



Strategic Nursing Workforce Plan for NHS Wales

Why we are developing a plan

The Strategic Nursing Workforce Plan is a 10-year plan to support NHS Wales: to **recruit** high-calibre individuals into the profession, to **train** more nurses, to **retain** our dedicated nursing workforce and to **transform** the way nurses work.

Nurses are the largest group of staff in NHS Wales and represent approximately 40% of the workforce, working across a range of specialities and environments including hospitals and community settings. Across NHS Wales, all organisations are experiencing unprecedented service pressures compounded by workforce challenges.

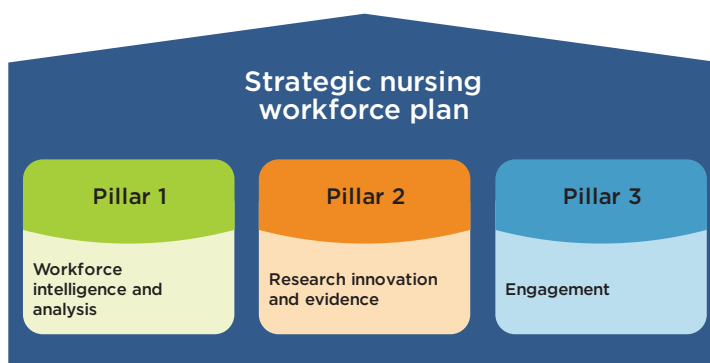
The challenges facing the nursing profession include.

- ❑ A shortage of registered nurses.
- ❑ Rising numbers of patients with co-morbidities.
- ❑ Increased demand for care and services.
- ❑ An aging population.
- ❑ Numbers of experienced nurses diminishing.

These factors combined, impact on nurse recruitment and retention, wellbeing and can lead to burnout. Shortages and burnout lead to increased stress levels among nurses, resulting in reduced job satisfaction and compromised attention to patient needs.

The aim of the plan is to develop innovative solutions to transform the nursing profession to ensure a suitable workforce to meet future service and workforce demands.

Steps taken to develop the plan



The plan has been developed using the HEIW three pillar approach, of workforce intelligence and analysis, research innovation, evidence, and engagement. We completed an analysis and review of the nursing workforce data alongside the development of a demand and supply model.

We reviewed numerous reports and papers to identify best practice and the strategic drivers that will impact on the nursing workforce over the next 10 years.

To ensure that the plan is co-created, we have undertaken engagement over two phases. We have listened to the views from nurses, the wider workforce, students, patients, families’ carers, and the public. Participants contributed nearly 3,000 ideas, comments, and votes in phase 1 and almost 1,650 in phase 2. ¹

In addition, three round table events were held to inform the actions, with students, education partners and senior nurse leaders including the five nations Chief Nursing Officers or their deputies.



Through engagement we asked a number of questions and summarised the views and ideas that you shared under the headings of **Appreciate us, Develop us, Trust us, Support us, Help us deliver effective patient care**. The views and ideas that you shared with us through the engagement process are summarised in the table below.

<p>Appreciate us</p>	<p>Reward fairly, celebrate publicly, value contributions of nurses, and promote their professional image</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the seed ideas was very strong (96-100%), with comments seeking to clarify, expand, and provide detail, but generally offering implicit or explicit support of the strategic statement; • Discussion in the comments focused on the need for an Agenda for Change review, fair pay, and advanced practice roles, all of which we had heard in the first online conversation; • Issues of banding and pay and support for older nurses came through in ideas contributed by the crowd.
<p>Develop us</p>	<p>Provide funding for study and development, develop new roles and pathways, and offer more career progression opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the seed ideas was unanimous (100%), with written feedback generally zeroing in on separate details of the statements and seeking to clarify these or bringing up challenges to their implementation; • Discussion was around protected time, regional disparities, or career pathways suggestions, among others; • The crowd offered several specific suggestions (some of which had come through the first conversation), such as support for developing Welsh language skills, assistant practitioner progression and nurse associate role, better retire and return support, and others.

¹ Our Big Conversation Nursing in Wales – clever together

<p>Trust us</p>	<p>Empower the nursing workforce, consult them in decision making, allow them to find fair solutions to flexible working</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the seed ideas was unanimous (100%), with written feedback in comments criticising the way the system currently operates, or highlighting difficulties with implementing these ideas; • Limited discussion nevertheless brought up the issues with lack of (adequate) response to whistleblowing, Datix report, or other concerns staff has raised, including lack of feedback; and criticised the lack of empowerment for staff, with non-clinical managers making poor decisions they are not held accountable for.
<p>Support us</p>	<p>Provide functional facilities, access to wellbeing services, better work-life balance, debriefings, and visible, compassionate, and engaged managers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the seed ideas was unanimous (100%), with comments criticising current practices; • We heard calls for increased accountability, effectiveness, role-modelling, and presence from leaders; addressing shortage of break-spaces and practices; and a suggestion to reword reference to patient aggression; • One of the more supported new ideas from the crowd asked for additional support in protecting nurses from stress, burnout, harassment, violence, and during formal processes – risks associated with the nursing career.
<p>Help us deliver effective patient care</p>	<p>Provide us with resources, equipment, infrastructure, and efficient digital systems, and remove obstacles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the seed ideas was again unanimous (100%), with comments largely restating the urgent need to address the issues that are targeted by these strategic statements. • A focus of discussion was on the need for integrated, interconnected, efficient, mobile, and user-friendly information systems and easily accessible patient records, as well as infrastructure and buildings offering ample space and in good repair. • New ideas suggested developing integrated community teams and support for clinical supervision.

The data, research and feedback from the engagement has been coordinated, analysed, and developed into **twenty strategic actions**. These actions will provide the foundation for the creation of a delivery plan to address the current and future nursing workforce challenges over the next 10 years.

Next Steps

Please take part in our consultation, this is your opportunity to influence the development of the Strategic Nursing Workforce Plan actions. We would welcome you telling us what is **strong**, what is **wrong** and what is **missing**.

Through the consultation we will, describe the strategic **action**; the **evidence** to support it; the **impact** of the action; and **who** is responsible for leading it.

There are several ways that you can participate. Please visit our webpage where you will find further details and information. [Strategic nursing workforce plan - HEIW \(nhs.wales\)](#)

Following the consultation, we will review and reflect on all the contributions we receive, revise the actions as necessary, and develop a costed delivery plan.

Thank you for engaging in the consultation and supporting the development of the Strategic Nursing Workforce Plan for NHS Wales.