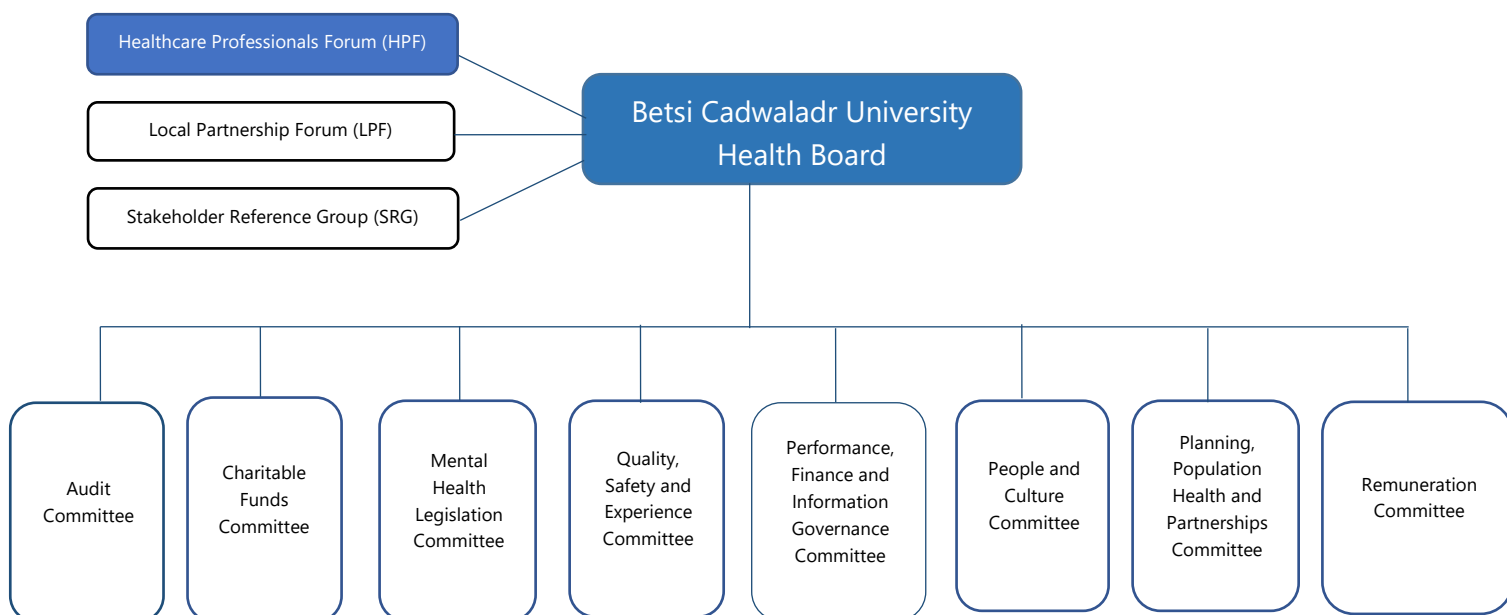


HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS' FORUM

TERMS OF REFERENCE



Version	Issued to	Date	Comments
V0.01 Draft	Audit Committee	16/11/23	Developed as a first draft for review by Audit Committee on 16/11/23
V0.02 Draft	TOR meeting with Committee Chair & Executive Lead	18/12/23	Developed as a draft for review with Committee Chair and Executive Lead
V0.03 Draft	Health Board	18/01/24	Final Draft for consideration by the Health Board to be held on 25/01/24
V6.00 Approved		25/01/24	Approved by the Health Board

1) Introduction

1.1 The Healthcare Professionals' Forum's role is to provide a balanced, multi-disciplinary view of healthcare professional issues to advise the Board on local strategy and delivery. Its role does not include consideration of healthcare professional terms and conditions of service. The detailed operating arrangements in respect of this Committee are set out below.

2) Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of the Healthcare Professionals' Forum is to:
- facilitate engagement and debate amongst the wide range of clinical interests within the Health Board's area of activity, with the aim of reaching and presenting a cohesive and balanced healthcare professional perspective to inform the Health Board's decision making.

3) Responsibility of the Advisory Group

3.1 The Board must set out the relationships and accountabilities with others as well as the National Professional Advisory Group.

4) Membership

4.1 Formal membership of the Advisory Group shall comprise the following:

MEMBERS
Chair – nominated from within the membership of the Healthcare Professionals' Forum by its members and approved by the Minister
Vice Chair - nominated from within the membership of the Healthcare Professionals' Forum by its members and approved by the Minister
The membership of the Healthcare Professionals' Forum reflects the structure of the seven health Statutory Professional Advisory Committees set up in accordance with Section 190 of the NHS (Wales) Act 2006. Membership of the Forum shall therefore comprise the following eleven (11) members (or nominated deputy):
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welsh Medical Committee<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Primary and Community Care Medical representative○ Mental Health Medical representative○ Specialist and Tertiary Care medical representative• Welsh Nursing and Midwifery Committee<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Community Nursing and Midwifery representative○ Hospital Nursing and Midwifery representative• Welsh Allied Health Professions Committee

- Therapies representative
- Welsh Scientific Advisory Committee
 - Scientific representative
- Welsh Optometric Committee
 - Optometry representative
- Welsh Dental Committee
 - Dental representative
- Welsh Pharmaceutical Committee
 - Hospital and Primary Care representative
 - Community Pharmacists representative

4.2 The following should attend Committee meetings:

IN ATTENDANCE
Executive Lead – Executive Director of Therapies and Health Sciences
Secretariat – as determined by the Director of Corporate Governance

4.3 Where the Board determines it appropriate, the Health Board may extend membership to other individuals in order to ensure an appropriate balance in representation amongst healthcare professional groupings and across the range of primary, community and secondary service provision.

5) Member Responsibilities and Accountability

5.1 The Chair

5.1.1 The Chair is responsible for the effective operation of the Healthcare Professionals’ Forum:

- Chairing meetings;
- Establishing and ensuring adherence to the standards of good governance set for the NHS in Wales, ensuring that all business is conducted in accordance with its agreed operating arrangements; and
- Developing positive and professional relationships amongst the Healthcare Professionals’ Forum’s membership and between the Healthcare Professionals’ Forum and the Health Board, and in particular its Chair, Chief Executive and clinical Directors.

5.1.2 The Chair shall work in close harmony with the Chairs of the Health Board’s other advisory groups and, supported by the Director of Corporate Governance, shall ensure that key and appropriate issues are discussed by the Healthcare Professionals Forum in a timely manner with all the necessary information and advice being made available to members to inform the debate and ultimate resolutions.

5.1.3 As Chair of the Healthcare Professionals' Forum, he or she will be appointed as an Associate Member of the Health Board. The Chair is accountable for the conduct of his or her role as Associate Member on the Health Board to the Minister, through the Health Board Chair and accountable to the Health Board for the conduct of business in accordance with the governance and operating framework set by the Health Board.

5.2 The Vice Chair

5.2.1 The Vice-Chair shall deputise for the Chair in his or her absence for any reason, and will do so until either the existing chair resumes duties or a new chair is appointed. This deputisation includes acting in the role of Associate Member of the Health Board.

5.2.2 The Vice Chair is accountable through the Healthcare Professionals' Forum Chair to the Health Board for his or her performance as Vice Chair, and to the nominating body or grouping for the way in which their views are represented at the Healthcare Professionals' Forum.

5.3 Members

5.3.1 The Healthcare Professionals' Forum shall function as a coherent advisory group, all members being full and equal members and sharing responsibility for the decisions of the Healthcare Professionals' Forum.

5.3.2 All members must:

- be prepared to engage with and contribute fully to the Healthcare Professionals' Forum's activities and in a manner that upholds the standards of good governance – including the values and standards of behaviour – set for the NHS in Wales;
- comply with the terms and conditions of their appointment;
- equip themselves to fulfil the breadth of their responsibilities by participating in appropriate personal and organisational development programmes; and
- promote the work of the Healthcare Professionals' Forum within the healthcare professional discipline they represent.

5.3.3 Forum members are accountable through the Healthcare Professionals' Forum Chair to the Health Board for their performance as Group members, and to their nominating body or grouping for the way in which they represent the views of their body or grouping at the Healthcare Professionals' Forum.

6) Appointment and Terms of Office

6.1 Appointments to the Healthcare Professionals' Forum shall be made by the Board, based upon nominations received from the relevant healthcare professional group, and in accordance with any specific requirements or directions made by the Welsh Ministers. Members shall be appointed for a period specified by the Board, but for no longer than

four (4) years in any one term. Those members can be reappointed but may not serve a total period of more than eight (8) years consecutively.

- 6.2 The **Chair** will be nominated from within the membership of the Healthcare Professionals' Forum, by its members, in a manner determined by the Board, subject to any specific requirements or directions made by the Welsh Ministers. The nomination will be subject to consideration by the Board, which must submit a recommendation on the nomination to the Minister for Health and Social Services. The appointment as Chair will be made by the Minister but it will not be a formal public appointment. The Constitution Regulations provide that the Welsh Ministers may appoint an Associate Member of the Board, and the appointment of the Chair to this role is on the basis of the conditions of appointment for Associate Members set out in the Regulations.
- 6.3 The Chair's term of office will be for a period of up to two (2) years, with the ability to stand as Chair for an additional one (1) year, in line with that individual's term of office as a member of the Healthcare Professionals' Forum. That individual may remain in office for the remainder of his or her term as a member of the Healthcare Professionals' Forum after the term of appointment as Chair has ended.
- 6.4 The **Vice Chair** will be nominated from within the membership of the Healthcare Professionals' Forum, by its members, in a manner determined by the Board, subject to the condition that the appointment is from a different healthcare discipline to that of the Chair, along with any specific requirements or directions made by the Welsh Ministers. The nomination shall be subject to consideration and appointment by the Board. The Constitution Regulations provide that the Welsh Ministers may appoint an Associate Member of the Board. In the Healthcare Professionals' Forum's Chair's absence, the Vice Chair will also perform the role of Associate Member on the Health Board. The appointment of the Vice Chair is therefore also on the basis of the conditions of appointment for Associate Members set out in the Regulations.
- 6.5 The Vice Chair's term of office will be for a period of up to two (2) years, with the ability to stand as Vice Chair for an additional one (1) year, in line with that individual's term of office as a member of the Healthcare Professionals' Forum. That individual may remain in office for the remainder of his or her term as a member of the Healthcare Professionals' Forum after the term of appointment as Vice Chair has ended.
- 6.6 Members' tenure of appointment will cease in the event that they no longer meet any of the eligibility requirements determined for the position. Members must inform the Healthcare Professionals' Forum's Chair as soon as is reasonably practicable to do so in respect of any issue which may impact on their eligibility to hold office. The Healthcare Professionals' Forum's Chair will advise the Board in writing of any such cases immediately.
- 6.7 The Health Board will require Forum members to confirm in writing their continued eligibility on an annual basis.
- 6.8 Resignation, suspension and removal of members**

- A member of the Forum may resign office at any time during the period of appointment by giving notice in writing to the Healthcare Professionals' Forum's Chair and the Board.
- If the Board, having consulted with the Healthcare Professionals' Forum's Chair and the nominating body or group, considers that:
 - It is not in the interests of the health service in the area covered by the Healthcare Professionals' Forum that a person should continue to hold office as a member; or
 - It is not conducive to the effective operation of the Healthcare Professionals' Forum
 it shall remove that person from office by giving immediate notice in writing to the person and the relevant nominating body or group.
- A nominating body or group may request the removal of a member appointed to the Healthcare Professionals' Forum to represent their interests by writing to the Board setting out an explanation and full reasons for removal.
- If an Healthcare Professionals' Forum member fails to attend any meeting of the Group for a period of six months or more, the Board may remove that person from office unless they are satisfied that:
 - The absence was due to a reasonable cause; and
 - The person will be able to attend such meetings within such period as the Board considers reasonable.
- Before making a decision to remove a person from office, the Board may suspend the tenure of office of that person for a limited period (as determined by the Board) to enable it to carry out a proper investigation of the circumstances leading to the consideration of removal. Where the Board suspends any member, that member shall be advised immediately in writing of the reasons for suspension. Any such member shall not perform any of the functions of membership during a period of suspension.

6.9 Relationship with the Board

- The Healthcare Professionals' Forum's main link with the Board is through the Healthcare Professionals Forum's Chair's membership of the Board as an Associate Member.
- The Board may determine that designated Board members or Health Board officers shall be in attendance at Advisory Group meetings. The Healthcare Professionals' Forum's Chair may also request the attendance of Board members or Health Board officers, subject to the agreement of the Health Board Chair.
- The Board shall determine the arrangements for any joint meetings between the Health Board and the Healthcare Professionals' Forum.
- The Board's Chair shall put in place arrangements to meet with the Healthcare Professionals' Forum Chair on a regular basis to discuss the Healthcare Professionals' Forum's activities and operation.

6.10 Rights of Access to Health Board for Professional Groups

- The Health Board Chair, on the advice of the Chief Executive and/or Director of Corporate Governance, may recommend that the Board affords direct right of access to any professional group in the following exceptional circumstances:

- where the Healthcare Professionals' Forum recommends that a matter should be presented to the Board by a particular healthcare professional grouping, e.g., due to the specialist nature of the issues concerned; or
- where a healthcare professional group has demonstrated that the Healthcare Professionals' Forum has not afforded it due consideration in the determination of its advice to the Board on a particular issue.
- The Board may itself determine that it wishes to seek the views of a particular healthcare professional grouping on a specific matter, in accordance with Standing Order 6.5.7.

6.11 Relationship with the National Professional Advisory Group

- The Healthcare Professionals' Forum Chair (or Healthcare Professionals' Forum Vice-Chair) will be a member of the National Professional Advisory Group.

7) Quorum and Attendance

- 7.1 The Standing Orders on which these Terms of Reference are based do not specify a quorum for Healthcare Professionals' Forums, however it is considered to be good governance that at least one quarter of the agreed membership be present to ensure the quorum of the Healthcare Professionals' Forum and must include the Chair or Vice Chair of the Group. If a meeting is not quorate, any decisions made must be ratified at the next meeting of the Healthcare Professionals' Forum.

8) Agenda and Papers

- 8.1 The Advisory Group Secretary is to hold an agenda setting meeting with the Chair and /or Vice Chair and the Executive Lead (Executive Director of Therapies and Health Sciences) at least six weeks before the meeting date.
- 8.2 The agenda will be based around the Advisory Group work plan, identified risks, matters arising from previous meetings, issues emerging throughout the year, and requests from Advisory Group members. Following approval, the agenda and timetable for request of papers will be circulated to all Advisory Group members.
- 8.3 All papers must be approved by the Executive lead.
- 8.4 The agenda and papers will be distributed/published seven days in advance of the meeting.
- 8.5 A draft table of actions will be issued within two working days of the meeting. The minutes and table of actions will be circulated to the Advisory Group Chair and Executive lead within seven days to check the accuracy, prior to sending to Members to review within the next seven days.
- 8.6 Members must forward amendments to the Advisory Group Secretary within the next seven days. The secretariat will then forward the final version to the Advisory Group Chair for final review.

9) Meetings

- 9.1 The Healthcare Professionals' Forum will meet quarterly and an annual schedule of meetings will be determined by the corporate calendar.
- 9.2 The Healthcare Professionals' Forum may be convened at short notice if requested by the Chair.
- 9.3 Any additional meetings will be arranged under exceptional circumstance and shall be determined by the Chair of the Healthcare Professionals' Forum in discussion with the Executive Director of Therapies and Health Sciences.
- 9.4 The Healthcare Professionals' Forum may, subject to the approval of the Health Board, establish Groups to carry out on its behalf specific aspects of Healthcare Professionals Forum business.
- 9.5 The Board's commitment to openness and transparency in the conduct of all its business extends equally to the work carried out by others to advise it in the conduct of its business. The Board therefore requires the Healthcare Professionals' Forum to hold meetings in public unless there are specific, valid reasons for not doing so.
- 9.6 The Healthcare Professionals' Forum secretariat shall be determined by the Director of Corporate Governance.

10) Private Session

- 10.1 The Healthcare Professionals Forum can operate with a 'closed' function to receive updates on the management of sensitive and /or confidential information.

11) Reporting and Assurance Arrangements

- 11.1 The Advisory Group, through its Chair and members, shall work closely with the other Committees and Advisory Groups to provide advice and assurance to the Board through joint planning and co-ordination of Board and Advisory Group business including the sharing of information.
- 11.2 The Advisory Group Chair, supported by the Advisory Group Secretary, shall:
 - report formally, regularly and on a timely basis to the Board on the Advisory Group's activities;
 - bring to the Board's specific attention any significant matter under consideration by the Group / Forum; and
 - Ensure appropriate escalation arrangements are in place to alert the Health Board's Chair, Chief Executive and/or Chairs of other relevant Committee, of any urgent/critical matters that may affect the operation and/or reputation of the Health Board.

- 11.3 The Advisory Group will undertake an annual review on the effectiveness of its arrangements and responsibilities. The Director of Corporate Governance will oversee this review.

12) Accountability, Responsibility and Authority

- 12.1 Although the Board has delegated authority to the Healthcare Professionals' Forum for the exercise of certain functions, as set out in these Terms of Reference, it retains overall responsibility and accountability for ensuring the quality and safety of healthcare for its citizens through the effective governance of the organisation.
- 12.2 The Healthcare Professionals' Forum is directly accountable to the Board for its performance in exercising the functions set out in these terms of reference.
- 12.3 The requirements for the conduct of business as set out in the Health Board's Standing Orders are equally applicable to the operation of the Healthcare Professionals' Forum.

13) Review Date

- 13.1 These Terms of Reference and operating arrangements shall be reviewed on at least an annual basis by the Forum for approval by the Board.