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Addysg a Gwella Iechyd
Cymru (AaGIC)
Health Education and
Improvement Wales (HEIW)

Our Ref: SG/cw

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Sent via email to:

NHS Wales Directors of Nursing

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Dear Colleague

COVID 19 AND IMPLICATIONS FOR NURSING AND MIDWIFERY STUDENTS

As you will be aware the NMC, CNO's, Council of Deans for Health (UK) and professional bodies agreed a Joint [statement](#) on expanding the nursing and midwifery workforce in the Covid-19 outbreak on the 25.3.2020.

In support of this HEIW has published guidance providing information for nursing and midwifery students on how they can support the health and care system during this time of emergency.

The guidance has been developed by HEIW and Welsh Government alongside the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), the Royal Colleges and the Council of Deans of Health and Trade Unions.

Attached to this e-mail are:

- 1. Letter issued to all nursing and midwifery students in Wales**
- 2. COVID-19 Student Support Guide.**
- 3. Briefing Paper for Practice Partners, Education Leads and Practice Education Facilitators (and equivalent roles) during the COVID-19 period.**

This is a fast-changing and emerging situation and advice may be subject to further development. The Student Support Guide should be used in conjunction with advice and guidance from both students' higher education institutions, the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and royal colleges and trade unions.

This correspondence covers nursing and midwifery students only. Discussions are in advanced stages surrounding Allied Health Professional students and Healthcare Science students and it is anticipated that student guidance will be issued to AHPs and HCS later this week. Further correspondence will be issued regarding AHPs and HCS once there is final agreement on the process.

We know this is a complex, uncertain and difficult time for students and their families. We also know that the NHS' greatest asset is its workforce, and that many students want the opportunity to help. As future members of that workforce, they have been provided the opportunity to consider this calling to join the NHS early and to use their acquired skills to help save lives.

Students, depending on their stage of study will have options to assist you in this time of crisis. Students have been categorized as follows,

- the last 6 months of their third-year undergraduate programme;
- the second year or early stages of their third year of undergraduate programme and postgraduate students;
- the first year of their undergraduate programme.

Further details are included in the guidance document but in summary the options available are highlighted below;

Students in their final six months of the third year of their undergraduate programme

Given the significant pressures on the system and the need to ensure that front line services are fully supported it is not possible to continue to provide the current programme for students in these years of study. **The NMC have put actions into place to expand the nursing workforce and have changed the nature of the programme for undergraduate nursing students so that they can opt to undertake their final six months of their programme as a clinical placement.**

This is voluntary and if they do not feel able to opt into this they will be supported by their university to consider the options available. From correspondence with Universities it is expected that there will be a high sign-up for this.

Below is a list of the students currently in the last 6 months of training. Commissions to universities are based on needs set out in your IMTP's. HEIW issue a placement matrix and Universities target placements within the Health Boards and Trusts in Wales based on the placement matrix. It is highly likely that students will choose to work in a setting where they have had previous placement experience and where they know some of the staff and are familiar with the surroundings. We appreciate that during this crisis students may be moved around but, whilst there is a desire to assist, organisations will need to work with the university to ensure the clinical area is able to support the student at this time.

Based on the placement plan these are the maximum number of students that each organisation can expect. Please note however this is subject to student "buy-in" and also

there will be some students who wish to contribute but for health or other reasons are not able to at this time. Therefore, the numbers are indicative to provide you with an estimated figure for planning purposes.

Nursing and Midwifery students currently in the last six months of their studies:

Organisation	Nursing	Midwifery
Aneurin Bevan	121	15
Cardiff & Vale	179	21
Velindre	2	0
Swansea Bay	104	10
BCU	230	25
CTM	114	21
Hywel Dda	75	12
Powys	46	4
Total	871	108

Students in the second year or the first six months of their final year of their undergraduate programme and postgraduate pre-registration students not in the last 6 months of their programme

Given the significant pressures on the system and the need to ensure that front line services are fully supported it is not possible to continue to provide the current programme for students in these years of study. Therefore, **they have been invited to opt-in to an arrangement where they spend 80 percent of time in clinical practice, which would be remunerated (and will count towards practice hours as it will be part of their programme)**, and 20 percent in academic study during this emergency period.

Based on the placement plan these are the number of students that each organisation can expect. Please note this is subject to student “buy-in” and also there will be some students who wish to contribute but for health or other reasons are not able to at this time. Therefore, the numbers are indicative to provide you with an estimated figure for planning purposes as we don’t know how many of the students are going to take up the 80:20 option of working in practice.

Nursing and Midwifery students currently in the first six months of year three and all second-year students:

Organisation	Nursing	Midwifery
Aneurin Bevan	236	16
Cardiff & Vale	350	22
Velindre	4	0
Swansea Bay	198	11
BCU	449	25
CTM	228	20
Hywel Dda	146	12
Powys	90	4
Total	1,701	110

Students in their first year of undergraduate programme

Students in year one will continue with their studies and remain on their programme. However, the nature of the programme will be adapted so that students will see their academic studies continue but their clinical placement time will be paused. As now, **they may volunteer or undertake paid work within a healthcare setting while maintaining their academic study.**

The Process

The relevant university will contact students to discuss the revised programme delivery model and what it means for them.

If the students decide to opt in to the NMC revised programme in clinical practice, the university will work with them to identify their preferences. This information will then be provided to the NHS who will identify an appropriate organisation for them to be assigned to.

NHS Wales Shared Services will also contact the students regarding their clinical placement employment arrangements.

NWSSP will act as the conduit between Health Organisations, the Universities and the students.

If there are any questions, please contact martin.riley@wales.nhs.uk.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen Griffiths". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Stephen Griffiths
Director of Nursing

c.c. NHS Wales Directors of Workforce & OD
Prof. Jean White, Chief Nursing Officer, Welsh Government
Helen Arthur, Director of Workforce, Welsh Government