

ALL WALES NURSE STAFFING PROGRAMME



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Health Education and
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Health Visiting Workstream Update

SUMMER 2021

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 Nurse Sponsor (Executive Director of Nursing and Quality at Public Health Wales) and Rebecca Boore (Health Education and Improvement Wales) has recently joined as 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 when the second duty of the Act is extended to health visiting services.

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 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 dynamic needs of children, families and communities.



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 Welsh Government's Early Years Transformation work has been instrumental in piloting different models for health visiting and includes service models that are co-produced and co-commissioned. In addition, different roles and skill mix have been introduced into health visiting services by health boards with consideration given to a prudent use of health visiting skills. The Heads of health visiting across Wales have been pivotal in managing and implementing these new developments across Wales and feedback on this work to the workstream group.

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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 the duty and aligning its work to Welsh Government strategy.

PROGRESS TO DATE

Highlights of progress to date by the workstream:

- devising draft health visiting staffing principles to inform and guide workforce plans as an interim measure until the act is extended to health visiting.
- working in collaboration with health visitors from across Wales and all Health Boards to support the development of the Welsh Levels of Care for health visiting. This has included holding local and national workshops and more recently virtual workshops to draft and refine the tool. The Welsh Levels of Care have also been aligned to the Healthy Child Wales Programme (Welsh Government 2017).
- exploration and identification of quality indicators relevant to health visiting.
- engaging with stakeholders and sharing the progress of the work.
- scoping of IT systems used across health visiting services to capture and report data.
- 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 gather information about and to map out the current health visiting workforce across Wales
- to finalise the second draft of the health visiting principles
- to finalise the first draft of the Welsh Levels of Care and plan a pilot to test the tool in practice
- to identify the specific measures and opportunities for data capture of the quality indicators
- to concept test a professional judgement workbook within health visiting services.

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 year due to the pressures of Covid-19.

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

References

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