

WF 14

Ymchwiliad i gynaliadwyedd y gweithlu iechyd a gofal cymdeithasol
Inquiry into the sustainability of the health and social care workforce

Ymateb gan: Ysgol Feddygaeth Prifysgol Caerdydd

Response from: Cardiff University School of Medicine

School of Medicine, Cardiff University

Responses to Consultative questions - Inquiry into the sustainability of the health and social care workforce

1. Do we have an accurate picture of the current health and care workforce? Are there any data gaps?

Focusing on the Welsh Language data, we note it is currently very difficult to find accurate data of the Welsh speaking ability of the workforce, even with ESR – this is a clear data gap. Self-reporting of language ability can mean skills are hidden due to lack of confidence to use Welsh in the workplace. Whilst this clearly has an impact on the delivery of the aims of the Strategic Framework for Welsh Language services in Health and Social Services (More than Just Words), it also has an impact on finding Welsh speaking mentors and academic supervisors in the workplace for Welsh speaking students. This is threatening the sustainability of Welsh medium education in medicine and other healthcare courses chosen by students keen to continue their bilingual education and develop their clinical communication skills in both languages.

2. Is there a clear understanding of the Welsh Government’s vision for health and care services and the workforce needed to deliver this?

We are still unclear re: policy/vision for health (but appreciate that this is partially due to new administration etc. and will become clearer).

3. How well-equipped is the workforce to meet future health and care needs?

Please see response below

4. What are the factors that influence recruitment and retention of staff across Wales?

This might include for example:

- the opportunities for young people to find out about/experience the range of NHS and social care careers;
- education and training (commissioning and/or delivery);
- pay and terms of employment/contract;

We believe it is important to ensure consideration is given to academic Medicine and the role of clinical academics when focusing on recruitment and retention in Wales. The relationship between Universities and the Health Boards is critical here. There is an important requirement to ensure parity and fairness between academic and non-academic medicine (financial and in job-planning). There must be appropriate levels of

funding to ensure this can continue.

The pipeline for health care professionals in Wales from school through Further and Higher Education and onto the career itself is critical. We aim to attract and retain the best Doctors in Wales, but must be equipped to achieve this. There are a number of important factors that must be addressed in order to achieve this including:

- Adequate funding and a clear financial strategy
- A workforce with the ability to deliver (particularly with the training elements)
- Facilities – particularly within the communities of Wales.

In a recent Teacher Advisory Panel at Cardiff University School of Medicine, teachers responded to a question about the reason why the numbers of young people from Wales applying to undergraduate medicine courses across the UK has fallen according to 2015 UCAS data. The teachers suggested that there was a lack of unbiased information about careers in the NHS, and that young people are being influenced by the negative media about working in the NHS in Wales and possibly outdated information from family connections. They also cited the success of recent campaigns by STEM organisations such as STEMnet in making other careers in Science more accessible and attractive. They believed that potential medics were being swayed away from the demands of medicine to study other degree programmes.

5. Whether there are there particular issues in some geographic areas, rural or urban areas, or areas of deprivation for example.

From the Medical Education perspective, we ensure clinical placements take place across the breadth of Wales. This includes rural and urban areas and ensures a clear understanding of the specific requirements and nuances of each situation. By ensuring an awareness at early career points we aim to provide the tools and training to provide an equipped workforce in the future.

Furthermore, work is currently ongoing to identify future potential “community-based” centres (building on the achievements and learnings from the Kier Hardy Health Park) – by enabling the training of students to take place in community-based facilities ensures an understanding and appreciation of the requirements of the full social (and geographical) spectrum across Wales.