



# National Pathology Programme Newsletter – July 2025

## Who we are

The National Pathology Programme is a strategic body in Wales sitting within NHS Wales Performance and Improvement, which is in turn hosted by Public Health Wales. Its remit is to work with Health Boards and Trusts across Wales to support the development of high quality, effective and sustainable pathology services. Priority areas for improvement that are the focus of the National Programme were originally identified in the Pathology Statement of Intent (2019) and current work is aligned with the Diagnostics Recovery and Transformation Strategy for Wales (2023 – 2025) and the Ministerial Advisory Group Report 2025.

## Ministerial Advisory Group NHS Performance and Productivity Report

In October 2024 Welsh Government announced the appointment of an external, independent Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) to examine in detail the performance and productivity of NHS Wales. Their remit was to provide assurance to Welsh Government, where current arrangements were deemed effective, and to provide views on how performance and productivity could be strengthened going forward. The final MAG report was published on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2025 and can be read [here](#).

The document includes some specific references to Pathology services in Wales and has become a key guide to how services and the National Pathology Programme are expected to respond to the challenges of improving productivity and performance outlined. Read more on Recommendation 7 [here](#).

The review findings have resulted in the NHS Executive (which hosts the National Pathology Programme) being renamed NHS Wales Performance and Improvement. The review findings have also led to a reprioritisation of the work of the National Programme to focus on regional working and the delivery of Digital Cellular Pathology for Wales. However, the majority of our existing workstreams will remain, as will our remit, to support Pathology services across the country and improve outcomes for our patients. – Alan Deacon, National Pathology Programme Lead

# Out on the road



## The National Pathology Programme out on the Road

The road trip started at Royal Glamorgan Hospital (Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board), followed by a visit to University Hospital of Wales (Cardiff and Vale University Health Board) followed by The Grange and The Royal Gwent, (Aneurin Bevan University Health Board).

A huge thank you to all colleagues who welcomed our team and provided excellent discussions and detailed laboratory tours.

### Our next stops:

- Hywel Dda University Health Board
- Swansea Bay University Health Board
- Betsi Cadwalader University Health Board

We are looking forward to meeting you all soon.

## Updates on the key areas of our work

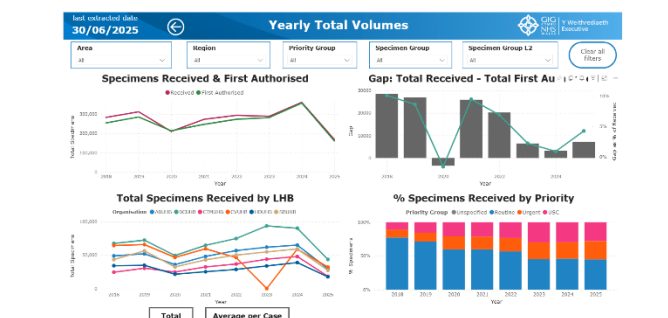
### Quality Assurance

The Quality Assurance and Regulatory Compliance workstream continues to work alongside informatics colleagues from NHS Wales Performance and Improvement, to further develop a business intelligence dashboard capturing performance metrics across Wales. Work also continues with sharing learning and best practise in relation to compliance with ISO 15189:2022 and regulatory requirements (MHRA and HTA) along with continued oversight of the regulatory requirements and compliance with accreditation standards for the implementation of the All Wales LIMS. - *Hannah Albery, Pathology Quality Manager*

The National Pathology Quality and Regulatory Compliance Group continue to provide an invaluable forum to support UKAS accreditation of services in Wales (whether full, partial or aspirational). This group has also contributed to initial work which has been undertaken to develop quality and performance dashboards (working alongside Business Informatics colleagues) and will continue to do so going forward - *Alan Deacon, National Pathology Programme Lead*

### Business Intelligence

Work continues to enhance the demand and capacity informatics which have been developed in conjunction with colleagues from the Business Intelligence Unit of NHS Wales Performance and Productivity. We are also currently exploring how data can be accessed more easily to support the National Pathology benchmarking project which has recently commenced - *Alan Deacon, National Pathology Programme Lead*



## Digital and Novel Technologies

Work has continued to review the service specification document that will be used as part of the procurement process for the digital cellular pathology solution. Members of the group met at a face-to-face workshop in Cardiff on 9th July, with a second workshop being scheduled for September. In addition, over the summer, a small working group will continue to review specific elements in more detail. - *Caity Thomas, Programme Manager*

## Benchmarking

Following the Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) report, the Programme has expanded its focus on regional collaboration and benchmarking across all pathology disciplines. A standardised benchmarking framework is being developed to assess workforce fragility, service resilience, and financial sustainability at both local and regional levels. This work began with a pilot in Cellular Pathology and is now being prepared for wider rollout. It will also enable consistent data collection and comparison across Biochemistry, Haematology, Microbiology, Immunology, and Specimen Reception—supporting evidence-based planning and targeted interventions across the pathology network in Wales. - *Tahir Mohammed, Senior Project Manager*

## Environmental Sustainability

Work around environmental sustainability within pathology has continued; however, following the Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) report, our strategic direction has shifted to focus on higher-priority areas identified through national recommendations. While sustainability remains an important theme, it will receive a more proportionate level of attention going forward. We will continue to support initiatives in this space where they align with wider programme goals and service improvement opportunities. Importantly, this shift does not represent a step back from our sustainability ambitions, but rather a need to balance priorities while maintaining momentum where it matters most. - *Tahir Mohammed, Senior Project Manager*

## Workforce, Training and Education

Pathology Practice Education Facilitator (PPEFs) – as reported in our April newsletter, we have received funding from the IBMS for a 12-month trial of the PPEF role. The trial will evidence the impact of the PPEF roles and assess if the role brings benefits to the training and education within laboratory teams. We have been progressing internal recruitment processes and expect to be going out to advert shortly. Watch this space!

Point of Care Testing (PoCT) – the PoCT Managers and Co-Ordinators are waiting for the new 30 credit level 4 module to be ratified by the education body. The IBMS specialist portfolio for PoCT was launched (21st March 2025) to help with career pathway development for both scientists and non-scientific professionals.

Limited Scope Reporting BMS training pilot – the pilot is being funded by the Moondance Cancer Initiative. Training is progressing well with 2 trainees in CVUHB, with evidence of the trainees having a positive impact on processing the bowel screening workload and contributing to improving turnaround times. The Programme is developing a business case to support the introduction of this reporting BMS (limited scope) role on a permanent basis.

Online Pathology Academy – we are pleased to announce that Luke Hughes (BCUHB) has been appointed as the Pathology Subject Matter Expert/Pathology Academy Development Manager. (Read Luke's bio below in the Meet the Team section.) Luke will take up this role at the beginning of August, on secondment to the Programme for 12 months. Luke has already kindly had an introductory meeting with HEIW Digital, who will be supporting the work of setting up an online academy for Pathology on the HEIW Y Ty Dysgu platform.

Luke is keen to find out the priorities of pathology staff for the online academy. Please use the link or QR code to the questionnaire, which is designed to capture your views on the priorities for the Academy. Your feedback will help to:

- Identify where the Academy can have the greatest positive impact in its first 12 months
- Ensure development focuses on the areas that matter most to the workforce
- Support alignment with national strategies, including the Welsh Government's Diagnostics Recovery and Transformation Strategy

Survey Link here:

[Wales Pathology Academy Training Needs Assessment](#)

Any questions please contact Luke Hughes:

[Luke.Hughes4@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Luke.Hughes4@wales.nhs.uk)



**A gentle reminder** to Pathology managers to use the post-recruitment survey that has been developed via PWEg, to gather information on the training routes of newly appointed BMS staff, which will support future workforce and training planning – *Jane Long, Senior Project Manager*

## Equipment Register Project

We are continuing to maintain the National Pathology Equipment Register to support strategic oversight of key equipment needs across Wales. The current register will be taken to Welsh Government in September. In advance of this, we ask Health Boards and Trusts to begin considering which items they wish to prioritise, to ensure local needs are accurately reflected and inform future planning. - *Tahir Mohammed, Senior Project Manager*

## Good News Stories



### Wales Success at the Advancing Healthcare Awards 2025

A massive congratulations to Craig Baker for winning Biomedical Scientist of the Year Award for his work as Cellular Pathology and Mortuary Manager at Hywel Dda University Health Board. A fantastic achievement, da iawn Craig!

[Find the podcast here](#)

### Biomedical Science Day 5th June 2025

#### Welsh Quiz competition!!!

To celebrate Biomedical Science Day a friendly competition was held between Health Boards, departments, and disciplines. Results below. The quiz is still available if you would like to test your knowledge?



#### Results

1. Cwm Taf Morganwg University Health Board (Quality, IT, Education)
2. Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (Haematology)
3. Hywel Dda University Health Board (Cellular Pathology)
4. Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (Biochemistry)
5. Public Health Wales (Microbiology)

#AtTheHeartOfHealthcareCymru





## CONGRATULATIONS

Clinical Biochemistry in Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board who won the IBMS award for sustainability!  
Well Done!

[Read more here](#)

## Information - Cellular Pathology Cardiff and Vale fundraiser for Africa Cancer Action Trust

A group of amateur runners from the Cardiff and Vale Cellular Pathology laboratory (and wider Clinical Diagnostics and Therapeutics Clinical Board) are going to take on the Cardiff 10k challenge in September 2025. We have chosen the Africa Cancer Action Trust to receive any money we raise.

The charity was set up by our (semi) retired colleague Dr David Griffiths who has been working with a pathology department in Uganda for several years. The money raised will further assist the department in getting equipment and teaching to a much needed and deserving part of the world. Previous projects can be found at; <https://africacanceraction.org/>

If you want to join the team let me know (adam.christian@wales.nhs.uk), or if you are able to donate, please click [here](#).



The Africa Cancer Action Trust is a small local charity, founded in 2018, dedicated to improving cancer diagnosis in sub-Saharan Africa. Currently focused on Uganda where fewer than 15 histopathologists serve a population of 40 million the charity supports the training of histopathologists by assisting with surgical reporting, offering slide seminars, and running educational courses. Recognising that many women in southern Uganda cannot afford a histological diagnosis for breast lumps, the charity has funded a low-cost biopsy clinic, which has now diagnosed over 100 cases of breast cancer. Additionally, it supports the local histopathology laboratory by providing essential consumables. Committed to good medical practice, the charity strives to ensure its initiatives are sustainable by maintaining minimal costs – *David Griffiths, Founder*

## Upcoming Pathology Events

### The Advancing Healthcare Awards Cymru

Closing date: Monday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2025

Virtual Judging Panels: 29 September – 3 October

Awards ceremony: Friday 14 November (Cardiff Marriott Hotel)



## Meet the Team

A BIG HELLO to **Luke Hughes** joining the National Pathology Programme.

A few words from Luke:

*"I am currently the Pathology Head of Education and Development for Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and will be joining the National Pathology Programme on a secondment as Academy Development Manager in August.*

*I'm originally from Eryri in North Wales and studied Biomedical Science at Bangor University. Since 2013, I've worked within pathology at BCUHB, specialising in Haematology and Blood Transfusion. My main interests have always been blood morphology and pathology training and education, with workforce development becoming the focus of my work in the last couple of years.*

*Through my new role with the National Pathology Programme, I'm looking forward to supporting the development of a Pathology Academy for Wales to help showcase the education we are developing and delivering aimed at building a sustainable, skilled workforce across all areas of pathology. – Luke Hughes*



### The National Pathology Programme Team

Alan Deacon	Programme Lead
Adam Christian	Clinical Lead
Caity Thomas	Programme Manager
Luke Hughes	Pathology Subject Matter Expert Lead/Academy Development Manager
Kim Williams	Senior Project Manager
Jane Long	Senior Project Manager
Tahir Mohammed	Senior Project Manager
Leanne Barker	Programme Support Manager
Jack Buchanan	Senior Project Support Officer
Demi Ford	Senior Project Support Officer

## Contact us

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Please email [NHSWHC.National.Pathology.Programmes@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:NHSWHC.National.Pathology.Programmes@wales.nhs.uk) if you would like:

- to be added to the circulation list for our newsletter
- to provide feedback or contributions
- opportunities to engage with the work of the Programme

**Previous newsletters available via QR code:**



**Next Issue – October 2025**