



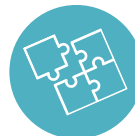
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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Betsi Cadwaladr
University Health Board

FEBRUARY 2024

ONE YEAR ON...

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board's
improvement progress over the last year





February 2023

BCUHB was placed in Special Measures.

March 2023

Urgent mental health support became available 24/7 through NHS 111.

July 2023

Artificial Intelligence introduced to help the diagnosis of cancer across North Wales.
New blood test unit in Wrexham reduces waiting times from weeks to days.

August 2023

Departments at Ysbyty Gwynedd ranked the top in Wales for training by Junior Doctors.

September 2023

The start of a new approach to involving local communities with big health conversations starting across all areas.

November 2023

Funding agreed for brand new orthopaedic hub in Llandudno.
Carol Shillabeer appointed to the role of permanent Chief Executive.

December 2023

Reduced the number of interims from 41 to two.

January 2024

Dyfed Edwards appointed to the role of Chair for the next four years.

February 2024

One year on and as confirmed by an Audit Wales re-review, we've made some progress but there is still more to do (see page 7).

March 2024 and beyond

We will be embedding our approach to the last year into our Annual Plan for the next year and beyond, working to further improve our services for the those we serve.

Our journey to excellent healthcare for North Wales

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board's improvement progress over the last year

This time last year, Welsh Government announced that Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board was being placed in the highest level of escalation; Special Measures. This decision was taken due to serious concerns about performance, leadership and culture. Over the last year, there have been many changes within the health board with support and advice provided by expert independent advisers.

There has been a change in leadership and approach. We now have a firm foundation to build on, with a new Chief Executive, Chair and Board members in place who are committed to improving our ways of working, our handling of finances and ultimately improving the quality of care provided and the experiences of our patients and their families.

Of course, there is much more still to be done and as we continue on our improvement journey, we are committed to ensuring excellent healthcare services and long-term positive change for the people of north Wales

Audit Wales' recent milestone report showed the health board is moving in the right direction with more stability. There is a clearer direction towards a positive and supportive culture and we know we must focus on rebuilding trust and confidence in the organisation amongst public, staff and partners.

We still face many challenges, we have services that still need to improve, ongoing financial challenges



and more to do to lay the foundations of the organisation we want and need to be.

We know that people have been frustrated by the amount of time they have had to wait for appointments, care and treatment and over the last year we have been able to make real inroads in reducing some of the waiting times for our longest waiters. We will continue to prioritise reducing waiting times as we move forward.

Our staff continue to work incredibly hard to provide the services required across primary, community and hospital settings. We want to support them in doing the jobs they are expertly trained to do, well; celebrating their efforts and successes along the way.

We are committed to working with our staff, our partners and our communities to make even more progress over the year to come and beyond.

New ways of treating and diagnosing some cancers:

Including using artificial intelligence in breast and prostate cancers. Implementing a 'straight to test' approach for prostate cancers which is reducing the diagnostic journey by half.

Treating people sooner

- All 156 week waiters without a Stage 1 appointment were all booked by August 2023 (excluding Orthodontics)
- 6 year waits eradicated
- Reduced people waiting 52 weeks for a first appointment by 45%
- Reduced people waiting 104 weeks by 37%.

Stronger leadership:

New Chief Executive
New Chair and Independent Members.
Progress identified by Audit Wales (Feb, 2024).

Improving our most challenged services:

Vascular Services have been 'de-escalated' by Health Improvement Wales and received a positive external review. We have a new approach to involving service users and their families/carers and further improvement plans are ongoing.

Reducing expensive, short term contracts

We have reduced use of 'interim' staff by

82%

(from 41 to just two)

Building a firm foundation:

New ways of working, policies and processes making sure everything we do is done in a standard, agreed way.

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Key areas of progress

Managing the money:

Agreed a financial plan and a savings target that will give us better control. We've trained over 400 staff in procurement/how we pay for services.

Involving people and setting a good example:

Visible, committed and responsible leaders. A new approach to engagement: Involving., speaking with and listening to our communities more. Increased clinically-led improvements.

Received a multi-million pound investment

Approved development of a planned orthopaedic centre in Llandudno will mean more people will be seen sooner at a dedicated site for 50 weeks of the year.

Clear focus:

Following reviews by expert advisers, key areas have been identified, including:

- How we use data to inform our plans
- Developing a positive working culture
- Involving communities more
- Identifying and acting on risks sooner.





Key developments

New orthopaedic hub at Llandudno

The Welsh Government has agreed funding of up to £29.4m for a new Orthopaedic hub at Llandudno Hospital to help reduce orthopaedic waiting times.

The new hub will transform elective orthopaedic services at Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board and provide benefits for patients, staff and the wider North Wales community, by delivering a planned 1,900 procedures a year.

Specialising in high volume, low complexity care, the dedicated hub will increase annual surgical activity. By providing orthopaedic services away from hospitals, it will reduce the effects unscheduled care can have on elective treatment and reduce the chance of surgeries being postponed.

The funding from Welsh Government will refurbish a vacant ward at Llandudno hospital to create 19 extra bed spaces, two new theatres and an eight bed enhanced recovery / Post-Anaesthetic Care unit.

Work at Llandudno hospital will start in February 2024 with the expectation that the hub will be operating at full capacity in early 2025. Elective Orthopaedic services will continue at Abergele Hospital until the new hub is built.

Once the hub is operational, patients who need an orthopaedic procedure that require a short stay in hospital could be offered their surgery at Llandudno. Patients will still be able to choose to have their surgery at their nearest general hospital if they wish.

Patients thank hospital after first in Wales bladder procedure

Patients at Wrexham Maelor Hospital have thanked the medical team for performing 'quick and completely painless' procedure, the first of its kind in Wales, using cutting-edge laser to remove bladder tumours or suspicious areas. The procedure used a Trans Urethral Laser Ablation (TULA), an examination of the bladder using a camera on a thin flexible tube that uses a laser for bladder treatment.

The new laser, which is effectively the size of a Smartphone, was funded via the North Wales NHS charity Awyr Las, and the Health Board's Cancer Services.

Elizabeth Comer, 82, Wrexham, has re-occurring growths on her bladder and has previously had them removed under local anaesthetic as she was too concerned to be put to sleep and was one of the first to be offered laser removal.

Elizabeth said, "Professor Shergill and the team are marvellous, and I won't have any nerves about coming in again, it wouldn't worry me at all."



“Straight to test” triage showing faster diagnosis of prostate cancer

Integrated working is leading to earlier and faster diagnosis of prostate cancer, cutting the amount of time between referral and vital diagnostic tests almost in half.

In Spring last year, we began a ‘straight to test’ approach, meaning people can have an mpMRI test sooner after being referred for diagnostics on a ‘suspicious of cancer’ pathway, either by being triaged by a Clinical Nurse Specialist or Consultant without first needing to be seen within secondary care.

Eleri Jones, Uro-Oncology Cancer Clinical Nurse Specialist said: “Before we started a new triage here, people would usually wait around 35 days from GP referral to mpMRI test, now they have their MRI around 18 days after we receive the referral from the GP.

“There was a lot of duplication before with people attending another appointment before coming for tests where as now, we call people on the phone and can make the referral on their behalf.

“People don’t need to travel for as many appointments, we’re freeing up clinical time as a result and people are getting their diagnostics much sooner.

“It’s fantastic to be seeing the results, knowing that we’re making such a difference to people’s experience of our service.

“Being referred on a cancer pathway can be a nerve-racking time so anything we can do to speed that up and diagnose or rule out a cancer sooner can have such a big impact on people’s journey and onward treatment.”



Truly honoured! Betsi staff rewarded by King Charles

Five Health Board colleagues have been awarded titles in the King’s New Year’s Honours List.

The awards, which celebrate contributions to either outside interests or work within the NHS, were announced just before the 2024 New Year celebrations.

These awards celebrate not only what contributions these colleagues have made to our patients or their wider communities, but what type of people commit themselves to health care.

We all know there are many more within our ranks who may never receive this type of recognition but who make incredible contributions to the wellbeing of our region, every single day. Congratulations to (left to right):

- Sharon Manning, MBE
- Dr Robert Havard Davies, BEM
- Llinos Edwards, BEM
- Mandy Giddins, BEM
- Kath Kynaston, BEM



There is still a long way to go ...



Whilst we're really pleased that the recent Audit Wales report acknowledges the progress that we've made over the past year and we can point to examples of progress that are underway, we know that there is still much more to be done as we continue on our improvement journey.

We are committed to providing excellent healthcare services for the people of north Wales and know that there are still people waiting longer than we would like or who feel frustrated over their experiences of our services. We also know that we have some fantastic staff who are with us on this journey and thank each and every one for their continued hard work and commitment. We hope that the next phase for Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board continues to build on the stabilisation we have set out to achieve and that people can see the opportunity we have now to transform ourselves and our services.

We've welcomed the support from our partners and from the Welsh Government and over the next 12 months we will focus



on how we can ensure our approach to the last year is replicated and built upon so that we can build an effective organisation, with a robust plan for long-lasting change so that we can truly improve quality, outcomes and experience.

We want to be known as an organisation with a compassionate culture, with visible leadership and engagement with staff, partners and our communities to be a Health Board they trust and can be proud of.

We must learn from the past, from our previous experiences and are committed to ongoing and continuous improvement.

Thank you to everyone for being involved in our journey so far and we look forward to working with you in the months and years ahead.

**"The board has the opportunity to regenerate itself and lead the organisation through the challenges it continues to face." –
Audit Wales, February
2024**

A handwritten signature in grey ink, reading "Dyfed Edwards".

Dyfed Edwards,
Chair, BCUHB

A handwritten signature in grey ink, reading "Carol Shillabeer".

Carol Shillabeer,
Chief Executive, BCUHB



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For more information:

www.bcuhb.nhs.wales/about-us/special-measures/health-board-progress/



A well-functioning
board



A clear, deliverable
plan for 2023/24



Strong leadership
and engagement



Improved access,
outcomes and
experience



A learning, self-
improving organisation