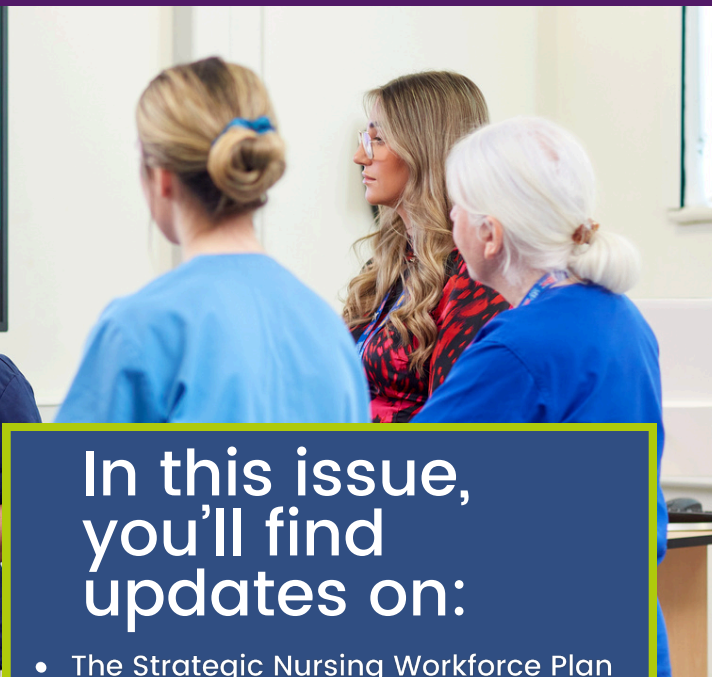


# Nursing & Midwifery Newsletter



GIG  
CYMRU  
NHS  
WALES

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



## In this issue, you'll find updates on:

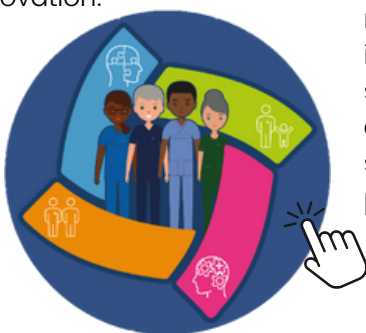
- The [Strategic Nursing Workforce Plan](#) for Wales, which sets out a long-term vision and practical actions to ensure a sustainable, skilled and supported nursing workforce.
- The [Strategic Perinatal Workforce Plan](#) for Wales, developed in collaboration with partners to enhance care for women, babies and families by strengthening the perinatal workforce across services.
- Digital learning innovations, including simulation-based education and virtual reality tools to enhance clinical training.
- Sustainability in practice, with a focus on environmentally responsible care and green healthcare leadership.
- Welsh language promotion, ensuring inclusive, culturally sensitive care for all communities in Wales.
- Workforce retention, offering support, compassionate leadership, flexible working options and professional development opportunities to retain our nursing workforce.
- And more!!!

## Introduction

We're excited to introduce the first edition of the Nursing and Midwifery Newsletter – your regular update on the work underway to support, develop, and celebrate the nursing and midwifery workforce across Wales. At HEIW, we are committed to building a skilled, compassionate, and future-ready workforce. This newsletter brings you closer to the wide range of initiatives we're leading and supporting – from workforce planning and education reform to leadership development and digital innovation.



Each edition will also explore cross-cutting themes that shape the future of our professions – including equity, wellbeing, research, and interprofessional collaboration. It's a space to share progress, celebrate achievements, and highlight the partnerships and innovations that are driving positive change across health and care in Wales. We hope you find this newsletter informative, inspiring, and reflective of our shared commitment to delivering the highest standards of care for the people of Wales.



## What we do

Established in 2018, HEIW is a Special Health Authority, which is responsible for providing education, training and further development for the Welsh healthcare workforce. HEIW aims to make sure healthcare staff feel well-equipped with the right skills and correct knowledge, to be able to provide high-quality care within the population.

HEIW also provides essential strategic workforce planning, education and further training across many healthcare professions and works closely

with the National Health Service (NHS) Wales, academic institutions and a wide range of stakeholders, to facilitate the development and implementation of strategies for improving healthcare education and to develop the workforce in Wales. Our vision is “to develop a skilled and sustainable workforce that improves care and population health”.

## Supporting the Nursing and Midwifery Workforce Through HEIW’s IMTP

HEIW Integrated Medium Term Plan (IMTP) outlines our strategic priorities for building a sustainable, skilled and future-ready health and care workforce.

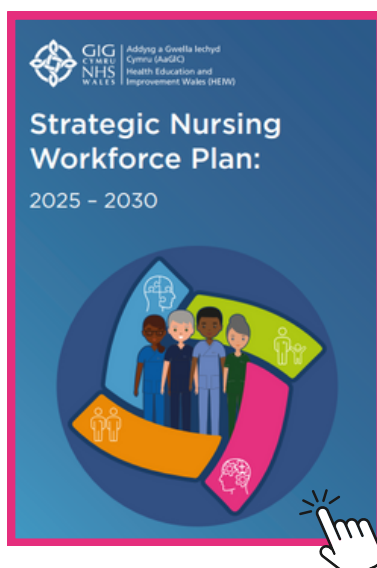


Strategic priority 7 (Future-Focused Workforce Plans) directly supports nursing and midwifery. As part of this, we’re delivering Year 1 of the national nursing and perinatal workforce plans, which focus on strengthening career pathways, easing workforce pressures and ensuring nurses, midwives and the perinatal team are supported throughout their careers.

This work reflects our long-term, collaborative approach to workforce planning, ensuring we meet the needs of today’s population while preparing for the challenges of tomorrow.

[HEIW IMTP for 2025-2028 video](#)

## Strategic Nursing Workforce Plan: Launch of the Plan



The Strategic Nursing Workforce Plan is the first of its kind in Wales, it has an all-Wales focus to grow, transform and support the nursing workforce in Wales to ensure it is equipped to meet the evolving healthcare demands of the Welsh population. The plan outlines a series of targeted actions to be implemented over the next 5 years in collaboration with Welsh Government, Health Boards and Trusts, Primary Care and other key stakeholders.

The actions focus on three key areas: growing the nursing workforce, supporting the nursing workforce and transforming the nursing workforce. The success of the plan depends on the collective effort of nurses, educators, policymakers and healthcare leaders. By working together, we can build a resilient, future-ready nursing workforce that delivers high-quality care and improved health outcomes for the people of Wales.

This newsletter will highlight some of the work that has already started. More information on the plan and the specific actions can be found at [Strategic nursing workforce plan - HEIW](#).

## Integrated Nursing Career Framework from Entry to Consultant Level

We are excited to announce the upcoming launch of our future-focused Nursing Career Framework, designed to support career development from Healthcare Support Worker to Consultant Nurse levels. This initiative aims to provide clear pathways for progression, ensuring that every member of the nursing team can envisage and achieve their career aspirations.

The framework demonstrates the wide range of roles available in each area and explains what skills, experience and qualifications you may need to progress. It is designed to help you feel motivated, supported and valued, wherever you work and whatever your goals are.



This framework has been developed to fulfil Action 21 of the Strategic Nursing Workforce Plan, to ensure we have an engaged and motivated workforce who feel valued and invested in.

The framework has been developed in partnership with:

- Nurses and nursing support staff across Wales
- Nurse educators, workforce planners and leaders
- Health boards, trusts and social care organisations

Wales is changing how we deliver healthcare. National policies such as 'A Healthier Wales' aim to bring care closer to people's homes and communities. To achieve this, we need a nursing workforce that is skilled, confident and ready for the future. The Nursing Career Framework will help the workforce prepare for these changes and understand the development opportunities available to them.



## Professional Framework for Enhanced, Advanced and Consultant Clinical Practice



The multidisciplinary framework was launched in 2023 making recommendations for health boards and trusts and has led to a more consistent approach to the development, education and management of these roles across NHS Wales.

There is an increased understanding of individuals working at enhanced, advanced or consultant levels of practice across NHS Wales as being an essential part of the multi-professional healthcare team.

All Welsh health boards and trusts now have leads for supporting advanced practice roles.

Enhanced, advanced and consultant clinical practitioners now have clear career pathways with progression plans in place which maximise their skills and knowledge to meet the health needs of the Welsh population.

National forums have been put in place for organisations to share best practice and offer support to others.

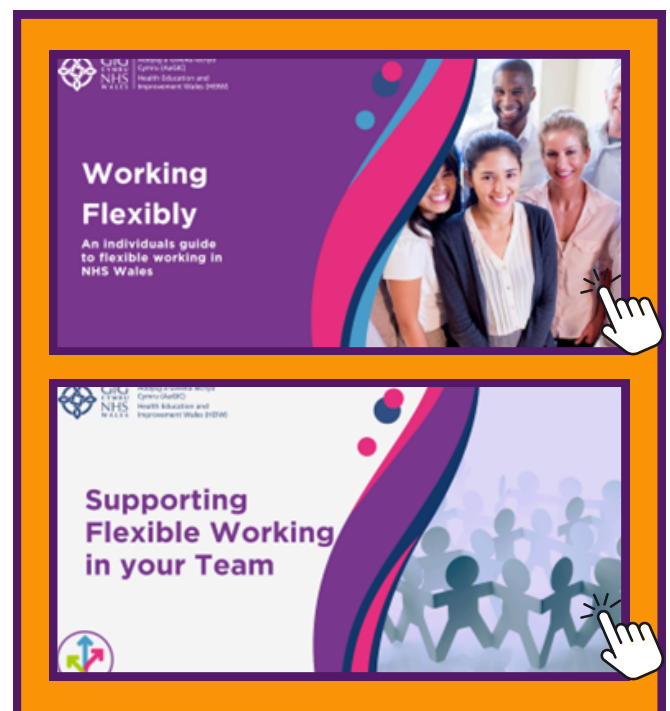
If you'd like to read more about the framework and recommendations made you can access it here [HEIW Framework for Enhanced, Advanced and Consultant Clinical Practice in Wales is a success - HEIW](#)

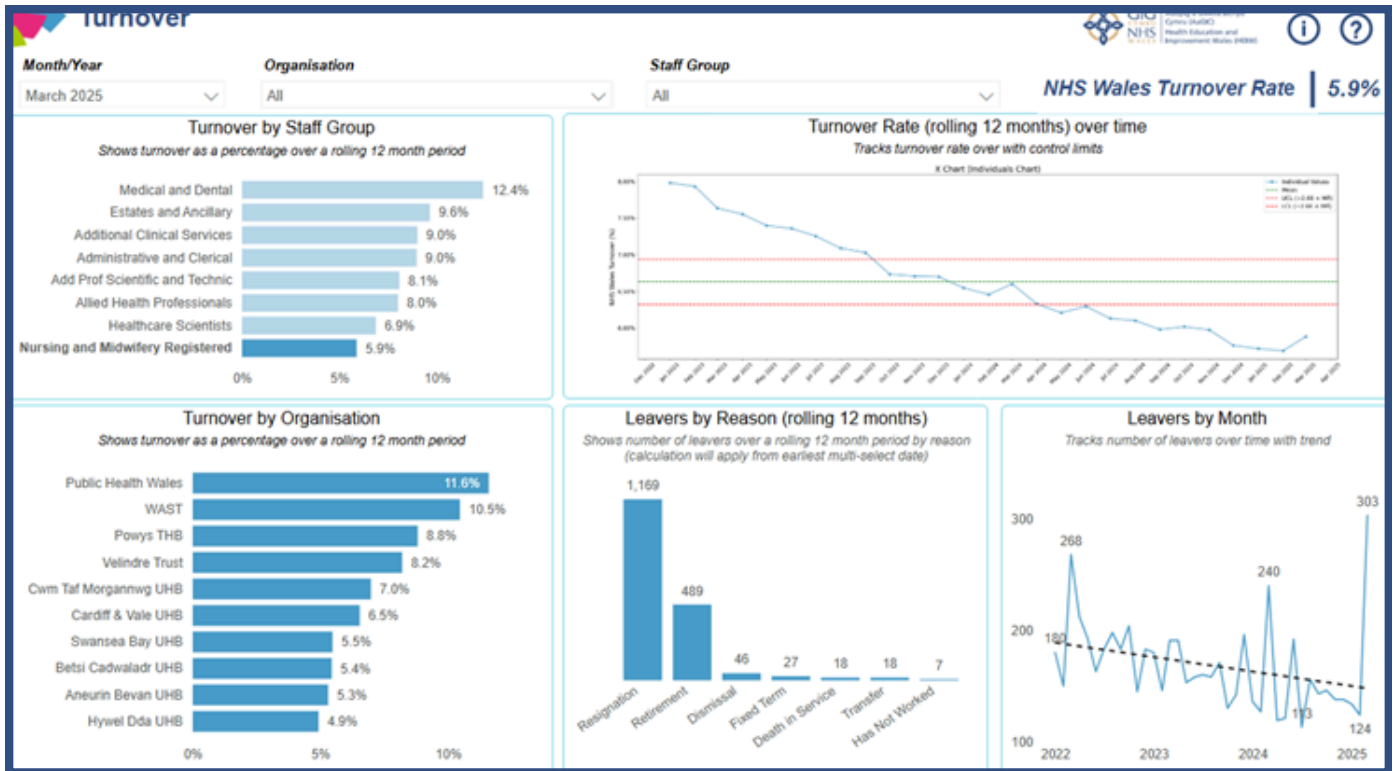


## Nursing and Midwifery Retention

Improving retention is crucial for sustaining and growing our nursing and midwifery workforce to meet increasing demands. Over recent years, colleagues across NHS Wales have been leaving at an increased rate due to various factors, including external factors such as pay, terms and conditions and pensions and internal factors such as suboptimal health and wellbeing, suboptimal experience and satisfaction, poor work life balance, inflexible working approaches, lack of career and professional development opportunities and suboptimal leadership, cultures and working environments.

The National Nurse Retention Plan and National Retention Programme, launched in December 2023, aimed to address these challenges through the delivery of system-wide targeted and data driven improvement approaches.





Through undertaking this approach to nursing and midwifery retention improvement, positive impacts are already visible. Downward trends in both Nursing and Midwifery turnover and voluntary resignation rates are evident, with all Wales Nursing and Midwifery turnover rates reducing from 6.7% in December 2023 to 5.9% in March 2025. Additionally, these improvements have also realised financial and productivity benefits associated with reductions in recruitment and onboarding, utilisation of bank and agency staff and lost training costs.

The programme will continue to build on these successes in 2025/26, with a focus on data refinement, further identification of retention priorities, development of supportive resources and wider colleague engagement.

You can find additional information and resources on the [National Retention Hub](#) cited on Gwella.



## Driving Sustainable Change in Wales' Theatre Workforce

In November 2024, a new HEIW project was launched to transform the theatre workforce in Wales and tackle perioperative care challenges. Backed by the Planned Care Transformation Fund, the project focuses on several key areas: evaluating the current workforce, improving data quality, sharing best practices for flexible workforce models and creating a perioperative workforce guide. It also aims to boost educational opportunities for perioperative staff and provide leadership support for senior theatre practitioners. These efforts align with the Welsh Government's goals in their programme for transforming and modernising planned care and reducing waiting lists in Wales.

Since it started, the project has received strong support and engagement from all Health Boards and Trusts, working together with related workstreams to gather insights and share findings. It started with a leadership and organisational development survey to pinpoint growth areas. Based on the survey results, training opportunities have been offered to support theatre practitioners. In February 2025, forty-four individuals were given membership to ShiftWorks, an online learning programme by The King's Fund that offers CPD-accredited leadership development resources. Additionally, support has been provided to access the Professional Advocate Programme at Swansea University, which helps practice educators offer clinical supervision for theatre staff.

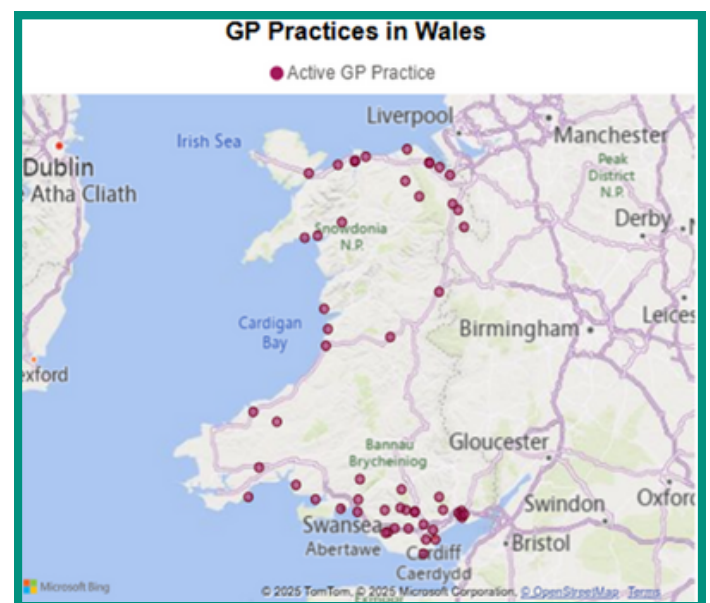
This strategic approach aims to build a resilient and well-prepared theatre workforce, improving patient care across Wales by optimising workforce models, expanding education and training opportunities and fostering a supportive leadership culture.

The project will continue until the end of March 2026. For further information, please contact [HEIW.Nationalprogrammes@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:HEIW.Nationalprogrammes@wales.nhs.uk)

## Nursing Placements in GP Practices: Supporting Learners Today to Be the Workforce of Tomorrow

High quality, inspirational placements are key to securing a future primary and community care workforce. HEIW have appointed Primary Care Practice Education Facilitators (PEFs) to improve and increase the number of student nurse placements within Primary Care.

According to Wales National Workforce Reporting System data (May 2024), 48.6% of Practice Nurses are aged over 50, so inspiring new nurses to consider a career in General Practice Nursing is critical. For surgeries in areas of deprivation, such as those signed up to the [Deep End initiative](#), recruitment and retention is a particular challenge. Placements in Primary Care also align with policy drivers which focus on public health and delivering care closer to home.



Since the appointment of PEF's GP practices offering student nurse placements has increased from 18 to 71 practices. This builds on a successful pilot in Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB which saw several student nurses go on to gain employment as Practice Nurses after completing placements in Primary Care. Student nurse placements promote a multi-professional learning environment in General Practice with students able to learn from other primary care professionals, such as pharmacists, physiotherapists and podiatrists.

The placements have been well evaluated by both General Practice Nurses (GPNs) and nurse students, with 76% of students who experienced a GPN placement stated they would consider a career in practice nursing.

'I would like to express my gratitude to each of you for your incredible support, guidance, and kindness during my placement. From the GPs, practice nurses, advanced nurse practitioner, physiotherapist, Health care assistants, health visitors, receptionists, prescription team and administrative staff, you all played a vital role in making my learning experience so valuable.'

Nancy Third year student nurse placed at Oaktree surgery, Bridgend.

'I don't think people really understand the role of the General Practice Nurse – we need to show students how challenging the role can be as well as the rewards and opportunities it presents. We feel it is important to reach out to the next generation of nurses coming through.'

GPNs Nikki Hayes and Janice Rees, Llan Healthcare

The next 12 months will focus on building resilience into placements and exploring the options of Primary Care clusters hosting a placement to maximise the opportunities for interprofessional learning and collaboration.

Further Information: [Nursing placements in GP practices – HEIW](#)

## Leadership and Management – Compassionate Leadership

HEIW have a leadership and management training platform called Gwella, anyone can access the courses and resources within the platform, you just need to sign up using your NHS e-mail address. There are many bitesize videos on different topics in relation to leadership and management which can support you in your workplace. [Welcome! – Gwella HEIW Leadership Portal for Wales.](#)

Compassionate leadership involves using both intellect and empathy to inspire and influence people, positively impacting oneself, others and the planet. It emphasises building strong relationships through active listening, understanding, empathy and support, ensuring individuals feel valued and respected. Compassionate leaders create safe spaces for vulnerability, self-compassion and compassion for others, leading to improved productivity, employee morale and retention.



Our Nursing Workforce Transformation Team have designed a two-hour workshop titled "Your High Performing Compassionate Team". It is a train the trainer approach to strategically support embedding compassionate leadership across our nursing and perinatal teams.

['High Performing Compassionate Team' training for Nursing and Perinatal workforce – HEIW](#)

## Welsh Language – More Than Just Words

### Using Welsh at work – HEIW

A little bit of Welsh goes a long way.

Why is it important for the people of Wales to access healthcare services in their preferred or native language?

We engage with the people of Wales at their most vulnerable time when accessing healthcare, this is often a frightening time in someone's life. Better clinical outcomes are achieved when providing our services in Welsh to those who require it.

The active offer is asking if a patient requires the service in Welsh, without them having to ask for it. Not all Welsh people speak fluent English, for them to be involved in and understand what care they are receiving it is important they receive this care in a language they understand.

How can you help?

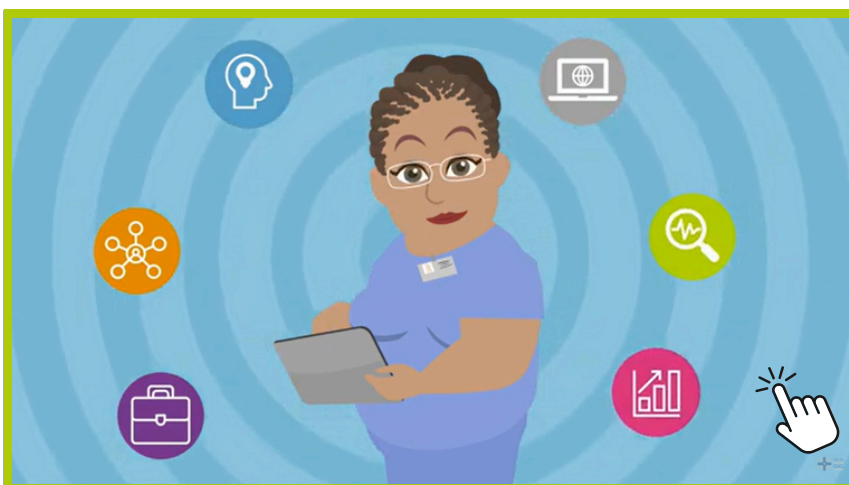
- Greet people bilingually e.g. Shwmae (Hi there). Allows people to feel at ease and makes it much easier to determine if their first language is Welsh
- Understand who on your team speaks Welsh so you can ask for support if needed
- Learn how you can access a Welsh translator in your health board
- Complete the ESR module for Welsh Language Awareness 000 NHS Wales Welsh Language Awareness Certification (more than just words)
- Using and learning Welsh at work [Resources for Welsh learners – HEIW](#)



If you use Welsh at work, there is a list of useful resources that can help, like a Welsh language spelling and grammar checker and Microsoft in Welsh or resources to support learning the Welsh language.

Or if you are having difficulty with knowing the medical terminology in Welsh, you can use [termau.cymru](http://termau.cymru) which is a useful tool.

## Digital Skills and Competence



Digital transformation is a top priority for NHS Wales. However, a significant gap remains between technological advances and the workforce's ability to adopt them. This is due to limited digital literacy and socio-economic barriers.

To address this, HEIW developed the [Digital Capability Framework \(DCF\)](#), as part of the [Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care](#). The framework helps individuals and organisations identify and build the digital skills, behaviours and mindsets essential for modern healthcare.

The DCF consists of six domains and a self-evaluation tool that supports professional development and helps users identify areas for improvement. The six domains are:



- Learning and Leadership
- Working with Others
- Safety and Wellbeing
- Using Technology
- Data Literacy
- Research and Innovation

Each domain targets a specific area of digital capability.

Take the First Step! Feeling unsure where to start? Try the [DCF self-evaluation tool](#), which takes about an hour to complete and can count as CPD. It helps you evaluate your current skills and offers bite-sized learning resources to support your development.

Visit the HEIW website to learn more and begin your digital capability journey.

## HEIW Courses

Did you know there are a wealth of online resources and training available at [Welcome! - Ytydysgu Heiw](#).



This is an online learning platform available for anyone who has an NHS Wales account. Simply use the sign-up button and register, here you will find all Wales training on a breadth of subjects that will support you in work and provide you with CPD. There are also resources to support with workforce planning, finance, improve digital skills and Welsh language.

## Canopi

Previously known as Health for Health Professionals Wales, they provide support to those experiencing mental health and psychological symptoms such as, anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and alcohol related issues. This service is available to all NHS and social care staff in Wales that are 18 years and over. They offer self-help resources, support from well-being allies, guided self-help and virtual or face-to-face therapies. To access help, you complete an online referral, and a doctor will call you back to discuss what support you may need. You can find more information online at [About us - Canopi](#), including resources to support your mental health.

## Health and Well-being

Supporting and maintaining the health and wellbeing of our NHS workforce is a top priority, there are a vast amount of health and wellbeing resources available online at HEIW.

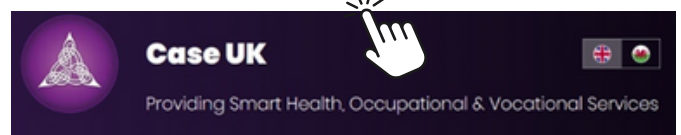


[Colleague health and wellbeing - HEIW](#)

Other services are available through Welsh Government funded projects to support the NHS workforce with timely access to services to support physical and mental well-being.

## Case UK

Welsh Government provide funded support for anyone living or employed within the Cardiff and Vale, Cwm Taf Morgannwg and Gwent areas. Case UK provide an In Work Support Service, providing rapid access to physiotherapy, psychological therapy and occupational therapy at no charge to you. It is easy to apply with an online form; you can do this on their website [Case UK | A Wellbeing Support Service](#)



## Watch This Space!

### Newborn and Infant Physical Examination Cymru (NIPEC)

- Resources have been developed to support those who have undertaken the relevant training to complete the NIPEC, they support the ongoing CPD of these professionals and aim to standardise the approach across Wales.
- Resources including the framework can be found here: [NIPEC - HEIW](#)
- There is also NIPEC e-learning on: [Welcome! - Ytydysgu Heiw.](#)

### Perinatal Workforce Plan

- The Strategic Perinatal Workforce Plan for Wales has been developed in response to the growing recognition that a sustainable, skilled and supported workforce is essential to delivering high-quality care for women, babies and families. The plan sets out a clear, collaborative vision to strengthen and future-proof the perinatal workforce across Wales by addressing current challenges and promoting multi-professional development. It has recently been launched in July and can be found here [HEIW launch the first Strategic Perinatal Workforce Plan for Wales - HEIW.](#)

### Email:

HEIW.NursingWorkforcePlan@Wales.NHS.UK  
HEIW.PerinatalWorkforcePlan@Wales.NHS.UK

### National Labour-ward Co-ordinator Framework

- In 2023 HEIW launched the [Labour Ward Coordinator Framework](#), a significant milestone in the ongoing development of maternity services in Wales. The second version of this document is under development. The framework is designed to support the work of labour ward coordinators, ensuring they have the tools and guidance necessary to provide high-quality, safe and efficient care.

### Motivational Interviewing (MI)

- We're continuing to build on our work to embed MI across the NHS workforce by developing a series of short films that showcase real-life scenarios from a range of clinical settings, including physiotherapy, maternity, genomics, primary care and dental to demonstrate how MI can support positive behaviour change.

### Virtual Models of Care

- The nursing workforce plan highlights the need to introduce new models of care to offer more sustainable ways of working. Workforce modelling has shown that the demand on the NHS is not being met by the workforce supply in its current state, therefore, we need to work in more innovative ways to ensure we continue to provide quality patient care that is safe and person centred.

