Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW)

Welsh Language Scheme Annual Report 2025–26

Foreword

We are proud to present this Welsh Language Scheme Report, which demonstrates our continued commitment to delivering high-quality, inclusive services through the Welsh language. As an organisation at the centre of education, training, learning, and workforce development for the health workforce in Wales, we recognise the Welsh language as a fundamental component of both service quality and equitable access.

Over the past year, we have made measurable progress in embedding the Welsh language across our operations. This includes strengthening bilingual provision, investing in staff skills and confidence, and integrating Welsh language considerations into workforce planning and service design. These developments have had a tangible impact—ensuring that Welsh speakers can engage with our services confidently, consistently, and with a level of quality that reflects their needs and preferences.

Our approach is rooted in the principle that language is integral to safe, effective, and person-centred care. Promoting the Welsh language is therefore not only a statutory responsibility, but a key driver of quality and inclusive practice. By embedding the Active Offer and normalising the use of Welsh across our work, we are strengthening our connection with service users and supporting better outcomes.

We extend our sincere thanks to our partners for their ongoing collaboration and commitment. Their contribution has been instrumental in driving forward our shared ambition to enhance Welsh language provision across the health sector.

Our vision is to cultivate a truly bilingual HEIW, one where the Welsh language is visible, valued, and used naturally in everyday interactions. Guided by our organisational values, we are building a culture where linguistic choice is respected as a core element of quality and inclusion. This report not only reflects the progress made to date but also outlines our continued ambition: to further empower our workforce, embed language equity, and ensure that the Welsh language is an intrinsic and sustained part of everything we do.

Introduction and Legal Context

We operate under the Welsh Language Act 1993, which establishes the principle of equal treatment for Welsh and English in public business in Wales. In line with this, HEIW continues to implement its Welsh Language Scheme, approved by the Welsh Language Commissioner, which sets out our approach to delivering consistent, high-quality bilingual services.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 introduced Welsh Language Standards, which will replace Schemes over time. During 2025–2026, HEIW progressed its transition towards this framework. On 1st April 2026, HEIW received a Compliance Notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner, outlining the Standards that will apply to the organisation.

Our current Scheme (in place since October 2021) remains the basis of our compliance approach during this transition period. It is closely aligned with the Standards, enabling early adoption of key principles and supporting a proactive, quality-driven approach to service delivery.

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HEIW is required to comply with the Standards from 1st October 2026 and work is underway to ensure readiness. This includes strengthening awareness, governance and monitoring arrangements and workforce capability to deliver inclusive, high-quality Welsh language services.

HEIW Context

We are a Special Health Authority within NHS Wales, established on 1 October 2018 as the eleventh national NHS organisation. HEIW was formed by bringing together key bodies responsible for workforce education and training (including the former Wales Deanery and others) to provide a unified approach to developing the health workforce. Our core mission is to plan, train, and support the health and care workforce in Wales – from ensuring high-quality education and training for new professionals, to supporting leadership development and workforce planning for NHS Wales.

Because of this central workforce role, HEIW's activities span all of Wales and impact a broad range of services. We recognise that delivering healthcare in Wales requires delivering services in both Welsh and English. As such, our organisational values emphasise the importance of bilingualism. The Welsh Language Scheme underpins this commitment, guiding us to incorporate the Welsh language into our day-to-day work, communications, and services. Through the Scheme, we aim to make Welsh a natural part of the way we operate, ensuring that learners, staff, and stakeholders can engage with HEIW in their language of choice.

Governance and Leadership Arrangements

HEIW has established robust leadership and governance arrangements to support the Welsh language across the organisation. At Board level, the Chair serves as the Welsh Language Champion, providing visible leadership, advocacy, and strategic oversight.

Responsibility for executive leadership of the Welsh language transferred during the year from the Executive Director of Nursing, Health Professions and Quality to the Director of Education Strategy and Transformation, ensuring continued senior-level accountability and alignment with organisational priorities.

In February 2026, the Welsh Language Unit was incorporated into the Education Strategy and Transformation Directorate. This move has strengthened the integration of Welsh language considerations within wider organisational planning and strategic development.

The Head of More Than Just Words Strategy and Welsh Language Unit continues to provide strategic leadership for the implementation of the Welsh Government's *More Than Just Words* framework, ensuring that Welsh language considerations are embedded within policy development, service planning, and organisational decision-making.

Operational delivery is led by the Welsh Language Unit Manager and Welsh Language Facilitation Officer, who oversee the implementation of Welsh language commitments, support compliance with statutory requirements, and promote the increased use of Welsh throughout the organisation.

The Translation Manager leads a dedicated translation team that provides translation services, linguistic advice, and support to staff. The team also delivers simultaneous interpretation services, enabling individuals to use their language of choice in both clinical and corporate settings.

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Performance against Welsh language commitments is monitored through regular highlight reports presented to the Executive Team and Board. These reports provide assurance on progress, support effective oversight of implementation activities, and enable the timely identification and management of any risks or compliance issues.

Summary of Activities in 2025–26

Throughout 2024-25, we continued to prioritise the embedding of our Welsh Language Scheme, with a strong focus on both compliance and culture. We promoted the support available through the Welsh Language Unit, encouraged staff to use and develop their Welsh through weekly lessons, and raised awareness of the importance of bilingualism across healthcare settings.

This focus has continued into the 2025–26 reporting period, with further progress made in strengthening access to Welsh language services and increasing staff confidence in using Welsh in their daily work.

A cornerstone of our work remains the provision of translation and interpretation services. Demand for Welsh language support has continued to grow across the organisation, and we have responded by enhancing our internal capacity to meet this need. Alongside this, we have invested in developing our workforce's language skills and delivered a range of training and awareness initiatives to support practical, everyday use of Welsh.

HEIW continues to provide national leadership in delivering More Than Just Words, embedding the Welsh language as a core component of workforce development, planning and service delivery. Through strategic partnership working and targeted initiatives, HEIW is driving a clear shift from awareness to implementation across the system.

The activity outlined below demonstrates that we have built a strong foundation for a more bilingual organisation. Performance evidence in the following sections shows clear progress in complying with our Welsh Language Scheme, alongside growing momentum as we prepare for full implementation of the Welsh Language Standards.

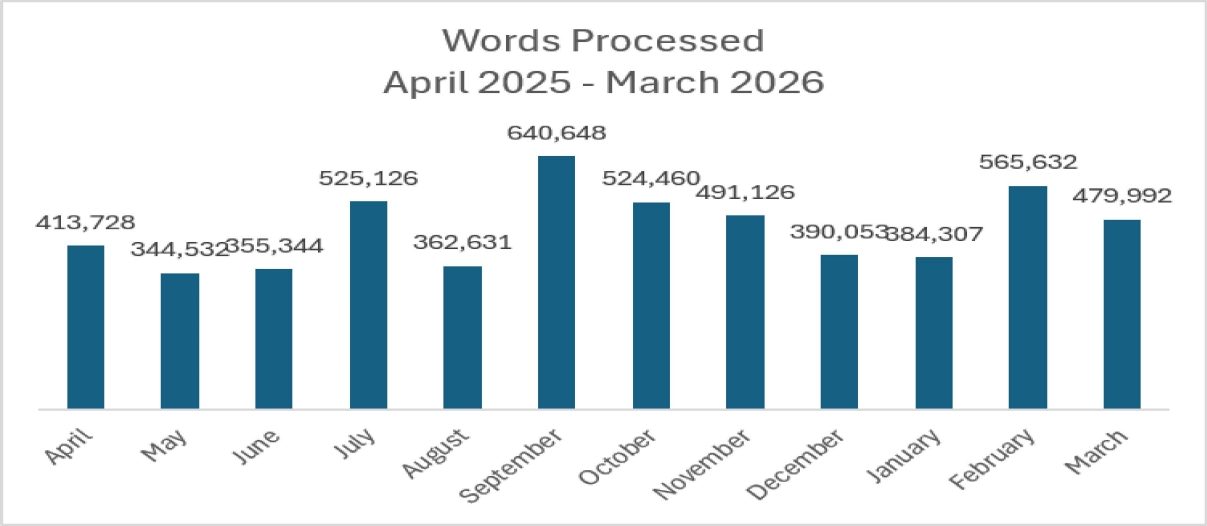
Translation and Interpretation Services

Providing high-quality translation and interpretation remains central to HEIW's Welsh Language Scheme and wider transition to the Welsh Language Standards. During 2025–26, demand for Welsh language support increased significantly, with the internal translation team delivering over 5.5 million words of English-to-Welsh translation across the year.

This consistently high volume, delivered by a small but highly skilled team, reflects both the strength and efficiency of the service. Turnaround times have remained high quality and responsive to organisational need, enabling departments to plan and deliver bilingual content as standard. Translation activity has supported a broad and expanding range of outputs, including corporate communications, Board and governance papers, educational resources, digital content, and a continued high demand for workforce materials such as job advertisements and job descriptions.

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Translation Figures Chart



Simultaneous interpretation activity has increased significantly, with 91 events supported over the past year, up from 45 during the 2024-25 reporting period. This has enabled bilingual participation across a wide range of settings. This has included Board and Committee meetings, leadership programmes, national conferences and partnership events—including complex and high-profile engagements such as mental health lived-experience sessions and multi-agency collaboration forums, ensuring that language choice is consistently embedded across both strategic and operational activity.

The scale and consistency of this provision have had a clear organisational impact. It has enabled bilingual working to become a practical reality rather than an additional consideration, supporting staff and stakeholders to engage confidently in their language of choice. The visibility and availability of these services have contributed to a cultural shift, with increased expectation that meetings, events and outputs will be designed for bilingual delivery from the outset.

Sustained growth in demand for both translation and interpretation is a strong indicator of this shift. It reflects not only increased awareness of Welsh language responsibilities but also growing confidence across HEIW in embedding Welsh into everyday working practices. The translation service has therefore become a key enabler of compliance, cultural change, and improved accessibility, directly supporting the organisation's commitment to providing equitable, high-quality services.

Alongside service delivery, the translation team has continued to invest in its professional development, maintaining high standards through ongoing CPD through the *Association of Welsh Translators* and academic progression. This includes multiple team members progressing towards the MA in Professional Translation at Aberystwyth University, strengthening the team's long-term capacity and expertise.

Workforce Welsh Language Skills and Training

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Developing the Welsh language skills of our workforce is critical for delivering services in Welsh. During 2025–26, HEIW made strong progress in this area. Welsh language awareness training remained mandatory for all staff, with high completion rates

demonstrating a strong organisational commitment to understanding Welsh language responsibilities and opportunities.

We continue to encourage all employees to record their Welsh language proficiency on the NHS Electronic Staff Record (ESR) system. By the end of March 2026, 89% of core staff had updated their language skills this provides a robust evidence base to support workforce planning and identify areas for further development, while recognising that 85% represents a realistic baseline given workforce factor such as leave and secondments.

Beyond awareness training, HEIW actively supports staff to develop their Welsh language skills. During the year, around 48 staff participated in structured Welsh language learning, This figure reflects an updated methodology aligned to the Cymraeg Gwaith (Work Welsh) framework, focusing on registered learners who attend regularly. In previous years, reporting captured a broader range of participation, including more informal or intermittent engagement, and is therefore not directly comparable.

During 2025–26, Welsh language training provision transitioned from a locally commissioned tutor model to the national Cymraeg Gwaith (Work Welsh) framework, delivered in partnership with the National Centre for Learning Welsh. This represents a significant improvement in value, replacing a locally funded provision with a fully funded model that delivers cost savings while maintaining and expanding access to training. While learner numbers remain relatively modest, the move to the national LearnWelsh model has improved quality, consistency and progression, creating a more sustainable approach to developing Welsh language capability across the organisation.

The LearnWelsh approach has strengthened quality through alignment with a nationally recognised framework, providing structured progression pathways and a broader, more flexible learning offer. This includes free opportunities for staff to engage with LearnWelsh programmes at a national level, including ‘Courtesy Welsh’ and ‘Confidence Building’ opportunities in addition to regular classes, supporting wider and more accessible entry points for staff, in addition to confidence and progression.

Impact is increasingly evident. Staff engagement has been sustained, and learners are progressing into formal qualifications, with recent success in Entry level Welsh language examinations demonstrating tangible outcomes from the approach. This progression, combined with improved data on workforce skills, supports a more proactive approach to delivering services based on language need.

Senior Staff member:

“Learning Welsh each week through HEIW has given me the confidence to use more Welsh in my day-to-day work. The language is an important part of my history, culture and identity, and these lessons have helped me reconnect with that heritage. I may only use a small amount of Welsh at times, particularly when speaking with fluent Welsh speakers, but even a few words can create meaningful connections, demonstrate respect for the Welsh language, and help people feel valued and included. Developing my Welsh language skills has strengthened my confidence, deepened my appreciation of the importance of Cymraeg in Wales, and reinforced my commitment to promoting and respecting the language in both my personal and professional life”.

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Overall, this combined approach of embedding awareness, strengthening data, expanding learning opportunities and transitioning to a high-value national model continues to build a more confident, capable and sustainable bilingual workforce, supporting both compliance and improved experience for Welsh-speaking service users.

Promotion and Awareness Initiatives

HEIW has continued to strengthen its promotion of the Welsh language through targeted awareness and outreach activity, with a particular focus on partnership working across NHS Wales.

A key highlight during 2025 was HEIW's participation in both the Urdd Eisteddfod in Margam Park and the National Eisteddfod in Wrexham, delivered in collaboration with NHS Wales partners under the More Than Just Words framework. At the Urdd Eisteddfod, HEIW contributed to a shared NHS Wales presence, engaging with a large and diverse audience and promoting the role of Welsh in delivering high-quality, person-centred care. Across the week, more than 1,200 interactions were recorded with members of the public, creating a significant opportunity to promote NHS careers, demonstrate the practical application of bilingual services, and increase awareness of the Welsh language as a core component of safe, effective and person-centred care. The event enabled HEIW and its partners to engage directly with future workforce cohorts and support wider ambitions to increase the visibility and normalisation of Welsh language services across NHS Wales.





Building on this, the National Eisteddfod activity demonstrated the strength and impact of cross-organisational working, with partners from across NHS Wales, national bodies and Welsh Government delivering a coordinated programme of engagement. The NHS Wales stand provided a platform to showcase bilingual services in practice, reinforcing the Active Offer and normalising the use of Welsh in service delivery. Activity across both events highlighted the breadth of NHS careers and the importance of Welsh language skills in supporting service delivery. This included engagement with the public, learners and future workforce groups, alongside demonstrations, resources and workforce-focused initiatives designed to embed Welsh language use. Collectively, this partnership approach strengthened visibility, increased engagement, and demonstrated how the More Than Just Words strategy is being delivered in practice

Promoting Welsh-medium career opportunities within the NHS has remained a key priority. This has been delivered through a more targeted, partnership-driven approach, working proactively with key stakeholders including CYDAG, Careers Wales and the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to influence and support learner pathways. During the year, this was complemented by targeted outreach and engagement activity, including presence at careers events, where HEIW promoted the breadth of opportunities available and the added value of Welsh language skills across a range of roles within the healthcare workforce.

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Notably, engagement at Welsh-medium careers events enabled HEIW to connect directly with large groups of school learners, raising awareness of NHS career pathways and positioning the organisation as a bilingual employer. A highlight was our presence at the Gyrfa Gymraeg careers fair for local schools arranged by the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and Cardiff Council. We engaged with over 700 students from 12 different schools across South Wales at this event and staff had an opportunity to showcase the variety of NHS careers and emphasise the value of Welsh language skills in each role. Outreach initiatives such as these enable HEIW not only to raise its profile as a bilingual employer but also contributes to the broader goal of normalising Welsh as a language of work and care.

Overall, promotion and awareness activity during the year has delivered increased visibility, strengthened partnerships, and contributed to a growing recognition of the Welsh language as an essential component of workforce development and service delivery.

In addition to these initiatives, we sustained ongoing promotional activities. Internally, we used our intranet and staff events to remind and encourage colleagues to use Welsh greetings and phrases at work, to take up language training opportunities. We celebrate occasions such as ‘Diwrnod ShwmaeSumae’ to encourage everyone to start conversations in Welsh, regardless of their skill level. These efforts help create a welcoming environment for using Welsh daily.

Language awareness for both internal staff and senior leaders across the NHS continues to be an area of focus, with the team providing language awareness sessions for independent board members, advanced clinical leaders and our own staff, which discusses the strategic context but also the behaviours staff need to adopt in their own practice.

The internal language awareness session ‘Croeso’ during induction promotes our friendly and inclusive approach to the language. It is essential to raise awareness of Welsh language ability through making this clearly visible, not only to members of the public, but also to colleagues, therefore we provide staff with Iaith Gwaith badges and lanyards during the induction process. These enable staff to recognise other Welsh speakers or learners. We have also developed Teams backgrounds that identify Welsh speakers and learners.

Contributions to More Than Just Words

A more detailed report on HEIW’s contribution to the More Than Just Words framework will be published in Autumn 2026. This section provides an overview of key activity; however, many actions are interlinked with broader Welsh language priorities and accordingly are also captured within this Scheme report.

More Than Just Words (MTJW) remains the Welsh Government’s strategic framework for strengthening Welsh language provision in health and social care. As the national body for workforce education and development, HEIW continues to play a central leadership role in translating national policy into practical, system-wide delivery. This includes embedding Welsh language considerations into workforce planning, strengthening leadership accountability, and equipping the workforce with the skills and confidence required to deliver the Active Offer consistently.

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HEIW continued to support the delivery of More Than Just Words through a programme of seminars designed to share innovation, research and practical approaches to strengthening Welsh language provision across health and care. Topics during the year included *“More Than Just Words: Targeting and Promoting Learning in the Health Boards”* by Dr Ben

Screen, Welsh Language Lead at Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board, *"Welsh at Cardiff Medical School"* with Dr Awen Iorwerth, an *Introduction to the Welsh Pharmacy Network with* Professor Delyth James of Swansea University and *"Designing the Ideal Module: Planning Learning for Less Confident Bilingual Learners"* delivered by Dr Myfanwy Davies of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol. The seminars attracted an average audience of around 30 attendees per session, bringing together colleagues from across Wales to explore current developments, share experiences and learn from emerging good practice.

Seminar Attendee:

"The More Than Just Words seminar series provides a valuable platform for colleagues across Wales to share expertise, showcase innovative practice and learn from one another. By creating opportunities to better understand the work taking place in different organisations and professions, the seminars help strengthen collaboration, support the implementation of More Than Just Words, and promote a consistent approach to embedding the Welsh language across health and care services."

A significant contribution during the reporting period was HEIW's central role in delivering the national *More Than Just Words* stakeholder event in Llandrindod Wells. The event brought together over 100 senior leaders from across health, social care, education and local government, creating a shared platform to align priorities and accelerate delivery. Feedback highlighted a tangible shift in organisational focus following the event, with increased senior-level engagement and a stronger emphasis on embedding the Welsh language within strategic planning and service delivery.





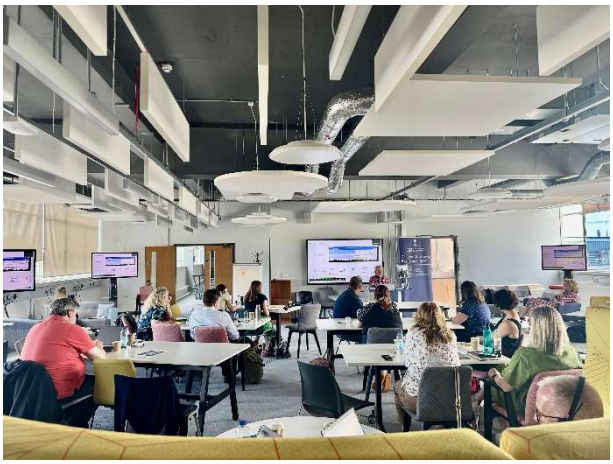
HEIW provided leadership across the programme, including keynote contributions from the Executive Director of Nursing, Health Professions and Quality, Executive Director for Workforce and Organisational Development, and the Head of MTJW and Welsh Language Unit. A dedicated breakout session on the Workforce Planning for the Welsh Language toolkit developed by HEIW supported organisations to move from policy intent to implementation, equipping them with practical methods to identify workforce gaps and align skills with service demand. As a result, organisations have begun to embed Welsh language considerations more systematically within workforce plans, strengthening their capacity to deliver bilingual services in priority areas.

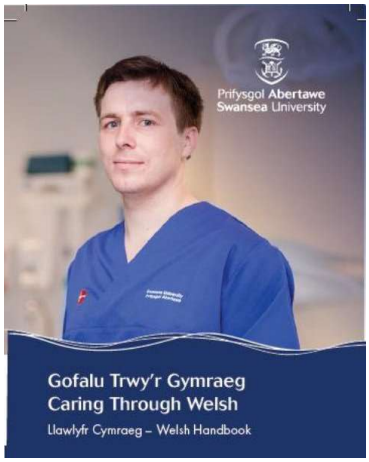
The impact of the event extends beyond the conference itself. It has driven follow-up actions including leadership pledges, organisational action plans and increased uptake of workforce planning resources, demonstrating a measurable shift from awareness to application. This momentum will be sustained through a planned national MTJW event in Autumn 2026,

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providing a further opportunity to assess progress, share outcomes, and reinforce accountability across the system.

HEIW has also contributed to the development of practical resources that support workforce capability. This includes the *Caring through Welsh Handbook*, developed in partnership with Swansea University and co-funded by HEIW, which provides accessible, clinically relevant language guidance to support staff in delivering care through the medium of Welsh. The resource strengthens day-to-day confidence among staff and reinforces the practical application of the Active Offer within clinical settings.





A further area of impact has been the establishment of the Welsh Language Pharmacy Network, delivered in collaboration with Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, universities, and professional partners. The network has created a structured national forum for the pharmacy workforce to develop Welsh language skills, share resources and increase confidence in using Welsh in practice. Early engagement demonstrates growing participation across the sector, directly supporting capacity building in a priority workforce area and contributing to improved patient experience in community and clinical pharmacy settings.

HEIW's partnership activity has continued to drive system-wide collaboration through targeted networking events and follow-on seminars. These have supported the sharing of best practice in areas such as recruitment, education and clinical placement models, resulting in increased alignment across organisations and a more coordinated approach to developing the bilingual workforce. HEIW has provided RCM Cymru with expert advice on developing their Welsh Language Offer, and this has included speaking on their panel in the Eisteddfod on the importance of Welsh in maternity care, speaking in the launch of RCM Cymru and reaching over 200 midwives and health professionals by speaking in RCM Cymru's annual conference on the importance of the Active Offer.

In parallel, HEIW has strengthened the future workforce pipeline through engagement with students and early career professionals. Forums and outreach sessions have increased awareness of the importance of Welsh language skills in clinical practice, with emerging evidence of heightened learner expectation to use Welsh in patient interactions. This supports long-term behavioural change and contributes to a more confident and linguistically competent workforce.

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HEIW has also supported national engagement through participation in the Urdd and the National Eisteddfod, working with partners to raise awareness of Welsh-language services and to reinforce the importance of language in delivering compassionate, person-centred

care. These activities have extended the reach of MTJW principles beyond the health system, strengthening public understanding and normalising the Active Offer.

In summary, HEIW's contribution demonstrates a clear progression from strategy to implementation—strengthening leadership ownership, embedding Welsh language requirements within workforce planning, and increasing workforce capability in priority areas.

What's Next – Priorities for 2026-27

As we look ahead, HEIW remains committed to further strengthening our bilingual capabilities and addressing the challenges identified within this performance report. Key priorities for 2026–27 include:

- **Embedding Compliance with Welsh Language Standards:**
  Building on preparatory activity undertaken during 2025–26, HEIW will move towards full implementation of the Welsh Language Standards ahead of the statutory compliance date of 1 October 2026. Over the coming months, we will ensure robust governance and assurance frameworks are in place as well as identifying and mitigating key risks, ensuring that high-impact service areas are prepared and that compliance arrangements are proportionate and sustainable. This will include establishing and convening a Welsh Language Standards Steering Group to provide strategic oversight and coordination across HEIW. Alongside this assuring organisational readiness through targeted awareness-raising activity, guidance and support for staff. The focus will be on ensuring that staff are fully prepared to meet the requirements of the Standards and that Welsh language considerations are consistently embedded within core business processes and decision-making.

- **Developing Welsh Language Skills and Confidence at Scale:**
  Building on established national training programmes, HEIW will continue to support staff and learners to develop practical Welsh language skills, with a stronger emphasis on confidence and real-world application in workplace settings. This will include promoting and expanding access to initiatives such as the Courtesy Welsh course and Confidence Building provision, alongside scaling the use of resources such as the *Caring through Welsh Handbook*. In parallel, HEIW will support staff to use the Welsh they already have through the implementation of our internal Welsh Language Use Policy, co-developed with staff to ensure it reflects practical needs and lived experience. Collectively, these actions aim to normalise everyday use of Welsh across the organisation and contribute to a measurable increase in staff confidence and use of Welsh in their interactions with service users.

- **Expanding Sector-Specific Workforce Initiatives:**
  HEIW will further develop targeted initiatives in priority workforce areas, building on established models such as the Welsh Language Pharmacy Network. This approach will support profession-specific collaboration, resource development and skills strengthening, ensuring that workforce interventions are tailored, sustainable, and aligned with service needs.

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- **Sustaining National Leadership and Partnership Working:**
  HEIW will continue to play a key strategic role in delivering MTJW through active

participation in national forums, working groups and collaborative programmes. The planned national MTJW stakeholder event in Autumn 2026 will provide a key platform to share progress, showcase impact and drive further system-wide commitment. Strengthening partnerships with Welsh Government, the Welsh Language Commissioner, education providers and NHS organisations is central to this work.

Strengthening Recruitment and Future Workforce Pipelines:
HEIW will enhance its outreach and engagement activity to attract Welsh speakers into health professions, including increased collaboration with Careers Wales, education providers and community partners. This will include expanding careers initiatives, promoting Welsh language pathways, and reinforcing the value of bilingual skills across all roles. In parallel, HEIW will work with universities to develop targeted case studies demonstrating best practice in embedding Welsh-medium provision within education, aligned to priority areas identified in *More Than Just Words*. The long-term aim is to increase the proportion of Welsh-speaking entrants into the workforce and increased Welsh- language use with patients.

These priorities will enable HEIW to build on the momentum of 2025–26 and address the challenges ahead in a more systematic and measurable way. Through sustained collaboration and targeted innovation, we will progress towards full compliance with the Welsh Language Standards while strengthening the integration of Welsh language considerations across workforce systems. Our ambition remains to position the Welsh language as an integral and natural part of high-quality, person-centred care for the people of Wales.

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Appendix 1 – Embedding of Welsh Language Scheme

What follows is a detailed report on how we have carried out the actions required to realise our objectives with relation to our WLS.

1. Service planning and delivery

Action	Delivery responsibility	Progress to March 26
i. Proactively publicise and raise awareness of the commitments set out in HEIW's Welsh Language Scheme 2021 by: developing an internal communications plan for Welsh Language Scheme planning and conducting face to face awareness raising campaign across HEIW planning and conducting digital awareness raising campaign across HEIW publish the Welsh Language Scheme on HEIW's external public facing website, https://heiw.nhs.wales.	Welsh Language Unit	We hold regular meetings with the Communications Team, and a forward communications program has been agreed upon and carried out throughout the year. Dedicated member of the Communications and Engagement team supports the Welsh language agenda and is an active member of the internal MTJW task and finish group and will also be a key member of the upcoming Welsh Language Standards Steering Group within HEIW. WLS awareness is a key component of the 'Croeso' sessions with particular focus on requesting translation and return times. Awareness-raising activity (*Setting the Standard*) has been a key focus in preparing for the introduction of the Welsh Language Standards. This has included targeted communications, staff engagement sessions to support understanding of the Standards and their implications for day-to-day roles. Early feedback indicates improved awareness across the organisation, helping to build confidence and ensure staff are better prepared for the transition to full compliance. The Scheme can be found on our website via the following page: https://heiw.nhs.wales/about-us/key-documents/corporate/

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ii. b. HEIW policy officials and Communications Team to liaise with HEIW Welsh Language Unit to ensure that the Welsh language is given due consideration when working on new resources and/or services (e.g., web content, correspondence to stakeholders, consultations).	All relevant HEIW Teams Communications and Engagement Team Welsh Language Unit	Welsh Language team members are regularly asked to attend departmental meetings at all levels and are consulted regularly when new resources and services are considered. We see a surge in demand on translation services when new resources and/or services are developed such as Y Ty Dysgu, Gwella or Codi. Teams are encouraged to forewarn or ensure that translation is worked into the project plan from the beginning. Work has been undertaken to develop a more robust and structured Welsh language section for inclusion in the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA). This has included refining guidance, clarifying expectations, and aligning the content more closely with Welsh Language Standards requirements. To ensure consistency and accountability, a formal sign-off process is being introduced, with a designated member of the Welsh Language Unit responsible for reviewing and approving the Welsh language section as part of the overall EIA governance process. The Data and Digital Strategy 2023-28 reinforces the commitment to ensuring equal access to all. The document can be accessed via this link;

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		https://heiw.nhs.wales/about-us/key-documents/
iii. Actively promote the HEIW's Welsh language resources.	Welsh Language Unit	A collection of resources is available on our Intranet platform. These resources are extensively discussed with all new employees during the Croeso Induction sessions.
iv. ch Monitor services provided by third parties on behalf of HEIW in relation to the Welsh language.	HEIW Policy Officials Welsh Language Unit	The Head of More Than Just Words Strategy is involved proactively with those third-party partners delivering on our Education contracts, attends meetings, monitors data returns, and engages on a one-to-one level with a number of the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Data returns of the Strategic Review of Education Phase are received, collated and shared over the course of the year, and these have been shared with key partners including Coleg Cymraeg and Dysgu Cymraeg.
v. d. Liaison with other public bodies to ensure that good practice is being shared.	Welsh Language Unit	The Head of More Than Just Words Strategy now chairs the monthly Welsh Language Managers network meeting and is also in regular dialogue with other stakeholders, including partners in Higher Education as well as Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, Welsh Government, The National Centre for Learning Welsh, and the Welsh Language Commissioner.

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2. Provision of services to the public

Action	Delivery responsibility	Progress to March 26
a. Correspondence		
i. Remind HEIW departments of the need to communicate with the public bilingually.	HEIW Staff Welsh Language Unit	This is part of the Croeso Induction presentation for all new starters and is also be covered in any subsequent workshops delivered Additionally, these resources are integrated into the digital and in-person communication strategies developed in collaboration with the Communications and Engagement Team.
ii. Ensure Welsh and English correspondence are treated equally and published simultaneously.	HEIW Staff Welsh Language Unit	The high level of translation activity is one measure of our effectiveness in this area; the message is also emphasised in the Croeso Induction presentation for all new starters and covered in any awareness workshops delivered in preparation for Welsh Language Standards. For this reporting period, 5.5 million words were translated from English to Welsh.
iii. Provide templates/essential terminology on shared platforms for HEIW staff in Wales. Provide translation of auto-signatures/out of office replies etc.	Welsh Language Unit	All of this is provided regularly. Prompt sheets for essential terminology are kept on the Intranet and are publicised to staff regularly, including via the Croeso Induction programme. New resources available with the delivery of a new streamlined staff intranet hub due to be implemented under our Welsh Language Standards workplan will include a searchable job

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		title library and example out of office messages and email signatures. Also, a specific "action" within the Croeso Induction programme is to get any delegates without a bilingual e mail signature to email the Translation mailbox there and then so that a bilingual template can be supplied to them.
b. Telephone communications		
i. Provide a full bilingual service on the main public telephone line. Divert calls as appropriate, according to language choice and nature of query.	Digital and Data	Work is ongoing in streamlining HEIW's open or public-facing telephone lines. Welsh Language Unit are involved in this work. Teams who own these lines have been reminded of the requirements under the WLS and appropriate support in available via the Facilitation Officer if a response is required in Welsh. Random spot check exercises are ongoing to support these teams it's recognised majority of Welsh language calls come through the Reception telephone line due to the volume of calls and further support will be needed. The Reception and Facilities Administrator is a Welsh speaker. Work ongoing to identify and record any non-compliant answer machine messages. A telephone answering prompt sheet (including Welsh/ English and phonetic

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		pronunciation versions) has been created for staff.
ii. Ensure that staff answer their phones with a bilingual greeting (bore da/ prynhawn da) and are familiar with the procedure for offering a Welsh language service. Ensure voicemail messages are recorded bilingually (landline and mobile)	HEIW Staff Welsh Language Unit	See reference to the telephone prompt sheet at 2.b.i above, and reminders of the need to have all recorded telephone messages bilingually. The team are regularly recording bilingual messages for use on voicemail. We are therefore assured there are no systemic examples of non-compliance.
c. Meetings		
i. Provide a simultaneous translation service at meetings open to the public	Welsh Language Unit	We have provided simultaneous translation for every Public Board and Committee meeting throughout the year through the MS Teams platforms this allows us to offer a streamlined and high-quality language choice to our service users. We ask that everyone organising a public event asks the question of delegates prior to the event if they would like to contribute in Welsh, and if there is a need for this, then we will provide the translation service. We've provided simultaneous translation services for 91 events. (45 previous year)

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ch. Public events		
i. HEIW must not treat Welsh any less favourably than English in relation to publicity, signage, information, staffing and assistance they provide for persons at a public event arranged in Wales, whether verbally or in writing.	Communications and Engagement Team: responsible for organising events Welsh Language Unit: to advise on and translate all relevant material and to oversee bilingual staffing	Teams are encouraged to contact Welsh Language Unit before arranging a public meeting to ensure compliance. We have a process for preparing for Public Events which ensures that all publicity material prior to the event is translated and sent out bilingually. Regular dialogue with the Communications team ensures that we maximise the opportunities to provide bilingual services at all of our public events within Wales. Additionally, any team that hasn't engaged with with Welsh Language Unit before the planning process are identified via this dialogue and can be contacted with the offer of appropriate support.
d. Publications		
i. Raise staff awareness on when to consider issuing bilingual or both Welsh and English language documents, publications and publicity material.	Welsh Language Unit	The message is emphasised in the Croeso Induction presentation for all new starters and will be be covered in the new awareness workshops. 'Welsh Translation – a Comms Guide' produced to educate teams and remind them of importance of keeping Translation and Design in mind when developing content. This is in line with what's required within HEIW Welsh Language Scheme. All public facing materials are created and published by the Communications and Engagement Team and therefore are fully bilingual.

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dd. Digital services		
i. Ensure any new content on HEIW's main public website is flagged for translation to ensure an equal service in both languages by creating a flagging function within the Content Management System.	Welsh Language Unit Digital and Data Team	Functionality to be added to any new website developments. The translation team is regularly translating new website content. The last audit revealed that we are fully compliant on all new website additions and as highlighted in the main report work is ongoing with significant progress made in identifying ensuring the written content is bilingual and correct.
ii. Assess Welsh language requirements when developing and updating IT systems for services provided to the public in Wales.	Welsh Language Unit Digital and Data Team	This is done regularly via different work streams; 1. Our Equality Impact Assessment works on each new initiative. 2. Regular dialogue with the Digital Team on all new digital development 3. Liaison with other public bodies and NHS Health Boards to ensure that good practice is learnt and being shared. 3. Discussions within in our internal More than just Words task and finish group, which include several key individuals including Communications, Digital and Workforce leads.
e. Social media		

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i. Establish an agreed internal procedure for ensuring relevant social messaging is posted both in Welsh and English in Wales.	Communications and Engagement Team Welsh Language Unit	All social media assets produced by the Communications and Engagement Team have remained fully bilingual. This is reinforced in our regular meetings with the Communications Team. We have also ensured a process is in place to support any time sensitive or "out of hours" social media communications that need translating.
ii. When creating new social media channels, or developing existing channels, consider the requirements outlined in the WLS to ensure an equal service in both Welsh and English.	Communications and Engagement Team Welsh Language Unit	HEIW engages on 2 well-known social media platforms, one with separate language feeds and the other operating as a bilingual feed due to the nature of the platform. It's currently not envisioned that HEIW require new social media channels but via our regular meetings with the Communications and Engagement Team these objectives can be delivered successfully if necessary

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3. Recruitment

Action	Delivery responsibility	Progress to March 25
i.Monitor recruitment processes to ensure compliance with the requirements outlined in the Welsh Language Scheme.	Welsh Language Unit HEIW People Team Recruiting Team Leader	Recruitment activities are increasingly becoming more focussed on the specific language requirements of a role. We no longer work in a linear manner with only essential or desirable Welsh being specified in the recruitment process. We are much more flexible, stating the levels required for specific skills, and saying we will support employees to learn where this is necessary – in line with our WLS aims. Introducing proficiency levels rather than binary "essential/desirable" language requirements has broadened recruitment opportunities by encouraging capable Welsh speakers who may previously have lacked confidence to apply
ii.Develop a framework for assessing and determining the level of Welsh language skills necessary for posts in HEIW.	Welsh Language Unit	We have replicated a method in use by ABUHB which is a simplified process for recording language skills of our workforce. We are also improving our data quality to set specification and are conducting more intelligent reporting. To date, 89% of core staff have self-assessed their Welsh Language proficiency. The *'Workforce planning for the Welsh language'* guidance document has been developed to help support workforce plan for Welsh language skills in mind. This guidance will help to ensure health and social care organisations are meeting all necessary legal requirements. The document was well received by Welsh Government, the Welsh Language Commissioner, and NHS Wales partners.
iii. If Welsh is determined as 'Essential' to a post following consultation, advise on level required using said framework.	Welsh Language Unit	Again, we have been more specific in the levels required in particular disciplines (for example, using the descriptor "Level 3 or above" instead of "Fluent"), which has

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		attracted more candidates for roles – and which has led to very good Welsh speakers who may lack a bit of confidence in their linguistic abilities applying for roles which they would otherwise have resisted from doing.
iv. Ensure recruitment adverts/notices and application packs for posts are provided bilingually and all adverts/notices placed in the media appear in both Welsh and English.	Welsh Language Unit HEIW People Team Recruiting Team Leader	All requests go through the People Team, which in turn come through the Translation team. Our use of Phrase software has meant that translations have become more consistent, are produced more efficiently. Additionally, the use of the TRAC website and NHS Jobs which enables us to promote and administer posts through the medium of Welsh. Both gateways enable applicants to submit applications in Welsh, and all communication with the applicant is bilingual. The electronic application form asks the applicant if they wish any interview to be conducted in Welsh, and we have a process in place to enable this to happen.

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4. Implementing, monitoring and reporting

Action	Delivery responsibility	Progress to March 25
i.In line with our commitments in the Welsh Language Scheme, identify and facilitate appropriate Welsh Language Training as and when necessary.	Welsh Language Unit Business Support Team	Quarterly reminders are sent out inviting staff to take up the opportunity to learn Welsh. We see a lot of interest in the weekly lessons immediately following a Croeso induction session. To date, around 48 learners regularly attend lessons. More needs to be done to utilities initiatives such as the Courtesy Welsh course and the Confidence Building work available through LearnWelsh.
ii. Provide Iaith Gwaith badges/lanyards and other associated materials to members of staff who wish to offer a Welsh language service.	Welsh Language Unit	We make these badges and lanyards available at the Croeso induction sessions, as well as making them accessible both in the office and at Reception at Ty Dysgu. We publicise this availability regularly on the Intranet, in Staff Meetings and at many other open events and meetings. We also provide "Dysgwr" (Learner) badges and lanyards for learners, and we update our stock regularly. Additionally, MS Teams backgrounds have been created in line with the HEIW corporate identity, including the

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		Iaith Gwaith logos for fluent speakers and learners.
iii. Where HEIW enters into arrangements with third parties/partnership working, monitor the arrangements concerning use of the Welsh language alongside other monitoring requirements.	Welsh Language Unit	Data returns for Strategic Review of Education Phase are received, collated and shared over the course of the year, and these have been shared with key partners Coleg Cymraeg and Dysgu Cymraeg. Work on developing the data into impactful Action Plans with the HEI's are ongoing.
iv. Monitor HEIW's progress in meeting the commitments made in the Scheme against the measurable outlined in this action plan. Record the demand for Welsh Language Unit, including any demand for services that go beyond the commitments made in our Welsh Language Scheme	Welsh Language Unit	Our progress is recorded in this performance report. We have specific delivery requirements under the More than just Words plan also. Regular progress reports are shared with the Board Secretary as the Executive Lead for the Welsh language. Since February 2026, The Director of Education Strategy and Transformation has taken up the responsibility of the Welsh Language a HEIW. Previously the Executive Director of Nursing, Health Professions and Quality

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v. Provide the Welsh Language Commissioner with a completed self-assessment report (Annual Monitoring Report) evaluating our progress in implementing the Scheme.	Welsh Language Manager	A copy of this report will be sent to the Welsh Language Commissioner.
vi. Publish HEIW's Annual Monitoring Report on HEIW's public facing website, heiw.nhs.wales	Welsh Language Unit/ Digital Team	This report will be published on HEIW's public facing website, www.heiw.nhs.wales
vii. Review HEIW's Welsh Language Scheme within three years of it coming to effect and discuss any changes with Welsh language Commissioner.	Welsh Language Unit	This was due to be updated in October 2024. However, after lengthy discussions with the Welsh Language Commissioner and Welsh Government, and since the process of bringing HEIW under Welsh Language Standards has now commenced, it is proposed that the current Scheme be temporarily extended until HEIW come under Standards. Following the issue of Welsh Language Standards to HEIW under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, the organisation is required to comply with the Standards from 1 October 2026.

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