 <p> GIG CYMRU NHS WALES </p>	Iechyd Cyhoeddus Cymru Public Health Wales	Name of Meeting Knowledge, Research and Information Committee Date of Meeting 5 March 2024 Agenda item: 6
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Update on the Implementation of the Research and Evaluation Strategy

Executive lead:	Iain Bell, Director of Public Health Data, Knowledge and Research, Knowledge Directorate
Author:	Elen de Lacy, R&E Strategic Partnership Lead Alisha Davies, Head of Research and Evaluation

Approval/Scrutiny route:	Iain Bell, Director of Public Health Data, Knowledge and Research, Knowledge Directorate
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Purpose

The purpose of the paper is to provide an update to the Knowledge, Research and Information Committee (KRIC) on the progress and implementation of the Public Health Wales Research and Evaluation Strategy.

Recommendation:

APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/>	CONSIDER <input type="checkbox"/>	RECOMMEND <input type="checkbox"/>	ADOPT <input type="checkbox"/>	ASSURANCE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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The Committee is asked to:

- Take **assurance** that Public Health Wales, and the Research and Evaluation team are delivering steadily on the core elements of the strategy.

Link to Public Health Wales [Strategic Plan](#)

Public Health Wales has an agreed strategic plan, which has identified six strategic priorities and well-being objectives.

This report contributes to the following:

Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	All Strategic Priorities/Well-being Objectives
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Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	All Strategic Priorities/Well-being Objectives
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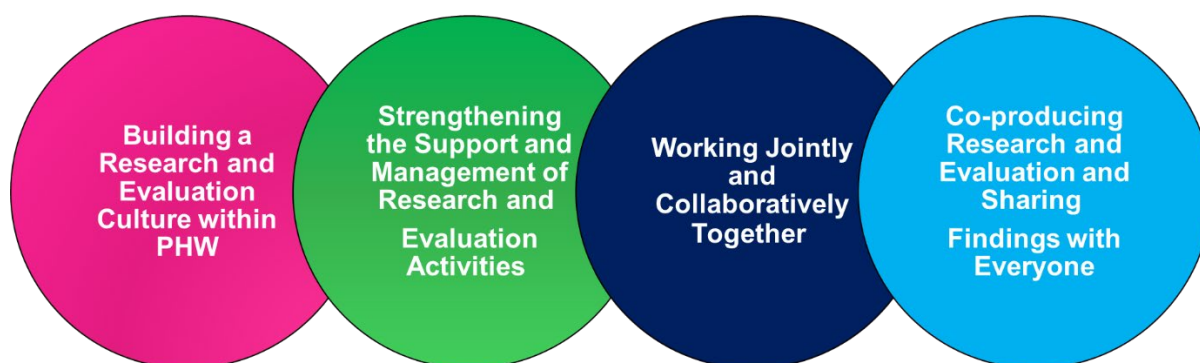
Summary impact analysis	
Equality and Health Impact Assessment	No Equality and Health Impact Assessment has been undertaken as a decision is not required by the Committee.
Risk and Assurance	Not identified as a risk on the Corporate Risk Register or Board Assurance Framework.
Health and Social Care Act Wales	This report supports and/or takes into account the s Quality Themes
Financial implications	None
People implications	The process applies to all staff undertaking research.

1. Purpose / situation

The Research and Evaluation (R&E) Strategy was published on the Public Health Wales website in October 2023, and was extensively shared internally and externally with researchers, Higher Education Institutes, Health Boards, funding organisations, Health and Care Research Wales and other stakeholders.

The R&E Strategy is an enabling strategy which will help Public Health Wales to deliver its [Long-Term Strategy](#) and is aligned to our [Integrated Medium-Term Plan](#) (IMTP) which references the strategy and cross-organisational priorities. The R&E Strategy will ensure that Public Health Wales is supporting and implementing research excellence across the organisation.

Within the strategy, there are four themes outlined for development:



The **R&E Oversight Group** which meets on a monthly basis, has senior cross-divisional membership and has been established to support the implementation and oversight of the strategy.

This paper outlines the implementation plan and progress of the strategy, with monitoring and assurance of delivery.

2. Description/Assessment

An implementation plan to take forward work outlined in the R&E Strategy over the next 3 years has been agreed by the R&E Oversight Group.

Key areas of focus include:

- a. **Developing and establishing effective strategic partnerships** for R&E with academics, health boards and local authorities to support the development and delivery of public health research;
- b. **Developing infrastructure and support** to increase R&E capacity and capability;



- c. **Developing effective communications and engagement** for R&E across the organisation and externally.

Further detail on the progress of each is provided below.

2.1 Developing and establishing effective strategic partnerships for R&E

A key tenet of the Strategy is to ensure that we **work jointly**, fostering collaborations and **strengthening links** with a wide range of partners and funders, both nationally and internationally.

The Research and Development (R&D) Office acts in a central co-ordinated role to support the development of new, and management of existing strategic R&E partnerships across Public Health Wales. There are currently three key areas which we are developing to strengthen our research collaborations:

1. **Developing a Vision for Academic Public Health Research in Wales (2023-24)**

As described in the '*Developing a Vision for Academic Public Health Research*' paper for KRIC (March 2024), Public Health Wales is developing a co-produced vision for academic public health research in Wales alongside partners in the research community. This piece of work identifies a key leadership role for Public Health Wales to make and build stronger links / networks systematically across the research community.

2. **Developing Academic Strategic Partnerships**

Public Health Wales are in the process of developing and formalising a number of academic and other strategic research partnerships. These are aligned to our priority areas to bring in the skills and data which we need. In addition, we are proactively identifying and facilitating opportunities for academic placements, postgraduate supervision (Master's and PhDs), staff secondments, honorary contracts and joint posts spanning organisational boundaries.

Strategic partnerships aligned to organisational need:

- An operating model/ **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the SAIL databank** (Swansea University) is being formalised to maximise population scale data sources for Public Health Wales, to build capacity in linked data application for public health, and develop collaborative research bids (Public Health Wales Linked Data Feasibility Hub (Public Health Wales-LDFH)). This MoU will have an initial term of 3 years.
- An **MoU between Public Health Wales-DECIPHer Centre** (Cardiff University) is under development to facilitate collaborative research with a focus on; evaluation of public health interventions, development of cross-organisational research skills transfer, and the development of collaborative research bids.



- A **strategic partnership with Cardiff University** is currently being explored. As well as the strategic partnership with DECIPHer, Public Health Wales Screening Services are working closely with the Population Health Division at Cardiff University to develop a collaborative screening unit.
- A strategic partnership with **Rhondda County Council** is under development as part of a successful NIHR Health Determinants Research Collaboration bid.

3. Collaborative research bids

The R&D Office offers cross-organisational support for these and is keeping a register of all the joint research bids which Public Health Wales undertakes.

2.2 Developing infrastructure and support to increase R&E capacity and capability

A key theme of the R&E Strategy is to build organisational culture which supports staff to develop and apply R&E skills to increase workforce capacity and capability, strengthen evidence-based practice and contribute towards creating a learning organisation.

Job families for Public Health Wales Evaluators

The R&E Division has worked with People and OD to develop a Job Family for Public Health Wales Evaluators. This has been developed through series of cross-organisational workshops. The aim of this job family is to develop a framework for roles with specialist evaluator skills responsible for supporting and leading the development and delivery of evaluation activities across Public Health Wales. This approach will support career development, training and consistency/standards of practices, innovation and develop a professional peer support network for career progression in these types of roles (supporting recruitment and retention).

Job families for Public Health Wales Researchers

We are liaising with the new Health and Care Research Wales Faculty to develop and formalise job families for Public Health researchers. The Faculty coordinates a range of personal research award schemes for health and social care researchers across professions and career stages.

2.3 Developing effective communications and engagement for R&E across the organisation and externally.

A core aim of the R&E Strategy is to develop and communicate research priorities which will lead to greater engagement across the organisation and wider research system.

Areas of R&E Interest for Public Health Wales, 2024

We are in the process of finalising the Areas of R&E Interest for Public Health Wales, and will shortly be in a position to share with our partners across the system. The development of Public Health Wales R&E priorities aligned to Public Health Wales' six strategic objectives, will effectively engage both funders and the wider academic community to target research to areas of need.



The Areas of R&E Interest will be hosted on the Public Health Wales website in HTML and will be updated on an annual basis to ensure emerging research gaps are identified.

3. Monitoring and Assurance

To ensure that research is undertaken and used by Public Health Wales and by the wider public health system to influence practice and service delivery, the R&E Oversight Group are in the process of developing indicators and mechanisms to measure the value associated with the research we produce and its impact.

The R&E Oversight Group monitor and contribute to all areas of the Strategy including collaborative bids, strategic partnerships, R&E priorities and communication and engagement of R&E across the organisation.

4. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

- Take **assurance** that Public Health Wales, and the Research and Evaluation team are delivering steadily on the core elements of the strategy.