

WELSH HEALTH SPECIALISED SERVICES COMMITTEE (WHSSC) JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING BRIEFING – 18 JANUARY 2022

The Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee held its latest public meeting on the 18 January 2022. This briefing sets out the key areas of consideration and aims to ensure everyone is kept up to date with what is happening within the Welsh Health Specialised Services.

The papers for the meeting can be accessed at:

<https://whssc.nhs.wales/joint-committee/committee-meetings-and-papers/2021-2022-meeting-papers/>

1. Minutes of Previous Meetings

The minutes of the meeting held on the 9 November 2021 were **approved** as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

2. Action log & matters arising

Members **noted** the progress on the actions outlined on the action log.

3. Chair's Report

Members received the Chair's Report and **noted**:

- That a Chair's action had been undertaken to update the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Welsh Renal Clinical Network (WRCN) to ensure effective governance and in the interest of expediency to commence the recruitment exercise for the role of the substantive Chair to the WRCN,
- The proposal to extend the Interim Chair Arrangements for the Chair of the Welsh Renal Clinical Network (WRCN) until the end of March 2022,
- an update concerning WHSSC Independent Member (IM) Remuneration,
- attendance at the Integrated Governance Committee (IGC) held on the 13 December 2021,
- an update on the Royal College of Nursing Wales – Nurse of the Year Awards 2021 ceremony held on the 10 November and that WHSSC had sponsored the Health Care Support Worker (HCSW) Award category,
- that Professor Vivienne Harpwood had appointed Dr Ruth Alcolado, Medical Director, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) as the new Vice Chair for the All Wales Individual Patient Funding Request (IPFR) Panel with effect from the 16 December 2021 for 2 years, in accordance with the Standing Orders,
- that the Chair had attended 1 to 1 meetings with Health Board (HB) CEOs.

Members (1) **Noted** the report, (2) **Ratified** the Chairs action undertaken to update the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Welsh Renal Clinical Network (WRCN) to ensure effective governance and in the interest of expediency to commence the recruitment exercise for the role of the substantive Chair to the WRCN, and (3) **Approved** the extension of the interim WRCN Chair arrangement until 31 March 2022 to ensure business continuity whilst the substantive post is recruited to.

4. Managing Director's Report

Members received the Managing Director's Report and **noted** updates on:

- Workshops held to consider options for WHSSC to commission Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary (HPB) Services,
- The extension of the Fast-Track Process for Military Personnel,
- Paediatric Inherited Metabolic Diseases (IMD),
- Discussions with SBUHB concerning the commissioning of Burns Treatment from the SBUHB Welsh Centre for Burns,
- The WHSSC Specialised Services Strategy,
- A request for WHSSC to support the National Collaborative Commissioning Unit (NCCU) to commission Surge Beds in response to the current omicron wave.

Members (1) **Noted** the report, (2) **Supported** that WHSSC provides support to the NCCU to enable them to commission mental health Surge Beds in response to the current omicron wave.

5. Individual Patient Funding Request (IPFR) Panel Update

Members received an update report on the Individual Patient Funding Request (IPFR) panel which outlined potential future proposals to change the terms of reference (ToR) of the All Wales Individual Patient Funding Request (IPFR) Panel, provided the JC with an update regarding the recent Judicial Review of an All Wales IPFR Panel decision, and provided an update on the outcome of a recent meeting with Welsh Government (WG) to discuss the governance arrangements of the All Wales IPFR Panel including the authority of the JC to amend the ToR of the Panel.

Members (1) **Noted** the issues with the current ToR of the All Wales IPFR Panel, (2) **Noted** the outcome of the recent Judicial Review and the implications for both the All Wales IPFR Panel and HB panels in Wales, (3) **Noted** the next steps agreed with Welsh Government regarding urgent changes to the existing All Wales IPFR Policy, (4) **Noted** the next steps agreed with Welsh Government regarding the authority of the Joint Committee to approve changes to the All Wales IPFR Panel ToR, and that a formal letter, from WG, confirming the position is awaited; and (5) **Noted** the suggestion from WHSSC officers regarding the need for a wider review of both the All Wales IPFR Policy and the governance arrangements for the policy.

6. Audit Wales WHSSC Committee Governance Arrangements

Update

Members received an update on progress against the recommendations outlined in the Audit Wales "WHSSC Committee Governance Arrangements" report.

Audit Wales presented the report and advised that the management responses were comprehensive and well thought out and that positive progress had been made against the actions. The ongoing scrutiny being undertaken through the Integrated Governance Committee (IGC) was noted.

Members were informed that the updated audit tracker document will be shared with the NHS Wales Board Secretaries in HBs for inclusion on HB Audit Committee agendas in February/March 2022. This will ensure that all NHS bodies are able to maintain a line of sight on the progress being made, noting WHSSC's status as a Joint Committee (JC) of each HB in Wales.

Members (1) **Noted** the progress made against the WHSSC management responses to the Audit Wales recommendations outlined in the WHSSC Committee Governance Arrangements report, (2) **Noted** the progress made against the Welsh Government responses to the Audit Wales recommendations outlined in the WHSSC Committee Governance Arrangements report; and (3) **Approved** the updated audit tracker for submission to Audit Wales and to HB Audit Committees for assurance in February/March 2022.

7. Assurance on Patients Waiting for Specialised Services

Members received a report providing detail on the processes being used within WHSSC to seek assurance around how patients are being managed whilst on a waiting list.

Members (1) **Noted** the report, (2) **Noted** the robust processes in place to gain assurance that provider organisations are managing and supporting patients waiting for specialised care and treatment; and (3) **Noted** that the position in our NHS England specialised service providers has been generally more stable with recovery and activity across most contracts back to pre-pandemic levels. However given the rise in cases of the omicron variant and the reports in the media that Trusts in NHS England are suspending elective care, the WHSS Team will urgently ascertain the position in our main specialised service contractors in NHS England. This will be reported to Joint Committee in the routine activity report.

8. Independent Member Remuneration Update

Members received an update on discussions with Welsh Government (WG) to review the options to recruit and retain WHSSC Independent Members

(IMs) in response to the recommendation outlined in the Audit Wales report "WHSSC Committee Governance Arrangements".

Members (1) **Noted** the report, (2) **Discussed** and **approved** the proposal to transition to a fair and open selection process for appointing WHSSC IMs through advertising the vacancies through the HB Chairs and the Board Secretaries, with eligibility confined to existing HB IMs, (3) **Discussed** and **approved** that the existing arrangements for appointing a CTM audit lead IM, could transition to advertising for an Audit/Finance IM through a fair and open selection process through advertising the vacancy through the HB Chairs and the Board Secretaries, with eligibility confined to existing HB IMs, (4) **Discussed** and **approved** the suggested proposals to remunerate WHSSC IMs including the requirement for a review following the recruitment process, (5) **Discussed** and **approved** the additional annual cost of remunerating WHSSC IMs; and **approved** an uplift to the Direct Running Costs (DRC) budget to enable a financial pool of resource to recurrently fund the remunerated IM positions.

9. COVID-19 Period Activity Report for Month 8 2021-2022

COVID-19 Period

Members received a report that highlighted the scale of decrease in specialised services activity delivered for the Welsh population by providers in England, together with the two major supra-regional providers in South Wales.

Members **noted** the report.

10. Financial Performance Report – Month 9 2021-2022

Members received a report providing the final outturn for the financial year. The financial position reported at Month 9 for WHSSC was a year-end outturn forecast under spend of £13,261k.

Members **noted** the report.

11. Corporate Governance Matters

Members received a report providing an update on corporate governance matters arising since the previous meeting.

Members **noted** the report.

12. Other reports

Members also **noted** update reports from the following joint Sub-committees and Advisory Groups:

- Audit & Risk Committee (ARC)
- Management Group (MG),
- Integrated Governance Committee (IGC),
- All Wales Individual Patient Funding Request (IPFR) Panel,

- Welsh Renal Clinical Network (WRCN).

