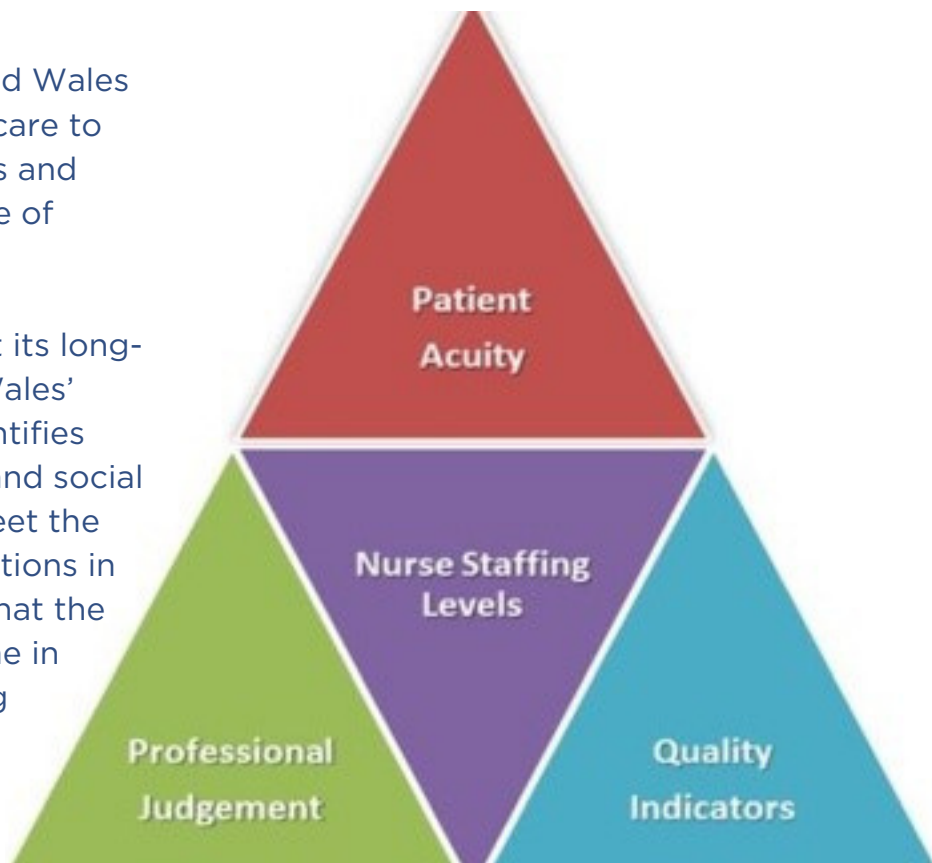
Introduction

The health visiting workstream group consists of senior representatives from each health board across Wales. The workstream lead and chair of the group is Chris Overs (Divisional Nurse at Aneurin Bevan University Health Board), Rhiannon Beaumont Wood is the Executive Sponsor (Executive Director of Nursing and Quality at Public Health Wales) and Rebecca Boore (Health Education and Improvement Wales) is the workstream project lead. The workstream meets at regular intervals to review, develop and strengthen quality and workforce related approaches, methods, and tools, informed by the principles of Prudent Healthcare focused on quality, equity of access and reducing variation across Wales. The workstream will support health boards following a 'Once for Wales' approach, to meet the requirements of the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 (the 2016 Act) in preparation for potential extension of the second duty of the 2016 Act to health visiting.

The aim of the health visiting workstream is to follow an evidence-based approach to creating robust methods, tools, and techniques to determine appropriate staffing levels within health visiting services across Wales, using the model of triangulation as set out in the Act. The triangulation method incorporates professional judgement, quality indicators and child and family acuity and dependency. The tools devised by the work stream will enable health visiting teams to calculate the right number of health visitors and skill mix

required to deliver the Healthy Child Wales Programme and provide effective care to meet the needs of children, families and communities based on the principle of proportionate universalism.

The Welsh Government has set out its long-term future vision in 'A Healthier Wales' (Welsh Government 2019) and identifies the changes needed in our health and social care system, so that it is able to meet the needs of current and future generations in Wales. It is widely acknowledged that the early years are the most crucial time in shaping life chances. Health visiting teams form part of the wider integrated early years system, providing services to children and families through delivery of the



Healthy Child Wales Programme and provision of a range of services to meet child and family need and tackle health inequalities.

The future health visiting workforce needs to align to the principles and measures of success outlined in 'A Healthier Wales: Our Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care' (Health, Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) 2020). This includes having a workforce that is inclusive, engaged, sustainable and flexible with better recruitment and retention of staff through attractive and flexible working arrangements, education, and career opportunities. The strategy also highlights the use of intelligence led workforce planning, enabling the ability to change the workforce to meet population need. A closer congruence between workforce and population health needs can be facilitated through closer links between health visiting teams and primary care colleagues. The workstream group believe that the health visiting service should have a stronger voice within the primary care clusters, identifying and supporting local population health needs and working in true collaboration across professional boundaries.

Welsh Government has recently published 'A More Equal Wales' (Welsh Government 2021) setting out the public sector socio-economic duties when making strategic decisions such as 'deciding priorities and setting objectives', to consider how their decisions might help to reduce the inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage.

The workstream group will work in a holistic way, adopting the principles set out in this duty and aligning its work to Welsh Government policy and HEIW workforce strategy.

Progress to date

Highlights of progress to date by the workstream:

- Development of the second draft of the health visiting staffing principles to inform and guide workforce plans as an interim measure until potential extension of the 2016 Act to health visiting
- Mapping out of the health visiting workforce across Wales
- Working in collaboration with health visitors from across Wales and all health boards to develop the Welsh Levels of Care for health visiting
- Exploration and identification of quality indicators relevant to health visiting
- Engaging with stakeholders and sharing the progress on the work
- Scoping of IT systems used across health visiting services to capture and report data
- Completion of a pilot test of the professional judgement workbook for health visiting
- Providing regular reports and position papers on the progress of the workstream against the workstream plan to the All Wales Nurse Staffing Group and the Nurse Directors/Chief Nursing Officer.

Next steps

Over the next six months work will continue as set out in the health visiting workstream plan and includes:

- To support health boards in completing impact assessments on the interim nurse staffing principles for health visiting
- To pilot test the first draft of the Welsh Levels of Care tool across Wales, then collate and analyse the data
- To identify the specific measures and opportunities for data capture of the quality indicators
- To refine the professional judgment workbook based on the results of the pilot test
- To explore opportunities for data capture and identify essential and desirable datasets

Chris Overs Workstream Lead would like to thank all members of the group for their ongoing support and commitment to progressing this important work. Chris would also like to thank health visitors across Wales for their excellent professional engagement and involvement in the workstreams activities, during what has proved to be a very challenging 18 months due to the pressures of Covid-19.

To access previous newsletters and find out more about the All Wales Nurse Staffing Programme and work undertaken by the workstream please access the website.

If you would like any more information about the health visiting workstream please e-mail Rebecca.boore2@wales.nhs.uk.

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References

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