

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd, Llesiant a Chwaraeon
Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Rebecca Evans AC/AM
Gweinidog Iechyd y Cyhoedd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Social Services and Public Health

Ein cyf/ Our ref MA-P-VG-6361-16

Lynne Neagle AM
Chair
Children, Young People and Education Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

4 October 2016

Dear Lynne,

During our attendance at the Children, Young People and Education Committee on Wednesday, 14 September 2016, we agreed to provide the committee with additional information.

The committee will wish to note the following:

Number of school nurses in Wales

The most recently published statistics show that as of 30 September 2015 there were 222 Whole Time Equivalent nurses working in mainstream schools in Wales (comprehensive schools and their feeder primary schools). There has been a 42.6% increase in the number since 2009. This figure does not include nurses employed directly by special schools.

The above figure includes non case holding managers, fixed term officers who do vaccinations and other nursing staff who work only part of their time with schools. If these officers are removed from the total so that the number only includes practising school nurses and broken down by Health Board the following will apply:

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Gohebiaeth.Vaughan.Gething@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Vaughan.Gething@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

Health Board	School Nurse head count	WTE
Abertawe Bro Morgannwg	32	25.49
Cardiff & Vale	26	20.27
Powys	13	8.30
Cwm Taf	23	19.00
Aneurin Bevan	34	27.40
Betsi Cadwaladr	32	20.70
Hywel Dda	39	26.04
TOTAL	199	147.20

The number of practising nurses stated above is mainly Registered Specialist Community Public Health Nurses - School Nurses (SCPHN SN) and with the remainder being Registered Nurses who have not undertaken the specialist school nursing course but have the required competencies to fulfil the role.

A Framework for a School Nursing Service for Wales (2009) review/refresh update

As the Framework for a School Nursing Service for Wales has been in place for eight years, a review of its application across Wales was commissioned. The Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) had received feedback from the All Wales Health Visitor and School Nurse Forum that indicated that there were some inconsistencies in the way the 2009 Framework was being implemented, for example, not all schools had nurses 52 weeks a year, some had them in term time only. In addition, as the 2009 Framework did not cover special schools it was felt that a dedicated review of the health needs of children accessing such schools should also be undertaken to determine whether specific provision should be developed as part of a revised Framework. A pilot using a multidisciplinary 'team around the family' approach was undertaken in three special schools in the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board catchment area in 2015. Evidence from this pilot is being used to develop a new service approach for children with special needs accessing mainstream as well as special schools. This work to develop a new service model is running in parallel to the review of the main framework.

The CNO established a small review team with members from the school nursing services in each of the seven health boards to revisit, revise and refresh the original Framework document. This approach was taken to ensure a consensus approach is achieved with relevant practitioners helping to inform the process.

Three consensus conferences have been held during 2016 with representation from the seven health boards including a Lead Nurse, an Operational Team Manager, a Community Practice Teacher and SCPHN (SN) staff representatives. Delegates also included student SCPHN (SNs), Higher Education Institute nurse education representatives and Public Health Wales. These events indicated that currently school nurses spend the majority of their time on vaccinations and immunisation programmes, doing developmental checks and child safeguarding. A strong desire was expressed to extend their role to promote healthy lifestyle choices.

In parallel, to ensure the work maintained a 'rights based approach', a consultation with children and young people was undertaken by Public Health Wales which helped establish what children want from their school nurses.

Informed by the above, work is currently underway to draft, by December, a refreshed document that will both guide professional practice and advise health boards of the Welsh Government's expectations by setting minimum standards for school nursing provision nationally. The revised Framework will support the recently launched Healthy Child Wales

Programme and provide a platform for future work to develop a Healthy Child Wales Programme for older school aged children and young people.

The latest plans on the new neonatal development in Cardiff

Welsh Government has provided capital funding of £7.472m for the initial phase of neonatal services development at UHW. This funding enabled the health board to provide interim facilities following the closure of the neonatal unit due to bacterial infections and also to refurbish the existing unit. The interim solution provided significantly more physical space around the cots than the previous layout with benefits around infection prevention and greater space to undertake clinical interventions. This is replicated in the refurbished unit. The health board is on track to deliver this phase by the end of November 2016.

In terms of the further phases of development, the Welsh Government has received the business case for the next phase of development of obstetric and neonatal facilities at UHW which is currently undergoing scrutiny. The business case submitted will allow for the expansion to allow for an additional 1,000 births, with the provision of an additional theatre and nine obstetric beds, and increasing the number of commissioned neonatal cots from the existing 28 up to 42.

Together for Children and Young People Programme

In addition, we wish to clarify one point relating to our evidence session. During the session a question was asked about the governance arrangements in place for the Together for Children and Young People Programme following comments by the Children's Commissioner for Wales. Not having been present during the Commissioner's evidence giving, Dr Watkins' response referred to the Welsh Government's arrangements to oversee and drive forward our Together for Mental Health Strategy Delivery Plan. However, having reviewed the transcript of the Commissioner's evidence we now appreciate that the point raised related specifically to the frequency of meetings for the Expert Reference Group set up as part of the Children and Young People Programme. The Expert Reference Group is chaired by Prof Sue Bailey and was always intended to operate primarily as a virtual group - although it has met once. We are assured that members of the virtual group routinely receive all board papers and all programme products for their comments. In future, the intention is for this group to meet in person twice a year and the next meeting is scheduled for December 2016.


We hope you find these responses helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Vaughan Gething AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd, Llesiant a Chwaraeon
Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport



Rebecca Evans AC/AM

Gweinidog Iechyd y Cyhoedd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Social Services and Public Health