

# IHCC PROGRESS REPORT 2018-22



**Working towards a globally responsible,  
resilient and prosperous NHS in Wales**

## Authors

This report has been developed by the International Health Coordination Centre (IHCC), International Health Division, Public Health Wales: Liz Green, Mariana Dyakova, Laura Holt and; Dr Kit Chalmers, the Tropical Health Education Trust (THET).

## Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Powys Teaching Health Board, Digital Health Care Wales, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and Malawi-Wales Antimicrobial Stewardship Partnership for providing and contributing to the case studies.

Many thanks to Professor Mark A Bellis, former Director of Policy and International Health – World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre Directorate, Public Health Wales and to Dr Gill Richardson, former Assistant Director, of Policy and International Health – World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre Directorate, and Lauren Couzens, Public Health Wales for their support to the report, the International Health Coordination Centre's work and the implementation of the Charter for International Health Partnerships in Wales.

**ISBN 978-1-83766-151-0**

© Public Health Wales NHS Trust 2023

Material contained in this document may be reproduced under the terms of the Open Government Licence (OGL) [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/) provided it is done so accurately and is not used in a misleading context. Acknowledgement to Public Health Wales NHS Trust to be stated.

---

# Contents

<b>About this Report</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Section 1: Foundations, Plans and Progress</b>	<b>6</b>
IHCC's Plans and Progress	7
Charter for International Health Partnerships: Recommitment Ceremony and Charter Toolkit	8
<b>Section 2: Activities Across NHS Wales</b>	<b>9</b>
Public Health Wales World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre (WHO CC)	9
Nursing Now	10
Welsh Government International Activity Reviews	11
WAST Collaboration with Indonesia	12
Wales and Africa Health Links Network	13
Cardiff and Vale University Health Board: Talk© Clinical Debriefing Tool	15
Powys-Bangladesh Endoscopy Partnership	16
Digital Health and Care Wales: IT Support in Lesotho	16
Cross-Wales Activity: Malawi-Wales Antimicrobial Stewardship Partnership	18
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board: Nursing Leadership "Buddy" Scheme	19
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board: The Betsi-Kenya Health Link	20
Global Citizenship E-Learning for the NHS in Wales	21
Sustainable Development Toolkit	22
Public Health Wales's International Health Strategy Refresh	23
Charter Implementation: Evaluating Progress	23
Welsh Health Equity Status Report (WHESRI)	26
COVID-19 International Horizon Scanning and Learning Reports	27
Brexit: Monitoring and Sharing Developments	27
<b>Section 3: Conclusions and the Future</b>	<b>28</b>
Support the Implementation of the International Activity Reports' Recommendations	28
Create an NHS International Health Activity Group	28
Prepare the Ground for a Refreshed Approach to International Health in Wales	29
Engage with NHS Organisations to Raise the Profile of International Health Activity	29
Implement Recommendations of the Charter Implementation Evaluation	29
<b>Concluding Comments</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>31</b>



# About this Report

This report outlines the International Health Coordination Centre's (IHCC) progress in driving and enabling implementation of the Charter for International Health Partnerships in Wales (the Charter) across the NHS over the last four years. It also provides examples of international health partnership working from across the Health Boards and NHS Trusts. The report highlights the IHCC's plans and aspirations for the future, in supporting a healthier, more equal, globally responsible, resilient and prosperous NHS in Wales.

The report highlights the IHCC's role, achievements, ways of working, collaborative structures and activities; and outlines the evolution of the IHCC in relation to global, UK, national and local developments. These include challenges and opportunities such as the UK withdrawal from the European Union ('Brexit'), the COVID-19 pandemic and the 'cost of living' crisis. It demonstrates the tools used to enable shared learning, facilitate cross-NHS and cross-sector synergies, and maximise benefits to the health and well-being of the people in Wales and beyond.

## The body of the report is structured into three sections:

- 1. Foundations, plans and progress:** this describes the IHCC, the Charter, which sits at the heart of its work, and its connections across the NHS. It includes a summary of plans and aspirations expressed in the last Progress Report 2015-17, and the activities that have taken place to deliver these. A major achievement has been the development of a Charter Implementation Toolkit, released in 2019 and described along with the Charter Recommitment Ceremony, which marked the Charter's fifth anniversary that year.
- 2. Activities across NHS Wales:** this section showcases some of the many international health activities which NHS Wales organisations have undertaken since 2018. These are mapped to the four core foundations of the Charter, though many demonstrate good practice in more than one of these. Eight individual organisations are represented, as well as cross-Wales and Welsh Government activities, and a summary of the Charter Implementation Progress Evaluation is included.
- 3. Conclusions and looking ahead:** this set out the ambitions for the IHCC over the next two years, based on assessment of the challenges and successes of the past. These show how the IHCC seeks to add value to the international activities taking place across NHS Wales, support global health and international partnerships in order to benefit local and global populations through learning, sharing and collaboration.

The report contains an Executive Summary, an overview of international health activity from 2018-2022, and provides some suggestions for the future.

## Target audience

The report is aimed at a wide range of stakeholders engaged with, and with an interest in, international and global health, including from the NHS (Health Boards and NHS Trusts), other relevant public bodies, Welsh Government, UK (Four Nations) partner organisations and groups, and third sector bodies.

# Executive Summary

Established in 2013, the Wales's International Health Coordination Centre (IHCC) is based within the Policy and International Health, the WHO Collaborating Centre on Investment for Health and Wellbeing (WHOCC) Directorate at Public Health Wales. This report describes activities of the IHCC itself, and the wider international health activity of NHS Wales between 2018-22. The last few years have been a turbulent period for health systems and the health workforce as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, but the report shows significant international collaboration taking place despite this. The examples included clearly demonstrate the mutual benefit of global health cooperation, including during emergencies.

The IHCC has continued to evolve and make progress despite the pandemic disruption and suspension of its work during this time. Its work has been centred around the 'Charter for International Health Partnerships' (the Charter) in Wales, and a Charter recommitment ceremony was held in 2019 to mark its fifth anniversary. This saw all NHS Wales organisations renewing their pledge to implement the Charter, and an Implementation Toolkit has been developed to support their efforts. Progress on the implementation of the Charter has been evaluated, with clear strengths and areas for improvement emerging which will guide efforts to drive international engagement across the NHS during the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. In March 2018, the Policy and International Health Directorate of Public Health Wales was designated as a World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre (CC) on Investment for Health and Well-being, bringing new and strengthened international links, and Global Citizenship e-learning has been developed and made available to all NHS colleagues and other public body workforce, including across the UK.

The report presents examples of international collaborative work from eight Health Boards and NHS Trusts as well as two cross-Wales organisations and the Welsh Government. Activities are varied and involve strategic partnerships, clinical research, service provision and voluntary activities, carried out across four continents. The examples include:

- Input into informing the Welsh Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, using regular International Horizon Scanning and learning reports. These are ongoing, now taking a broader look at public health priorities and emerging issues/threats.
- A clinical and academic partnership with Indonesia to support development of the Indonesian ambulance service, funded through a UK research grant. The partnership has developed mathematical models to guide developments and provided clinical paramedicine training.
- An all-Wales pharmacy collaboration with Malawi to improve antimicrobial stewardship and reduce antimicrobial resistance, funded by UK Official Development Assistance. A toolkit and training were developed to improve practice, and the partnership engaged with national bodies to ensure alignment with wider health strategies.
- A research project to promote use and assess the impact of a debriefing tool for clinical teams. This was in collaboration with institutions in Spain and Norway and was funded by a European research grant. The tool has been used to support clinicians during the pandemic and is now in use in twenty countries across the world.
- A link between north Wales and Kenya which, guided by a needs assessment, has developed a community events-based surveillance reporting system and training, funded by the Welsh Government's Wales and Africa programme. Over 60 Community Health Volunteers have been trained and now report concerns directly to the district public health team.
- Two Welsh Government funded reports examining Wales's international health activity, with recommendations to strengthen this. A Steering Group has considered the recommendations and there are plans to implement change.



A striking feature of much of this work is that it has continued – or in some cases started – in the midst of the pressures of the COVID-19 pandemic. This shows the value of such international collaborations and that they have brought mutual benefit to those involved.

As Wales is now in the recovery phase of the pandemic, the IHCC is committed to supporting, strengthening and championing international and global health activity. Public Health Wales's WHOCC has been re-designated for four years from 2022, providing a strong backing and connections with WHO, its offices and networks.

The report concludes with the IHCC's aims for the next two years, which include creation of a new NHS International Health Activity Group, engagement across the Health Boards and NHS Trusts to continue supporting the Charter implementation with understanding of the current context, and engagement with the Welsh Government and partner organisations to take forward the recommendations of recent reports and impact of global, UK and national developments. The IHCC's leadership and collaboration, underpinned by Wales's outward and forward-looking ambitions and policies, can allow global collaborations and international partnerships across NHS Wales to grow, strengthening health systems, and help protect, promote and improve population health and wellbeing at home and across the world.





# Introduction

This report follows the 2015-17 progress report of the IHCC (Public Health Wales, 2017). The longer time period covered reflects the challenges in relation to work re-orientation and staff mobilisation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The IHCC now exists in a very different context both locally, nationally and globally. There have been organisational changes, restructuring Public Health Wales; and the Directorate has been designated as a WHOCC now hosting the IHCC. Some challenges, such as Brexit, were expected but with unpredictable effects. Others were not expected: although a pandemic had been predicted for years, the widespread impact of COVID-19 has been dramatic and long-lasting.

These changes have challenged people, communities and the health service in Wales and the world, bringing new perspectives on health, inequality and priorities, and new weight to the work of the IHCC. Since it was established in 2013, the IHCC has acted as a focal point for health-related international work across the NHS in Wales: a hub for sharing and building on the excellence, expertise, passion and commitment of the Welsh health community. This community's international work has continued through all these changes and challenges: sometimes in different ways or with a different focus, but always with the aim of improving health at home and abroad through international connections, learning from and sharing with others.

This report presents examples of the positive practice and activities which have taken place across NHS Wales during the last four years, and the opportunities and challenges these highlight for the IHCC. The mission and objectives of the IHCC remain unchanged: promoting and facilitating opportunities for international collaboration and partnership building; maximising the potential gains and policy impact for Wales and our stakeholders; and reducing duplication of effort and resources. The work has continued to evolve and continue during these four years despite the challenges.

## Section 1: Foundations, Plans and Progress

Most of the IHCC's work has been centred around facilitating and supporting implementation of the Charter: a unique good practice document produced in 2014, to which all Welsh Health Boards and NHS Trusts have committed and signed (International Health Coordination Centre, 2014). The IHCC benefits from being embedded within Public Health Wales, bringing it under the umbrella of Public Health Wales's International Health Strategy (Dyakova, Couzens and Bellis, 2017), and bringing wide international connections including those established through the WHOCC.

### **The Charter sets standards and provides practical guidance for establishing and maintaining international health partnerships, based around four foundation stones:**

- **Organisational responsibilities:** recognising that strong organisational engagement and commitment are essential.
- **Reciprocal partnership working:** based on collaboration, equality, mutual respect and mutual benefit.
- **Good practice:** seeking evidence, celebrating positive results and learning from difficulties.
- **Sound governance:** with clearly agreed objectives and responsibilities for all involved.

The signature of NHS Wales organisations indicates their recognition of the benefits of global engagement and working and their intention to do this ethically, mutually beneficially and effectively. A core function of the IHCC has been to convene the Charter Implementation Group, bringing together representatives of each signatory and associate signatory organisation, to share information and experiences, and to plan supporting activities.

The last progress report concluded with plans to strengthen the IHCC work, and Wales's international health activity more generally. Figure 1 presents these plans, along with a summary of progress towards them. This has been very positive, despite recent challenges.



# Figure 1: IHCC's Plans and Progress



## **Publish an all-Wales Charter Implementation Toolkit**

This was published in October 2019. It summarises the Charter's information and links to supporting guidance, both from external organisations and produced by Welsh Health Boards through the Charter Implementation group. See below for more information.



## **Evaluate progress of the Charter Implementation**

Work began in January 2020 but was suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this, the evaluation was finalised in 2021: see the Sound Governance section for results.



## **Further develop global citizenship training**

Building on a previous pilot training course, an online learning module was developed. It was launched on Learning@Wales, the all-Wales NHS e-learning platform, in November 2021. Further details in the Good Practice section.



## **Consolidate synergies and governance to mainstream international engagement across the NHS.**

The pressures of the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted this activity. New opportunities are presenting themselves and the NHS can build on these. There is further information in the Organisational Responsibilities and Looking Ahead sections.



## **Strengthen our partnerships and seek new opportunities to learn, promote Wales, and increase its impact on the global health agenda.**

The IHCC has made good progress, with designation and redesignation of a World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre in Public Health Wales, a Memorandum of Understanding signed between Welsh Government and the WHO, and publication of the Welsh Health Equity Status Report. More on these below.



## **Sustain IHCC progress and deliver on expectations.**

2019 saw the five-year anniversary of the Charter, marked by a recommitment ceremony attended by all signatories and high level representatives, including Wales's Health Minister. Despite inevitable slowing of IHCC and other activity, the achievements above and examples throughout the report demonstrate the IHCC's commitment and success in making progress.

---

# Charter for International Health Partnerships: Recommitment Ceremony and Charter Toolkit

---

Since its launch in November 2014, The Charter for International Partnerships has been a flagship work programme for the IHCC. It was developed by the IHCC in collaboration with NHS Wales Health Boards and Trusts and aims to ensure that the principles and values of the NHS are reflected in our international health activity. This strengthens Wales's work to develop sustainable reciprocal partnerships, based on equity and in pursuit of mutual, tangible benefits, and healthy prosperous lives for all within and beyond Welsh borders.

2019 marked the fifth anniversary of the Charter's launch, and to celebrate this a recommitment ceremony was held as part of the Welsh Public Health Conference, in Newport. The IHCC and Public Health Wales were joined by representatives of all Health Boards and Trusts, their partner organisations, the Minister for Health and Social Services, Vaughan Gething, the Chief Medical Officer, Frank Atherton, and the NHS Chief Executive, Dr Andrew Goodall.

The event provided an opportunity for NHS organisations to recommit to their pledge to the principles of the Charter and to celebrate all the Charter had achieved. It also brought in new signatories from the wider NHS and third sector, along with the launch of the Charter Implementation Toolkit.

***“Health professionals in Wales have been successfully working with overseas partners for many years now. The Charter has been enormously successful in strengthening international health partnerships and promoting Wales’s profile on the world stage. Recommitting to the Charter and the creation of the Charter Implementation Toolkit are important steps in ensuring that good work continues.”***

*Dr Gill Richardson, Assistant Director of Policy and International Health, Public Health Wales in 2019*

The Charter Implementation Toolkit was developed to support implementation of the Charter (International Health Coordination Centre, 2019). As a companion document to the Charter, this serves as a how-to guide in establishing and maintaining international health links. It builds on the lessons learned since the Charter's launch, compiling examples of best practice and providing a robust governance framework to support international health activity. The Toolkit has been designed as a “living document”: it will be continually updated to assist signatories in implementing Charter principles.



## Section 2: Activities Across NHS Wales

NHS Wales has strong global connections, and this section showcases examples which illustrate the wide range of partnerships and activities it supports. It is organised around the four core foundations of the Charter, but you will see that many examples have crossover between these.

### Well-managed Organisational Responsibilities

*“Strong organisational engagement and commitment are essential. This may include support for special leave, provision of resources to support the development of health partnerships and organisational processes reporting at an executive level on International Health Partnerships.”*

## Public Health Wales World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre (WHO CC)

In March 2018, the Policy, Research and International Health Directorate of Public Health Wales was designated as a World Health Organization Collaborating Centre (WHOCC) on ‘Investment for Health and Well-being’ (Public Health Wales, d). The WHOCC designation built on a long-standing partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), working particularly closely with the WHO European Office for ‘Investment for Health and Development’ in Venice, Italy (the Venice Office).

The WHOCC – the first centre in the world with a specific focus on Investment for Health and Well-being – develops, collects and shares information and tools to support investment in better health. This aims to reduce inequalities and build stronger and more resilient communities in Wales, Europe and the world, including but not limited to its commitments to WHO.

Since its designation, the WHOCC has been driving sustainable development and promoting prosperity for all. It informs and promotes more sustainable policies; embraces the principles of human rights, equity and evidence; and helps to address the health and well-being needs of current and future generations. Its work supports the WHO to implement the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN, 2015b) (the Sustainable Development Goals – SDGs (UN, 2015a)) and

WHO’s Thirteenth General Programme of Work 2019–2023 (WHO, 2019). A major achievement has been to facilitate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Welsh Government and the WHO Regional Office for Europe. Amongst other activities, this pioneers the delivery of the WHO’s innovative health equity status reporting initiative (HESRI) at a national level (Welsh Government, 2020).

Nationally, the WHOCC supports implementation of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, 2015), A Healthier Wales: long term plan for health and social care (Welsh Government, 2018) and other relevant legislation, strategies and policies, such as the Public Health (Wales) Act (UK Government, 2017) and the Socio-economic Duty (Welsh Government, 2021). At the heart of this work are the principles of equity, social value, long term thinking, prevention, integration, collaboration and participation.

The WHOCC strengthens Wales’s and Public Health Wales’s European and global collaborations and partnerships, with aims to enable more effective cross-sector and multidisciplinary working. It opens opportunities for knowledge exchange and research, learning from our and others’ experiences and good practice, and developing our people and organisations. Examples include the



International Horizon Scanning and Learning (IHS) reports which have informed Wales's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the response related Health Impact Assessments (Public Health Wales, WHOCC), and membership of networks such as the International Association of National Public Health Institutes (IANPHI).

The WHOCC supports and facilitates investment for health and well-being as a driver and enabler of social, economic and environmental sustainability and prosperity for all. Following a successful first four years, in early 2022 the WHOCC was redesignated by the WHO and has developed an ongoing programme of work (Bellis and Dyakova, 2022).

---

## Nursing Now

---

The Nursing Now global campaign was launched in 2018 and endorsed by the World Health Organization and International Council of Nurses (WHO, 2018). The WHO designated 2020 the Year of the Nurse and Midwife and published the first State of the World's Nursing report (WHO, 2020). Nursing Now was a call to action at a local and global level, promoting opportunities to raise the profile of nursing across a range of themes, such as advanced and innovative practice, research capacity, and leadership development.

The campaign originated from the Triple Impact report (All-Party Parliamentary Group on Global Health, 2016). This argued that strengthening nursing would make a major contribution to three of the Sustainable Development Goals: Improved Health, Gender Equity and Economic Development.

In Wales, the then Chief Nursing Officer, Professor Jean White, led the drive to ensure that Wales played its part in the global efforts. At her request, Public Health Wales established a cross organisational group – Nursing Now Cymru Wales (Public Health Wales, b) – ensuring that within Wales, Nursing Now was set in the Welsh policy context.

The aim of this work was to build resilience, compassion and leadership in nursing and midwifery, and to raise the profile of nurses and midwives internationally. Nursing Now Cymru Wales has representatives from across NHS Wales as well as nurse leaders from Welsh Universities, the Royal College of Nursing, the Royal College of Midwives, and the third sector.



### Reporting on international work: pandemic impact

Until 2020, all Health Boards and Trusts were required to report their international activity in their Annual Quality Statement. This tended to focus on Wales and Africa activity and helped to maintain the profile of this work and showcase the achievements of those involved.

To help organisations manage the pressures of the pandemic, since 2021 quality reporting has been less detailed and forms part of the broader Annual Performance Report. Sadly, these reports have not included international work, although we know that much has continued through the pandemic.

This represents a missed opportunity to recognise and celebrate the benefits that global engagement brings to NHS Wales.

The 2021 Celebrating Nursing and Midwifery in Wales report supports our aims of raising the profile and status of nursing and midwifery, nationally and internationally (Nursing Now Cymru/Wales Steering Group, 2021). It shows that nurses and midwives are at the heart of health teams, playing a crucial role in improving and transforming health services, promoting health, and preventing and mitigating the impact of disease. Nurses and midwives ensure that the care being delivered is compassionate, and of the high standard which all patients and citizens should expect to receive.

---

## Welsh Government International Activity Reviews

---

In early 2021, the Welsh government commissioned the Tropical Health Education Trust (THET) to conduct two studies into international health work in Wales. One focussed on Wales's international health partnerships with Africa, examining how these are structured, funded and supported (Chalmers, 2021). The other was a Rapid Review taking a broader look at international health activity across all sectors and with all countries (Chalmers and Okeah, 2021).

The reports provide a detailed summary of the organisations active within Wales and show the considerable enthusiasm for this work within all sectors, including the NHS and the Welsh Government. They describe the different routes through which international work takes place and the many countries Wales partners, along with funding sources and supporting resources. Both identified strengths and weaknesses, and recommended actions to strengthen this work.

In July 2021, Dr Kathrin Thomas (Wales and Africa Health Links Network) and Dr Kit Chalmers (THET – the reports' lead author) presented an overview of the reports' findings to the IHCC's Charter Implementation Group (CIG). The reports concluded that Wales was not maximising the opportunities available for international health activity, due to lack of a coherent strategy and coordination, and a lack of focus on global demands. Wales has, however, been a pioneer in developing structures to support international health work (such as the IHCC and the Charter) and was recognised as a positive example by other UK nations, putting it in a good position to move forwards.

## Wales and Africa

The Welsh government's Wales for Africa scheme, launched in 2006, is now called Wales **and** Africa. This better represents the equal and collaborative nature of the partnerships involved.

Public Health Wales and the IHCC recognise the benefits of global engagement, which provides opportunities to attract, develop and retain staff in NHS Wales, to providing a platform for innovation on a global scale, and to promote global inclusivity and global citizenship. Since November 2021 Public Health Wales has sat on the Welsh government's Steering Group, which was set up to consider the reports' recommendations and make plans to progress priorities. This work has now concluded, with follow-on actions initiated such as the creation of a Welsh Government led International Health Partnership Board of which the IHCC is an integral member along with other organisations and charities such as Health Boards and Wales and Africa leads.

## Reciprocal Partnership Working

*"It is essential to have a collaborative relationship between two or more parties based on trust, equality, joint respect and understanding for the achievement of specified goals for mutual benefit."*



## WAST Collaboration with Indonesia

In 2019, the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (WAST) engaged in an international collaborative project between Cardiff University's School of Mathematics, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Ambulans 118 in Indonesia. The collaboration was funded by the UK's Global Challenges Research Fund, aimed at academic institutions, and WAST provided support to the collaboration in terms of paramedicine expertise, in a February 2020 scoping visit.

Ambulans 118, along with Ambulans 119, provide a national public ambulance service to support Indonesia's 264 million population. In addition to serving patients with emergency and general health conditions, the ambulance services have to cope with natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods, and in 2018 alone natural disasters are estimated to have

killed more than 4,000 people and displaced around 3 million. The collaborative partners are working towards developing an integrated national emergency response system but face many challenges in doing so, including the huge geographical area, infrastructure problems and lack of emergency response vehicles.





Mathematical models have been proposed to help overcome the challenges facing Ambulans 118, using operational data and situational analysis to advise on response mechanisms. Opportunities for WAST to share learning and deliver training were identified in the scoping visit.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic put a halt to much of the activity planned for the duration of the grant funding and progression has been limited for all partners, with both WAST and Ambulans 118 focussing on the needs of patients and the crisis of the pandemic. A follow up visit to Indonesia took place in mid-September 2022. Meetings were held with the Ministry of Health, and there was a two-day seminar with teaching and shared learning for a large cohort of healthcare professionals in Jakarta, delivered by Cardiff University, WAST and MIT. There are additional plans to share syllabus and learning outcomes with Ambulans 118, to continue the development of the service.

It is clear that there is much to be gained from collaborative projects between WAST and other international healthcare services, in terms of skill development, organisational mobility, self-reflection and improvement of practice, and from an operational perspective in seeing how other organisations manage and adapt to situations differently. Viewing variances and sharing experiences in overcoming challenges to practice, such as use of mobile technology, crisis management, and planning and adapting to changing patient needs, are all beneficial to improving practice both within the international organisations and here in Wales.

The September 2022 engagement visit enabled further development of the ambulance service both in Wales and Indonesia, with scope and opportunity for the mutual support it has involved to continue once the project funding has ended.

---

## Wales and Africa Health Links Network

---

The Wales and Africa Health Links Network (WaAHLN) supports Health Partnerships and activity between Wales and Africa, including groups based in the NHS and in communities, by facilitating shared learning, networking, and providing expert guidance. It is led by a Board comprising volunteers with health and international development experience and is a partner organisation of Hub Cymru Africa.

This has been a busy time for WaAHLN, as it has supported partnerships working through the pandemic while pushing ahead with activities to strengthen the global health activity taking place across Wales. Chief amongst these was securing commission by the Welsh government of the report looking at Wales's Health Partnerships with Africa, which was completed with the support of both WaAHLN and THET. WaAHLN has since formed part of the Steering Group convened by the Welsh government to consider how to act on the report's recommendations and looks forward to remaining involved as this work moves forwards.



WaAHLN has held a conference every year including at the height of the pandemic in 2020, when it was held online for the first time. 2021's conference attracted high-level speakers including the Chief Nursing Officer for Wales, Sue Tranka, and the Minister for Social Justice, Jane Hutt, as well as many delegates including African partners. In the last year WaAHLN has held a number of other events including:

- The annual Tony Jewell Lecture in December 2021, this time with Prof Anthony Costello discussing the climate crisis (Costello, 2021).
- "Recognition of the Contribution Diaspora NHS staff make to global health", a Shared Learning Event Chaired by Trustee Dr Zed Sibanda and hosted in collaboration with THET, in March 2022 (Wales and Africa Health Links Network, 2022b). This was convened to consider Wales's response to THET's recent report, *Experts in Our Midst*, which examines this theme (Chisholm, 2021).
- An event to promote NHS staff participation in the Welsh government's International Learning Opportunities (ILO) scheme (Wales and Africa Health Links Network, 2022a). Previous ILO participants described their experiences, which have clearly inspired them in their NHS careers as well as their global health activities, and the Welsh government's Jon Townley joined to give further detail on placements and how to apply.

It has been a time of change for the Board too, as it has diversified in terms of gender, ethnicity and professional background. In July 2022 Dr Kathrin Thomas stepped down as Chair after a hugely successful and busy three years in the role (plus six as a Trustee), handing over to new Chair Prof Kelechi Nnoaham and Vice Chair Dr Julia Terry. We wish them well as they take WaAHLN and partners onwards.



---

# Cardiff and Vale University Health Board: Talk© Clinical Debriefing Tool

---

Between 2017 and 2022 Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (CAVUHB) took part in an international research project, led by consultant Anaesthetist Dr Cristina Diaz-Navarro and funded through the European Commission Horizon 2020 programme. This aimed to promote and evaluate implementation of a clinical debriefing tool called TALK©, which helps staff to formally reflect and learn after a particular task, shift or critical event.

Dr Diaz-Navarro and colleagues developed the TALK© tool in 2014, having recognised the need for simple, structured guidance to allow teams to reflect on clinical events without the input of an expert, or specialist training. It can be used by all staff groups and promotes positive, respectful and professional communication. It aims to empower staff to take ownership of issues with a focus on finding solutions to problems and taking responsibility to implement learning. Ultimately, this improves team communication and patient safety.

Early use in CAVUHB was positive: the tool helped junior staff to ask questions and learn from events, and teams to identify priority areas for change. The formal research was undertaken in partnership with institutions in Barcelona, Spain, and Stavanger, Norway, allowing wider assessment of its utility and impact. This included an exchange of multidisciplinary staff members from and to Cardiff.

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the project, with exchange visits cancelled and researchers drawn into the emergency response. But it also fueled interest in the tool internationally, as health care workers sought to support themselves and colleagues through new and difficult experiences. As a result, TALK© has been translated into many languages, including Italian, French and Latin American Spanish, and is being used in at least 20 countries. The tool has been adopted at scale in Norway and Spain and is being piloted by Médecins Sans Frontières as their debriefing method of choice.

A charity, The TALK Foundation™, has been created to ensure longevity of the project (TALK Foundation). To enhance uptake, the tool and associated training materials are freely downloadable from this website, and training courses have been developed which are free or minimal cost. The research team have published two articles, with one focusing specifically on use of the tool during the COVID-19 pandemic (Diaz-Navarro et al., 2021; Stafford et al., 2021).

TALK© is now used regularly in CAVUHB Emergency Department, Operating Theatres and Critical Care Unit. Staff who took part in exchange visits have benefitted professionally and contributed to the organisation, with some progressing into leadership or education roles. Non-medical staff, who typically have fewer opportunities for professional development, have particularly valued the learning experience and the sense of recognition this has brought them. Dr Diaz-Navarro has enjoyed the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues across the world, and seeing the widespread adoption of the tool, and the difference that this makes to individuals and to teams, has made the hard work worthwhile.





---

## Powys-Bangladesh Endoscopy Partnership

---

In 2012, the British Society of Gastroenterology gave a grant to a group of Gastroenterologists and Surgeons based at Morriston Hospital, to initiate the first training in ERCP (advanced endoscopy) in Bangladesh. Since then, the doctors have visited Bangladesh every other year to continue the improvements in training and provision of endoscopy services. The learning included the realization that the endoscopy nurses need to be trained in endoscopy assisting techniques to ensure that the whole workforce team is trained to carry out more complex procedures. In 2017, the Consultant Nurse for Endoscopy visited Dhaka to deliver the first endoscopy nurses' course. In February 2019 she was asked to prepare and present an additional two full days of teaching, assisting with teaching the nurses during the doctors' training on animal models and assist the doctors in learning colonoscopy.

The success of the Consultant Nurse services in Endoscopy in Powys has meant that we have been able to employ an Advanced Nurse Endoscopist, expanding the upper endoscopy service.

### International partnership for service provision

The Welsh Burns and Plastic Surgery Centre in Swansea Bay Health Board is commissioned as a national UK burns centre and is part of a European and global network for mass casualty burns response.

As part of these reciprocal arrangements, it has received patients from major incidents in Eastern Europe and Egypt.

*Reproduced with permission from the Rapid Review of International Health Activity in Wales (Chalmers and Okeah, 2021).*

---

## Digital Health and Care Wales: IT Support in Lesotho

---

In 2018, a team from Digital Health and Care Wales (DHCW), whilst operating in the predecessor organisation, successfully delivered Information and Communication technology (ICT) training to medical professionals and their support staff in Lesotho, in line with the Charter for International Partnerships framework.

The initial project was developed following observations from an employee who spent time on placement in Lesotho. They identified a gap in the digital skills, particularly analytical and information technology skills, of the senior leaders in the health sector, and also recognised that they were undertaking secondary roles in public services. As a result, a training pathway was developed to upskill the senior leaders to enable them to be able to tell a story using data.

The first round of training was delivered in October 2018, designed to manage the gap in ICT skills of the Lesotho medical professions. It was planned in line with the best practice mapped out in the Charter and following the pre-approved NHS Wales procedures from the toolkit, to support the host organisations in Lesotho and the team delivering the training. The Charter framework also allowed for the project to be developed and implemented more quickly, as the governance process is already defined.

Following the initial round of training, the team conducted a follow-up survey on the impact and future needs of ICT training, to plan for future training developments. This first round of training and subsequent needs analysis allowed the team to apply for additional grant money, while allowing the host hospital in Quthing time to incorporate the existing training into their local development framework.

***"I always struggled to deal with Excel. I always thought it was a difficult thing and I did as much as possible to avoid using Excel in my daily reporting, in everything I was doing at work. But after today, I realise that my mind was complicated; Excel is no longer complicated. I just had to appreciate its use in reporting."***

*ICT training participant, SOS Children's Villages, Lesotho*



Additional funding would allow the team to perform future training within Quthing and to undertake further needs assessments and conduct subsequent training for more hospital staff outside the initial catchment area.

Training in Microsoft Excel and PowerPoint was delivered over 3 days to 19 people from Quthing Hospital, Ntlatfatsi Foundation and SOS Children's Villages in Lesotho. The training was designed at beginner and intermediate level with a broad aim to allow the attendees to present data with confidence. The attendees were surveyed following the training and asked to score a number of questions. 18 of the 19 attendees responded and stated that the training had been very helpful. Five attendees reported that they had already shared their learning with others at the time of the survey. This type of support had not been done before and it was particularly well received.

Following the training, the team were invited to the hospital to look at some of the processes being used. Many processes were paper based, so the staff were keen to seek advice as to how their own processes could be improved in light of their new learning.

In addition, it was agreed that SOS Children's Villages in Lesotho was DHCW's nominated charity of the year in 2020.

# Cross-Wales Activity: Malawi-Wales Antimicrobial Stewardship Partnership

Wales's newest international health link started in 2021 and has just completed its first project, with funding through THET from the Fleming Fund (UK government).

The Wales Antimicrobial Pharmacy Group partnered with the Pharmaceutical Society of Malawi in September 2021 and successfully applied to THET's Commonwealth Partnerships for Antimicrobial Stewardship (CwPAMS) grant programme. The three key partnership members in Wales are based across the country: Charlotte Makanga at Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, Ceri Phillips at Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and Charlotte Richards at Swansea Bay University Health Board. They chose Malawi as their partner country due to Charlotte Makanga's family connections there, and their grant application was strongly supported by the Welsh government's Chief Pharmaceutical Officer.

***"Malawian pharmacists are so enthusiastic, and so proud of their profession. They are always pushing the boundaries of their work, pressing for change to benefit patients and raising the profile of pharmacists. I thought "I could do that". Pharmacists are part of patients' journeys and play an important role in improving their care. I am proud to be a pharmacist and part of a global network of pharmacy professionals."***

*Charlotte Makanga, Lead, Malawi-Wales Antimicrobial Stewardship Partnership*

Post project activity was virtual due to the ongoing pandemic, with just one short in-person visit in February. This has been challenging, in part because of difficulties with internet connectivity in Malawi. Nonetheless, the partnership has:

- Developed good working relationships with two hospitals in Malawi, Kamuzu Central Hospital in Lilongwe and Mzuzu Central Hospital, and the Antimicrobial Stewardship committees.

- Completed a Global Point Prevalence Survey (Global-PPS) of antimicrobial usage in the hospitals, identifying areas where antimicrobial stewardship could be improved: for example, reduced usage or oral administration.
- Developed and supported implementation of a toolkit to guide these improvements, including tools for ongoing audit.
- Developed and delivered training on antimicrobial stewardship and resistance, infection prevention and control, and use of the toolkit. 120 staff across the two hospitals have been trained – some as trainers themselves – and the training is now being adopted as the antimicrobial stewardship training tool in the hospitals.
- Completed a second Global-PPS, which is currently being analysed to evaluate impact.
- Engaged with national pharmacy groups and lead, including within the Ministry of Health, to ensure the partnership's work aligns to national plans and is embedded as standard practice.
- Linked with the University of Malawi to facilitate research, starting with a service evaluation of their work so far, which is in preparation.





Though the funding for this project has ended, the partnership still meets weekly online and works together through a WhatsApp group. They will apply for the next round of CwPAMS funding, aiming to more broadly support pharmacy infrastructure and governance in Malawi.

Charlotte Makanga speaks of many benefits to her NHS practice, including new ideas to improve antimicrobial stewardship and learning from the research ethics application process in Malawi. Most of all, working with Malawian colleagues has been inspiring, leading her to re-evaluate her own role. She has now taken on a managerial role, to positively influence practice in her department and raise the profile of the profession.

### Good Practice Arrangements

*“An evidence-based approach searching out positive results that should be celebrated, and an open culture willing to learn when things go wrong are essential.”*

---

## Aneurin Bevan University Health Board: Nursing Leadership “Buddy” Scheme

---

The Namibia leadership project supports a buddy scheme between senior nurses in Namibia and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB), facilitating the sharing of information, knowledge and skills and providing nurses with insight into other cultures.

In June 2018, Bronagh Scott, the Director of Nursing at that time, visited Namibia with Independent Member of the Board, Prof Dianne Watkins (University), to scope the possibility of providing a leadership development programme for Nurses. This was funded by the Welsh government’s Wales for Africa Programme. By 2020 it had developed into a country wide project with a number of elements but structured primarily as a “buddy” scheme. The nurses share experiences, ideas and the challenges associated with leading nursing in both countries.

The Health Board has formed links with three University sites in Namibia, Windhoek, Oshakati and Rundu. Three fantastic films have been made to share with the nurses in Namibia, outlining what it is like to nurse working in District Nursing services, Intensive Care and the Accident and Emergency Unit in our Health Board.

ABUHB nurses benefit by developing greater resilience, empowerment and cultural awareness. They said: “Excellent opportunity for education”; “Will be a better role model, leading by example.”, “Massive insight into what it is like to nurse in another country.”

### Good practice example

Digital Health and Care Wales includes Wales and Africa activity as part of its Annual Plan (2021-22).

This is mapped to their objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, for both Cohesive Communities and A Prosperous Wales goals.

The former presents a case study of their work in Lesotho, through their partnership called NWIS in Africa. The latter states:

*“Our NWIS in Africa initiative enables us to support the digital needs and education of global citizens.”*

Linking international activity to well-being goals could help more organisations to recognise and champion this work.

*(Digital Health and Care Wales, 2021)*

---

# Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board: The Betsi-Kenya Health Link

---

The Betsi Kenya Health Link (BKHL) was established in 2018 by Janerose Buyiekha, a member of the Corporate Team at Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB). The Link has established working partnerships between the Health Board and Busia County in Western Kenya.

Janerose 's inspiration came from working with the BCUHB's International Health Group and, originally from Busia County herself, she chose this as the partner region. She gathered a group of colleagues and other volunteers committed to sharing skills, expertise and experience between the partner regions. The long-term goal is to establish a sustainable partnership to tackle health inequalities at home and abroad.

In early 2019 a team of Link members undertook a fact-finding visit to Busia County referral hospital in Kenya. Janerose was accompanied by four staff members from Wrexham Maelor Hospital, including clinical Lead Dr Tony Da Silva. This was followed by a fundraising campaign "Shillings for Sheets", to pay for bedsheets for the hospital, and a Health Needs Assessment for Busia County.

The Link now includes Dr Fiona Rae (Wrexham Maelor Hospital), as clinical lead, Dr Michael Greenslade, Volunteer (Eirias High School) and Bernard Okeah (Ysbyty Gwynedd and Bangor University). Bernard is also originally from Busia County. A strength of the Link has been Janerose and Bernard's local knowledge of Busia County: their understanding of local contexts and ability to communicate effectively with staff and patients, in a region where a number of languages are spoken, has been invaluable. The Link has been strengthened by participation in THET's Health Partnership Capacity Development Programme (HPCD), which facilitates networking and provides information and support on key topics.

Despite restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, work on the Health Needs Assessment has continued remotely. This led to a new public health "Community Events Based Surveillance" project, having identified sustained community transmission of COVID-19 but low adherence to protective behaviours. Both ongoing projects are funded by the Welsh Government's Wales and Africa Grant Scheme.

Bernard (virtually) and a local colleague have delivered training to 68 Community Health Volunteers (CHVs), some of whom now provide training for others, and who were provided with PPE for personal safety. They developed an alert system using Google Forms, which allows data logged by the CHVs to automatically alert the District Public Health team of high-risk events which require a response.

So far, the CHVs have reached over 2,500 community members and completed nearly 900 risk assessments. They now record data on key non-COVID public health threats and have detected a possible case of polio. This work has drawn the interest of Washington University, who plan to fund scale-up of the project across the whole county. Meanwhile, the Betsi Kenya Health Link is identifying the next priority and the funding to take it forwards.



---

# Global Citizenship E-Learning for the NHS in Wales

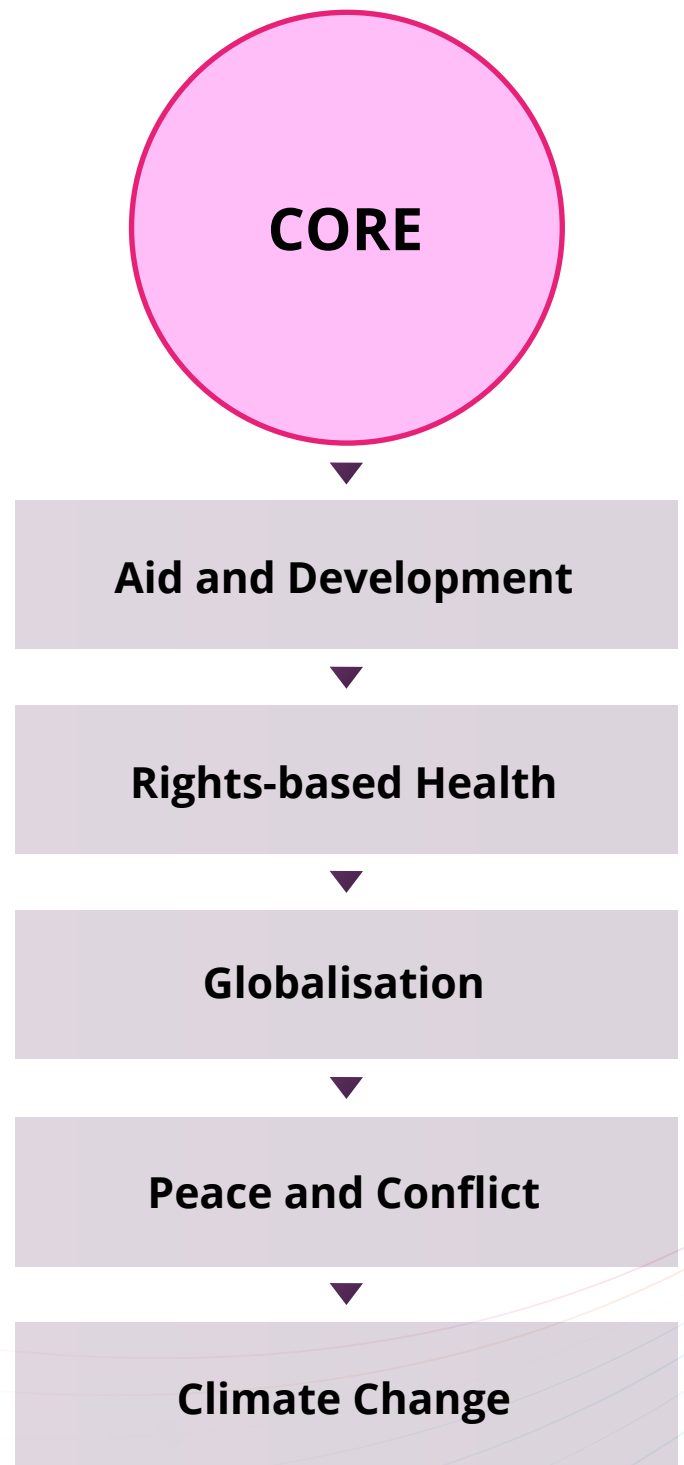
---

The first Global Citizenship e-learning resource for the NHS was launched on November 4th, 2021, by the IHCC. It was commissioned by Public Health Wales and developed in conjunction with the Welsh Centre for International Affairs (WCIA) and Oxfam Cymru.

This free online learning platform is aimed at all those working in NHS Wales and enables NHS staff to learn about and develop Global Citizenship as part of their lives and workplaces. Users:

- Learn about why there are inequalities in Wales and the world, and their impact on health.
- Take part in discussions on international health and development, and related themes and topics.
- Question viewpoints and perspectives.
- Challenge stereotypes.
- Learn about the social, economic, environmental, cultural and political impact of globalisation, especially on health and the NHS.
- Explore their own values and how they impact on others.
- Listen to, understand and respect different views.
- Be reflective and develop critical thinking skills.
- Understand the different ways of achieving global poverty reduction.
- Develop and support their personal and professional development.

The e-learning is split into six modules: one core and five 'deep dives' covering aid and development, rights-based health, globalisation, peace and conflict, and climate change. The resource is easy to access on the NHS Electronic Staff Record (ESR) and the Learning@Wales platform, is interactive and colourful, and will be beneficial to all NHS professionals.



---

# Sustainable Development Toolkit

---

The 'Be the Change Sustainable Development Toolkit' was developed by the Health and Sustainability Hub within the WHOCC (Public Health Wales, a). It is designed to help organisations understand the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and support their contributions to progressing these. It also shows how organisations can support a green recovery from COVID-19.

The toolkit was published to coincide with Wales's First Minister participating in a Regions4 Sustainable Development High-level Event on building a sustainable and resilient future, at the 2021 High-level Political Forum (UN, 2021). It focuses on:

- The background to sustainable development, including Wales's ground-breaking approach through the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.
- Case studies on making sustainable changes across five levels: country, system, organisation, team and individual.
- Practical and graphic resources to support step change, including materials by Public Health Wales and the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales.

The highly visual and accessible toolkit has been produced through Public Health Wales's role in the Joint Action Health Equity Europe (JAHEE) initiative to address health inequalities and achieve greater health equity across society (JAHEE). Importantly, the resource illustrates that whilst COVID-19 has had and continues to have some negative impacts on the global goals, it is possible to promote a sustainable recovery by building on the positive behaviours developed during the pandemic, such as reduced human activity and increased engagement in nature and local communities.

## Sound Governance

*"Clearly agreed aims, objectives and areas of responsibility for all partners involved in the partnerships are essential."*

# Public Health Wales's International Health Strategy Refresh

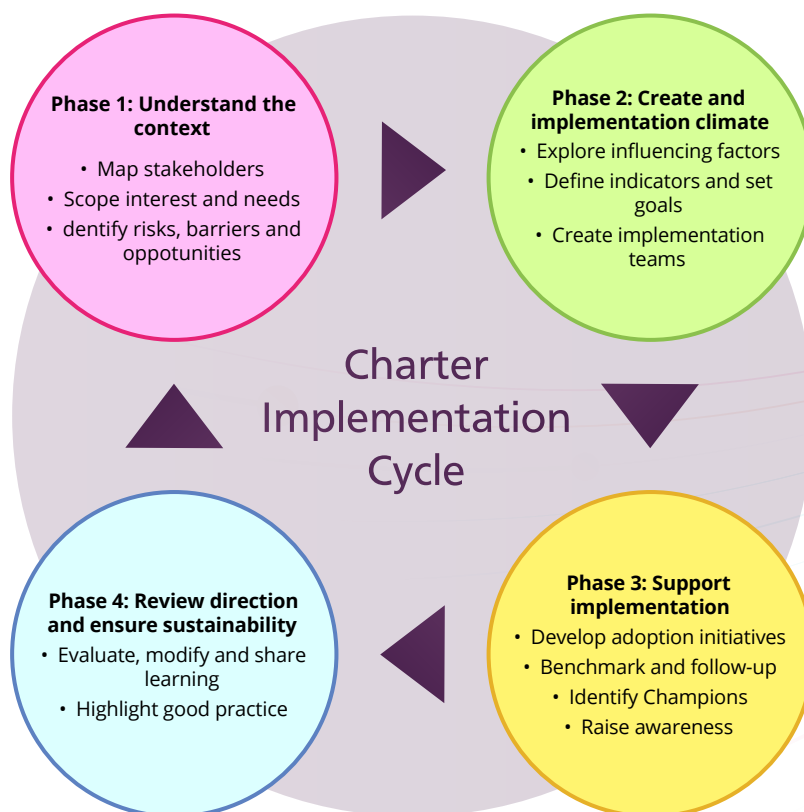
The International Health Strategy 2017-2027 is currently being updated at its midway point to reflect the changing priorities and challenges of recent years. A wide and inclusive consultation was carried out to identify key topics of interest, experiences, ideas and priority areas for Public Health Wales' staff and key external, including international, stakeholders. It is a good example of sound governance being used in practice and will be an enabling strategy, bringing the following to the organisation:

1. Bring all International Health work together
2. Build on synergies to optimise resources, reduce duplication and broaden the scope and sustainability of work
3. Increase the visibility of International Health Activity and celebrate success
4. Place Wales on the international stage in order to attract workforce and funding and strengthen and influence the work of Wales

## Charter Implementation: Evaluating Progress

The last IHCC progress report concluded with an ambition to evaluate the progress of the NHS Charter for International Health Partnerships implementation, with the aim of informing future developments in international health work across Wales. This followed reporting on a benchmarking exercise and development of the Charter Implementation Framework (see figure).

The Charter Implementation Evaluation commenced in late 2019. The work of the IHCC was suspended during the pandemic acute response and was completed in November 2021. The evaluation was carried out by engaging a wide range of stakeholders.





The Charter Implementation Group (CIG) members received an online survey, followed by semi-structured interviews comprising nine key questions covering:

- Impact
- Value
- Ownership
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Mechanism
- How to improve
- Engage
- Resources

This was followed by Fifteen CIG members participating in interviews. The responses were used to identify strengths and weaknesses in the Charter and the implementation of it and made several recommendations to strengthen it and progress the work going forward. The strengths and weaknesses are identified below.

### Strengths

- The Charter is seen as enabling, valuable and important.
- It allows organisations to deliver their international health partnership activity impactfully, clearly and inclusively. This, in turn, enables staff to build confidence through international work and to bring this experience back to the workplace.
- It provides a framework and encouragement for individuals and organisations to collaborate, facilitated by the quarterly Group meetings.
- The Charter is seen as pivotal to Wales's impact internationally, and the Charter recommitment ceremony was symbolic of each organisation's commitment to its work.

### Weaknesses

- The Charter's principles are not fully embedded into internal organisational objectives across the NHS, nor is it considered a strategic or high priority. This limits its ability to support professional development.
- Ownership and engagement are not consistent across Health Boards so that some lack representation, for example, at the CIG. The resources to fully engage with or implement the Charter are not accessible in all Health Boards and other organisations.
- Communications to CIG members could be improved.

The suggestions for action were made. These include a focus on communication, increasing the Charter's profile and awareness raising, developing resources and strengthening collaboration with key stakeholders. The table on the following page highlights these.





### **Communication**

- Create momentum: consistent, assertive and impactful communications.
- Regular Charter news bulletin.
- Greater presence on social media and NHS internal websites.
- Charter promotion at conferences/ workshops.
- Annual Charter/international health event.

### **Resources**

- Visual tools/toolkit.
- Case studies or testimonials about Charter implementation.
- System for sharing best practice.
- Accessible register of resources.
- Annual direct contact with HHealth Boards.
- Training for managers on the Charter.

### **Implementation and profile**

- Raise Charter's profile through Directors of Public Health.
- Embed the agenda as core business with high priority.
- Develop a cross-government strategy to support implementation.
- Engage with Charter signatories to deepen commitment.

### **Collaboration**

- Closer links with relevant external organisations: e.g. THET, Improvements Cymru.
- Share resources and mutually support.

**The IHCC will consider these as it refreshes engagement with Charter signatories over the next two years.**

---

# Welsh Health Equity Status Report (WHESRI)

---

The first Welsh Health Equity Status Report (WHESRI) was published in 2021 (Public Health Wales WHOCC, 2021), making Wales the first country to nationally implement the innovative framework trialled through the WHO's European Health Equity Status Report initiative (HESRI) (WHO).

The HESRI was launched in 2019, as a mechanism to promote and support policy action and commitment for health equity and well-being in the European Region. It aimed to shift political and policy focus from describing the problem to capturing progress and enable action and the implementation of solutions - resulting in greater health equity. The 'Healthy, prosperous lives for all: the European Health Equity Status Report' identified five essential conditions needed to create and sustain a healthy life for all (WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2019). These are:

- Food quality and accessible health services.
- Income security and social protection.
- Decent living conditions.
- Social and human capital.
- Decent work and employment conditions.

The HESRI Report identified the factors fundamental to creating more equitable societies: policy coherence, accountability, social participation and empowerment. The report provides evidence of the drivers of health inequities in each of the 53 Member States of the WHO European Region, as well as solutions to address these. It makes the case that policy actions are needed to address all five conditions and improve and protect health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities.

Inspired by the HESRI, the Welsh Health Equity Status Report initiative (WHESRI) (Public Health Wales, c) was the first to be established at national state level. It delivers an element of on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the WHO Regional Office for Europe and the Welsh Government, which is focused on accelerating progress towards a healthier, more equal and prosperous Wales and Europe.

The aim of the WHESRI is to provide an up-to-date, dynamic picture of health inequities, their burden, determinants and related policies in Wales. This will inform solutions and investment prioritisation, and facilitate a cross-sector, whole-of-government, whole-of-society policy dialogue. Targeted action will follow to bring a healthier, more equal and prosperous Wales, as demanded by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

The WHESRI identified the population groups hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting the interdependence of individual health and well-being, social cohesion, and the economy. These groups include young people, minority groups, and those with insecure employment, particularly women. A Welsh Health Equity Solutions Platform (WHESP) is being developed, which will act as a gateway to available data, evidence, legislation, policies, tools and practical solutions to improve health and well-being in Wales. The WHO European Regional Office and the Welsh Government have commended the roadmap the report provides and the momentum it has created to reduce health inequalities.

Having begun locally, the project will ultimately have global reach, positioning Wales as a key influencer in health equity through providing insights into national utilisation of the European HESRI. The Solutions Platform will link with the European Health Equity Status Report dataset and our experiences will provide a template for other countries to accelerate progress towards healthy, prosperous lives for all in the WHO European Region.

---

# COVID-19 International Horizon Scanning and Learning Reports

---

The International Horizon Scanning and Learning workstream was initiated by the WHOCC/IHCC at Public Health Wales to inform the evolving COVID-19 public health response and recovery plans in Wales (Public Health Wales WHOCC). The reports aim to document, compile, and share the rapidly evolving nature and uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the associated unprecedented challenges for health systems. The reports collate, synthesise and share international learning and intelligence on health, well-being, social and economic impacts, and act as a resource for comprehensive, timely, and evidence-informed public health action. They recognise and address the need for coherent action across all governance levels, sectors and stakeholders, nationally and internationally.

The work was part of a wider, systematic approach to intelligence gathering by Public Health Wales as part of the acute response to the pandemic. It fed into the Welsh Government Office for Science and its International Intelligence Subgroup of its Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and Public Health Wales's Gold Command.

At the time of writing (February 2023), 41 reports have been published and disseminated as part of the WHOCC International Resource update. Two summary calendars of published reports have been produced, alongside a number of summary reports, looking at the impact of COVID-19 in particular areas including Mental Health, vulnerabilities, and health inequalities (Public Health Wales WHOCC). In spring 2022 the scope of the reports was broadened to include priority public health topics for example, the 'Cost of Living' Crisis (Clark et al., 2022).

The learning and evidence from the reports has been disseminated through several webinars and publications, and it was presented at the European Public Health Conference 2021 and 2022.

<https://phwwhocc.co.uk/resources/international-horizon-scanning-and-learning-report-communication-campaigns-for-vaccine-acceptance/>



---

## Brexit: Monitoring and Sharing Developments

---

In the uncertainty surrounding the January 2020 withdrawal from the European Union (Brexit), the WHOCC's policy team began collating news, discussions and impacts of the process. The resulting reading list was compiled weekly and disseminated to Public Health Wales colleagues and UK health policy contacts, via the UK Public Health Network (Public Health Wales, 2020).

The list captured the high-level publications on Brexit, with a focus on public health and the wider determinants of health. Separate worksheets captured academic literature, open consultations and forthcoming events.

In 2019, Public Health Wales published a Health Impact Assessment of the public health implications of Brexit in Wales (Public Health Wales, 2019). This identified a number of risks

including loss of European health workers from the NHS, loss of access to key public health coordinating mechanisms, and the mental health and well-being impacts of uncertainty around job and economic prospects. Further reports looked at the potential impact of Brexit on the health and well-being of young people in Wales and implications for funding (Petchey et al., 2020).



## Section 3: Conclusions and the Future

There is no doubt that the challenges of recent years have impacted on the work which the IHCC delivers and supports. However, this report demonstrates a wide range of activity has commenced, continued or evolved, despite the enormous pressures on NHS Wales and health systems globally. It is a strong sign of a positive future for Wales's international health work. Many across the NHS in Wales and partners have demonstrated their commitment, since 2018 and right through 2022 including the Welsh Government and global partners.

The IHCC can add value to this important work, and is committed to continue to lead and, support and collaborate with NHS organisations across Wales and partners. Over the next two years the IHCC aims to:

---

### Support the Implementation of the International Activity Reports' Recommendations

---

According to the priorities agreed by the Welsh Government's steering group a new International Health Partnership Board will be established with the IHCC and PHW having a key role. This Board will set strategic direction and provide a major forum for discussion and developing synergies in international health activity.

---

### Create an NHS International Health Activity Group

---

This will merge two existing bodies: the Charter Implementation Group and the International Health Strategic Advisory Group. The latter includes cross-sector representatives including from Welsh Government, academia, environmental services and the wider UK. It is hoped that this will facilitate better engagement between NHS Wales and key stakeholders across all sectors and internationally. Members will share information and learning, allowing them to develop and build commonalities and interests which will support mutually beneficial global health collaborations and projects.

---

## Prepare the Ground for a Refreshed Approach to International Health in Wales

---

The work of the NHS International Health Activity Group will begin with three core activities, which together will lay a solid foundation for developing international health activity:

1. Revisit Phase 1 of the Charter Implementation Cycle: Understand the Context. The Charter Implementation Cycle is designed to remind users that the situation is not static. The context in which all organisations operate has changed dramatically, and it is important to fully understand the new situation in order to progress.
2. Review the Charter itself and consider revisions. This “live” document is expected to be reviewed regularly and adapted as needed. This is essential following this period of great change, and the process will be informed by understanding the context, as above.
3. Update and expand the Charter Toolkit. This will support all Charter signatories as they strengthen their activity. It may need to be adapted to match a revised Charter, and there are additional supporting documents and resources which could be developed.

---

## Engage with NHS Organisations to Raise the Profile of International Health Activity

---

The NHS remains under huge pressure, but the IHCC will re-engage with Health Boards and NHS Trusts to promote the Charter and international activity, to understand current barriers to implementation and seek solutions, and to promote understanding of the benefits of global citizenship and partnership working. It aims to promote and encourage further uptake of the global citizenship e-learning, as well as implementing of the SDGs and the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

A priority will be encouraging a return to including international health activity within annual reporting processes, with a strong focus on the benefits this brings to NHS Wales. This will provide an opportunity to highlight great work, celebrate the work that is being carried out and to recognise its value.

---

## Implement Recommendations of the Charter Implementation Evaluation

---

All suggestions for improvement presented in the Charter Implementation Evaluation will be reviewed and considered. Informed by the work above, those most appropriate to the current context will be implemented, prioritised according to their likely impact and reach.

## Concluding Comments

There is much to be done to drive the momentum of International Health activities forward, following the enormous changes and challenges since the last report was published. However, Wales is fortunate to have strong structures and drive at both grassroots and strategic levels. There are positive approaches being implemented currently which along with good leadership and government support should permit the growth of more collaborative, impactful and mutually beneficial environment and activities.

The IHCC is a key element to lead and drive this work forwards and progress will be reviewed again in 2024 with the next Progress Report.





## References

All-Party Parliamentary Group on Global Health (2016) *Triple Impact - How investing in nursing will improve health, improve gender equality and support economic growth*. Available at: <https://globalhealth.inparliament.uk/news/triple-impact-how-investing-nursing-will-improve-health-improve-gender-equality-and-support> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Bellis, M. and Dyakova, M. (2022) *WHO Collaborating Centre on Investment for Health and Wellbeing at Public Health Wales: Re-designation Awarded by the WHO. Overview, March 2022*. Available at: <https://phw.nhs.wales/about-us/board-and-executive-team/board-papers/board-meetings/2021-2022/31-march-2022/31-march-2022-board-papers/4a-phw-2022-03-31-who-collaborating-centre-re-designation-for-board/#:~:text=Following%20its%20designation%20in%20March%202018%2C%20the%20World,been%20re-designated%20for%20another%20four%20years%2C%20until%202026>. (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Chalmers, K. (2021) *Wales's Health Partnerships with Africa: Maximising potential for mutual benefit*. Available at: <https://www.thet.org/resources/wales-health-partnerships-with-africa-maximising-potential-for-mutual-benefit/> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Chalmers, K. and Okeah, B. (2021) *International Health Activity in Wales: Rapid Review*. Available at: <https://www.thet.org/resources/international-health-activity-in-wales-rapid-review/> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Chisholm, G. (2021) *Experts in Our Midst: Recognising the contribution NHS diaspora staff make to global health*. Available at: <https://www.thet.org/resources/experts-in-our-midst/> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Clark, E. et al. (2022) *International Horizon Scanning and Learning Report: The Cost-of-Living Crisis*. Available at: International Horizon Scanning and Learning Report: The Cost-of-Living Crisis (Accessed: 28 September 2022).

Costello, A. (2021) 'A future for our children?' *Wales and Africa Health Links Network*. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1UEI5UN5eWQ> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Diaz-Navarro, C. et al. (2021) 'Clinical debriefing: TALK© to learn and improve together in healthcare environments', *Trends in Anaesthesia and Critical Care*, 40, pp. 4–8. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2210844021001052> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Digital Health and Care Wales (2021) *2021/22 Plan*. Available at: <https://www.flemingfund.org/> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Dyakova, M., Couzens, L. and Bellis, M. (2017) *Public Health Wales: Our International Health Strategy 2017-27*. Available at: <https://phwwhocc.co.uk/resources/public-health-wales-our-international-health-strategy-2017-2027/> (Accessed: 27 September 2022).

Future Generations Commissioner for Wales (2015) *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act*. Available at: <https://www.futuregenerations.wales/about-us/future-generations-act/> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

IANPHI (no date) *The International Association of National Public Health Institutes: Building global public health capacity*. Available at: <https://www.ianphi.org/> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

International Health Coordination Centre (2014) *A Charter for International Health Partnerships in Wales*. Available at: [http://www.internationalhealth.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/1100/IHCC\\_Charter\\_for\\_IHP\\_%28Interactive%29\\_E.pdf](http://www.internationalhealth.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/1100/IHCC_Charter_for_IHP_%28Interactive%29_E.pdf) (Accessed: 14 September 2022).

International Health Coordination Centre (2019) *'Charter for International Health Partnerships in Wales: An implementation toolkit'*. Available at: [https://phwwhocc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Charter\\_for\\_Int\\_Health\\_Toolkit\\_English\\_.pdf](https://phwwhocc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Charter_for_Int_Health_Toolkit_English_.pdf) (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

JAHEE (no date) *Joint Action Health Equity Europe*. Available at: <https://jahee.iss.it/> (Accessed: 28 September 2022).

Nursing Now Cymru/Wales Steering Group (2021) *Celebrating Nursing and Midwifery in Wales*. Available at: <https://phw.nhs.wales/publications/publications1/celebrating-nursing-and-midwifery-in-wales/> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Petchey, L. et al. (2020) *The health and well-being of young people in Wales: Do they think Brexit will make a difference?* Available at: [https://phwwhocc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Brexit\\_young\\_people\\_report\\_English\\_final\\_Feb\\_2020-1.pdf](https://phwwhocc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Brexit_young_people_report_English_final_Feb_2020-1.pdf) (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Public Health Wales (2017) *IHCC Progress Report 2015-17*. Available at: <https://phwwhocc.co.uk/resources/international-health-coordination-centre-progress-report-2015-17/> (Accessed: 14 September 2022).

Public Health Wales (2019) *Brexit (includes Implications of Brexit Technical Report Parts I and II, Executive Summary, and Main Findings Report)*. Available at: <https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/brexit/> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Public Health Wales (2020) *Brexit reading list, UK Public Health Network*. Available at: <https://ukpublichealthnetwork.org.uk/resources/reading-list/> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Public Health Wales (no date a) *Be the Change: A toolkit for public bodies*. Available at: <https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/health-and-sustainability/be-the-change-toolkit/> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Public Health Wales (no date b) *Nursing Now Cymru Wales*. Available at: <https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/nursing-now/> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Public Health Wales (no date c) *Welsh Health Equity Status Report initiative*. Available at: [https://phwwhocc.co.uk/ih/our-work/welsh-health-equity-status-report-initiative-whesri/#:~:text=The%20Welsh%20Health%20Equity%20Status,Health%20Organization%20\(WHO\)%20framework.](https://phwwhocc.co.uk/ih/our-work/welsh-health-equity-status-report-initiative-whesri/#:~:text=The%20Welsh%20Health%20Equity%20Status,Health%20Organization%20(WHO)%20framework.) (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Public Health Wales (no date d) *WHOCC*. Available at: <https://phwwhocc.co.uk/> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Public Health Wales WHOCC (2021) *Placing health equity at the heart of the COVID-19 sustainable response and recovery: Building prosperous lives for all in Wales*. Available at: <https://phwwhocc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/WHESRI-Covid-Report-Eng.pdf> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Public Health Wales WHOCC (no date) *International Horizon Scanning*. Available at: <https://phwwhocc.co.uk/covid-19/international-horizon-scanning/> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Stafford, J.L. et al. (2021) *'Clinical debriefing during the COVID-19 pandemic: hurdles and opportunities for healthcare teams.'*, *Advances in Simulation*, 6. Available at: <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1186/s41077-021-00182-0>.

TALK Foundation: Supporting clinical debriefing (no date). Available at: <https://www.talkdebrief.org/> (Accessed: 26 September 2022).

UK Government (2017) *Public Health (Wales) Act*. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2017/2/contents>

UK Government (no date) *The Fleming Fund*. Available at: <https://www.flemingfund.org/> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

UN (2015a) *The Sustainable Development Goals*. Available at: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

UN (2015b) *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. Available at: <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

UN (2021) *High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development: High-Level Political Forum 2021*. Available at: <https://regions4.org/events/un-high-level-political-forum/?cid=86&pnum=13> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Wales and Africa Health Links Network (2022a) *ILO Programme: Calling Healthcare Professionals!* Available at: <https://www.wfahln.org/single-post/ilo-programme-calling-healthcare-professionals> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Wales and Africa Health Links Network (2022b) *'Recognising the Contribution NHS Diaspora Staff Make to Global Health: Shared Learning Event'*. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NMY3PXYuXAE> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Welsh Government (2017) *Prosperity for All: economic action plan*. Available at: <https://gov.wales/prosperity-all-economic-action-plan> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Welsh Government (2018) *A healthier Wales: long term plan for health and social care*. Available at: <https://gov.wales/healthier-wales-long-term-plan-health-and-social-care> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Welsh Government (2020) *Written Statement: Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the World Health Organisation to promote health equity*. Available at: <https://gov.wales/written-statement-signing-memorandum-understanding-world-health-organisation-promote-health-equity> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

Welsh Government (2021) *A More Equal Wales: The Socio-economic Duty*. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/more-equal-wales-socio-economic-duty> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

WHO (2018) *Nursing Now Campaign*. Available at: <https://www.who.int/news/item/27-02-2018-nursing-now-campaign> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

WHO (2019) *Thirteenth General Programme of Work 2019-23*. Available at: <https://www.who.int/about/what-we-do/thirteenth-general-programme-of-work-2019---2023> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

WHO (2020) *State of the world's nursing 2020: investing in education, jobs, leadership*. Available at: <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240003279> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

WHO (no date) *Health Equity Status Report Initiative*. Available at: <https://www.who.int/europe/initiatives/health-equity-status-report-initiative#:~:text=The%20WHO%20European%20Health%20Equity,being%20in%20the%20European%20Region>. (Accessed: 15 September 2022).

WHO Regional Office for Europe (2019) *'Healthy, prosperous lives for all: the European health equity status report'*. Available at: <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/326879> (Accessed: 15 September 2022).



## International Health Coordination Centre

Public Health Wales NHS Trust  
No 2 Capital Quarter  
Floor 5  
Tyndall Street  
Cardiff  
CF10 4BZ

Email [enquiries@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:enquiries@wales.nhs.uk)

Call us (+44) 02920 104 459

 [@IHCCWales](https://twitter.com/IHCCWales)

[www.phwwhocc.co.uk/ih/our-work/the-international-health-coordination-centre-ihcc](http://www.phwwhocc.co.uk/ih/our-work/the-international-health-coordination-centre-ihcc)

---