

Celebrating Nursing and Midwifery in Wales

Nursing Now Cymru/Wales
Steering Group Report,
July 2021



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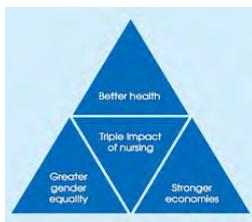
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High Level Themes

Better Health

Building resilience and promoting wellbeing in our students and registrants.

Nursing now
Cymru - Wales



Better Health

Increasing and Improving dissemination of effective and innovative practice in nursing to drive consistency in system wide adoption.



Better Health

Preparing students and supporting nurses and midwives to recognise their role responsibility in contributing to prevention, improving individual and population health outcomes.



Stronger economies and Greater Gender Equality

To actively encourage and increase diversity in nursing and midwifery to positively influence inclusion of underrepresented groups promoting social and economic developments.



Better Health, Stronger economies, Greater Gender Equality

Strengthening and building leadership and influencing capability at all levels.

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Foreword



Rhiannon Beaumont-Wood

On behalf of the Nursing Now Cymru/Wales steering group, I am pleased to introduce this report which summarises our contribution to the inspiring global movement intended to raise the profile and status of nursing worldwide. The movement has been underpinned by an All-Party Parliamentary Group on Global Health report known as the *Triple Impact* report, which identified that developing nursing would lead to improved health, greater gender equality and economic growth.

Following a request made by the Chief Nursing Officer for Wales to establish a Nursing Now group for Wales, led by Public Health Wales on behalf of Welsh Government, the steering group was brought together. It was made up of representation from the NHS Wales organisations, nurse leaders from Welsh Universities, Royal College of Nursing, Royal College of Midwives and third

sector representatives. The first task was to identify what aspects of nursing policy and practice to focus on, which led to five themes being identified, aligning to both the Welsh Government's *A Healthier Wales* and the *Triple Impact* report.

The Nursing Now Cymru/Wales group was formally launched in the Welsh Government building in Cardiff on the 29th of March 2019, supported by the Chief Nursing Officer for Wales, Professor Jean White, and Lisa Bayliss Pratt, representing the Nursing Now Global campaign.

Following the launch and through the focus of this group we harnessed and celebrated examples of nursing and midwifery practice. We recognised that they are at the heart of most health teams, playing a crucial role in improving and transforming health services, promoting health and preventing and reducing the impact of disease. Nurses and midwives ensure that the care being delivered is compassionate and of a high standard, which our patients and citizens should expect to receive.

Through supporting this campaign, we identified and shared best and innovative practice, which promotes the valuable role played by nurses and midwives in Wales. Through the publication of this report, we hope to further raise the profile and status of nursing and midwifery nationally and internationally.

In 2019, the 72nd WHO World Health Assembly endorsed 2020 as the 'Year of the Nurse'. Little did we know that COVID-19 was looming in the future. The global pandemic has inevitably had an impact on all of our plans, and health and social care professionals around the world have borne the burden of COVID-19 more than most. Never have the values of resilience, compassion and leadership promoted by the Nursing Now campaign been needed more.

Professor Jean White recently retired from her role as Chief Nursing Officer for Wales after a decade in post, but she was instrumental in setting up the work of Nursing Now Cymru/Wales. This quote from Jean sums up the importance of leadership both in Wales and around the world.

"You've got to have a seat at the table to influence how services are developed... how practices are working. And if there isn't a seat at the table, go get yourself a chair and bring your seat to the table, and make sure your voice is heard."



Through the focus of the Nursing Now Cymru/Wales campaign, we have demonstrated the benefits of getting round 'the virtual table'. We have been inspired at every meeting by the great things that nurses and midwives in Wales are doing. Having a safe space which encouraged nursing and midwifery voices to share best practice, to generate and share new knowledge, to focus on important issues, such as resilience, that impact on the nurses and midwives of the future, and to harness the full range of topics and opportunities in order to have greater impact, has been truly uplifting.

I am very proud to have had the opportunity to spend time with colleagues in Wales contributing to the themes of Nursing Now Cymru/Wales campaign and the vision of the global campaign for a healthier population worldwide. Nurses and midwives are the backbone of health and care systems around the world and they deserve to know they are highly appreciated and valued for all the work they do in a wide variety of contexts and settings.

In Wales, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires us to be 'A globally responsible Wales'. What better way to show our commitment to the nurses and midwives of the world than by sharing our report.

Rhiannon Beaumont-Wood

Chair of Nursing Now Cymru/Wales and Executive Director of Quality Nursing Allied Health Professionals (QNAHPs), Public Health Wales

Introduction

A global movement

The Nursing Now campaign aimed to improve health globally by raising the profile and status of nurses worldwide – influencing policymakers and supporting nurses themselves to lead, learn and build a global movement.

The global Nursing Now campaign focused on five core areas:

- Ensuring that nurses and midwives have a more prominent voice in health policy-making
- Encouraging greater investment in the nursing workforce
- Recruiting more nurses into leadership positions
- Conducting research that helps determine where nurses can have the greatest impact
- Sharing of best nursing practices.

The three-year campaign (2018-2020) was a programme of the Burdett Trust for Nursing. It was run in collaboration with the World Health Organization and the International Council of Nurses, and supported by a Campaign Board made up of nurses and non-nurses from around the world.

In the three years since its launch, Nursing Now grew to have a presence in 126 countries with over 700 active groups around the world. In 2019, Nursing Now also launched the Nightingale Challenge (now called the Nursing Now Challenge) and inspired over 700 health employers to develop the leadership skills of over 30,000 early career nurses and midwives.

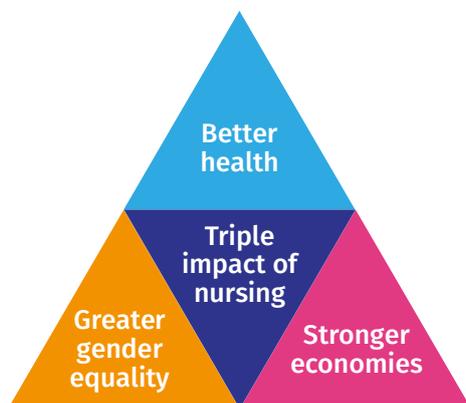
The campaign has forged alliances and connections with partners united with a shared message to invest in nursing to improve healthcare for all.

The campaign ended in May 2021 but Nursing Now's legacy will continue through the Nursing Now Challenge and through the ongoing work of its group network.

Why we needed a global campaign

The Nursing Now campaign was developed in response to the findings of the *Triple Impact* report¹, which concluded that as well as improving health globally, empowering nurses would contribute to improved gender equality and stronger economies.

Countries around the world are facing huge challenges in ensuring quality healthcare. Scarce resources, the rising burden of chronic diseases, and the impact of emerging factors, such as climate change, migration and ageing populations are putting health systems under strain. Furthermore, the global shortage of health workers means there simply are not enough professionals trained to help tackle these threats, and this includes nurses – 9 million more nurses and midwives are needed by 2030.



Not only do we need more nurses and midwives, we need to develop new and innovative types of services. The future of healthcare will be more community and home-based, more holistic and people-centred, with increased focus on prevention and making better use of technology. This means that nurses have an even greater role to play in the healthcare of tomorrow. However, maximising nurses' contributions will require that they are properly deployed, valued and included in policy and decision-making.

Investing to improve nurses' working conditions, training and leadership skills can deliver the triple impact of improving health, as well as gender equality and strengthening local economies. Maximising the potential of nurses and midwives is vital to achieving the goal of universal health coverage, making sure everyone, everywhere, has access to quality healthcare services.

Shaping a plan for Nursing Now Cymru/Wales

At the request of Professor Jean White, the then Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) for Wales, a Nursing Now Cymru/Wales 2020 Steering Group was established in November 2018 and formally launched on 29 March 2019. Its purpose was to highlight and showcase cross-sector collaboration and to share and promote nursing and midwifery best practice across Wales.

The Executive Director of Quality, Nursing and Allied Health Care Professionals from Public Health Wales was asked to lead, and identified additional support from colleagues. Together they provided oversight, leadership and direction for Nursing Now Cymru/Wales during the Nursing Now campaign.

Membership of the Nursing Now Cymru/Wales group included key stakeholders from across health and care sectors and settings in Wales, including those from health boards, trusts, professional bodies, educational establishments and third sector organisations.



Five high level themes for Nursing Now Cymru/Wales

Together the group developed and agreed five themes to guide the work of the Nursing Now campaign in Wales, informed by the themes of the global campaign and the Welsh policy context of *A Healthier Wales*.

1. Building resilience and promoting wellbeing in our students and registrants
2. Preparing students and supporting nurses and midwives to recognise their role and responsibility in contributing to prevention, improving individual and population health outcomes
3. To actively encourage and increase diversity in nursing and midwifery to positively influence inclusion of underrepresented groups promoting social and economic developments
4. Strengthening and building leadership and influencing capability at all levels
5. Increasing and improving dissemination of effective and innovative practice in nursing to drive consistency in system wide adoption

These themes fit with the aims of the global campaign, and align with the Triple Impact model in terms of demonstrating how developing nursing can improve health, promote gender equality and support economic growth.

The five themes, which also reflect the nursing and midwifery priorities for the CNO and Executive Director of Nursing Wales, provided a clear framework for planning future developments and aligning existing work within the Nursing Now campaign.²

Five high level themes for Nursing Now Cymru/Wales

On the following pages, we summarise what we achieved in each of the five themes.



Theme 1: Building resilience and promoting wellbeing in our students and registrants

Better health

Resilience is the ability to remain focused and positive when facing adverse situations – a characteristic vital for nurses working within our complex healthcare system, particularly since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020.

However, nursing is a demanding profession, both physically and emotionally, and nurses are often at risk of stress and burnout. Nursing staff need to be given the support and skills to be able to look after themselves, as well as others. It has been shown that improving staff resilience and wellbeing has a positive impact on patient care. It also helps staff to be healthy and happy in their roles, able to progress professionally despite the complex and fast-moving environment they work in.



Building a clear picture of current wellbeing

In 2020, Public Health Wales published a report³ into the current health and wellbeing of the nursing and midwifery workforce in Wales. This was based on a detailed survey of staff in Wales, conducted before the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

Public Health Wales worked closely with the Royal College of Nursing and the Royal College of Midwives to run the online survey, which captured the views of 1,642 nurses, midwives and healthcare support workers across Wales.

Three quarters of Welsh nurses and midwives surveyed feel they have a rewarding career, and over two thirds were enthusiastic about their job – but many shared the workplace and financial pressures they face.

Headline findings

- 75% felt their occupation was rewarding and 69% were enthusiastic about their job. 55% would recommend a nursing, midwifery or healthcare support worker career to others.
- 80% felt valued by patients and 70% felt valued by the families of patients – but only 42% felt valued by senior staff.
- 62% reported suffering from work-related stress. Work-related stress was highest amongst female and younger staff members, and those in NHS Pay Bands 5 and 6.
- 14% reported low mental wellbeing and 37% indicated that they had trouble feeling relaxed. Mental wellbeing was poorer in younger members of the nursing and midwifery workforce.
- 61% had attended work when feeling unwell twice or more in the last 12 months.

Recommendations

The report suggested four key areas for future action:

1. Developing and maintaining supportive work environments to improve staff and patient outcomes, with a focus on supporting the mental wellbeing of the workforce and strengthening the prevention of ill health.
2. Recognising and valuing the nursing and midwifery workforce.
3. Understanding the root cause of financial pressures.
4. Focusing support on the younger members of the nursing and midwifery workforce, and those employed on NHS Pay Bands 5 and 6.

“We know that the workplace plays a pivotal role in our health and wellbeing. If efforts are made to meet some of the challenges highlighted in our report, there is an opportunity to create a working environment that is more conducive to health and happiness.”

Benjamin Gray, Senior Researcher at Public Health Wales, who led the study.

The report and its recommendations have been welcomed by both the Royal College of Nursing and the Royal College of Midwives.

“When staff are overworked, under intense pressure, their physical and mental health suffers, and this undoubtedly impacts on their ability to work to their highest level. We also know that when staff wellbeing is supported, employee involvement increases, motivation and performance levels also increase. The RCM welcomes this report and hope it becomes the catalyst for change.”

Helen Rogers, Director for Wales, Royal College of Midwives

Exploring resilience in contemporary nursing

The findings of the survey by Public Health Wales are also linked to a current PhD study funded by RCN Wales: *Exploring Resilience in Contemporary Nursing Roles in Wales*.

Led by Senior Lecturer Judith Benbow, from Cardiff University’s School of Healthcare Sciences, this large-scale collaborative project will report in 2021.

The mixed methods study describes the perspectives of 1,459 registered nurses across the nation (covering all fields, pay bands, roles and settings), and is exploring the concept of resilience in nursing, particularly from an organisational level.

The work is already providing novel insights into the personal and workplace influences that shape the resilience of nurses in Wales. Findings show that resilience is an individual capacity that can protect nurses from occupational stressors, and that understanding the role of positive workplace factors is key to its enablement. The central argument in the conclusions to this research is that nurses’ experiences of resilience and the nature of their workplaces are inseparable. It is about more than just individual nurses as it includes a consideration of the environment where nurses work and where they will experience changes to their resilience. Therefore, consideration of both is required.

Once published, it is hoped that this work will provide an understanding of how resilience can help moderate stress from adversities experienced by nurses, while also providing a deeper understanding of the factors needed to cultivate appropriate levels of resilience in healthcare settings.

An ongoing approach to promoting wellbeing

Recognising the emotional impact of delivering high quality, safe, person-centred, effective nursing and midwifery care across Wales has been a key component of the work of the Nursing Now Cymru/Wales team. Through the workstreams brought together via the programme, the Nursing Now Cymru/Wales team looked at providing strategies for building resilience and promoting the wellbeing of all practitioners and students.

The Nursing Now Cymru/Wales team met every 8-12 weeks and regularly discussed ‘building resilience and promoting wellbeing’ as part of the programme’s work plan. This ensured the important issues regarding resilience, emotional health and wellbeing that had been identified in consultation with nurses and midwives across Wales, were kept in sharp focus during team discussions.

The findings and recommendations from both the above pieces of research, have been informing pan-Wales work to increase wellbeing and resilience over the last year and will continue to guide our planning going forward. It is recognised that response is needed on many different levels to address the challenges and opportunities identified. Some may require system investment, however there are also steps which nursing and midwifery leaders at all levels can promote.

“I’m interested in how nurses develop strategies to help them cope positively with the demands of their work, and how this can be applied more widely to help alleviate stress and enable nurses to provide excellent patient care. This project has allowed the voices of nurses working in Wales to reveal the subtle organisational factors that shape their everyday resilience”.

Judith Benbow, Senior Lecturer,
School of Healthcare Sciences,
Cardiff University

Many issues also require both short and long-term solutions. For example, the Public Health Wales report showed that men, younger nurses and midwives, and those in poorer health were found to be particularly impacted by financial pressures. Ensuring early access to financial advice and support for those currently struggling may alleviate some pressure in the short-term. Longer-term there is a need to understand the root causes and co-produce supportive solutions with nurses and midwives and their professional bodies.

A follow-up health and wellbeing study is planned during 2021 to examine the impact COVID-19 has had on the nursing and midwifery workforce in Wales.

“The wellbeing of health and social care staff is at the heart of Welsh Government’s flagship ‘A Healthier Wales’ strategy, and with 2020 being the Year of the Nurse and Midwife, now is an opportune time to help improve the health and wellbeing of the nursing and midwifery workforce in Wales.”

Rhiannon Beaumont-Wood,
Executive Director of Quality,
Nursing and Allied Health
Professionals, Public Health
Wales



Theme 2: Preparing students and supporting nurses and midwives to recognise their role and responsibility in contributing to prevention, improving individual and population health outcomes



Better health

Nursing staff work in almost every stage and setting of health and care, and as such, they have an important role across a wide range of public health interventions. They work with patients and the public to prevent illness, protect health and promote healthy lives on a daily basis.

Developing the curriculum for nursing

In *Future nurse: Standards of proficiency for registered nurses*,⁴ the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) recognises that the nurse's role in prevention is paramount. 'Promoting health and preventing ill health' makes up one of the seven platforms that group the proficiencies expected from nursing staff.

"Registered nurses play a key role in improving and maintaining the mental, physical and behavioural health and well-being of people, families, communities and populations. They support and enable people at all stages of life and in all care settings to make informed choices about how to manage health challenges in order to maximise their quality of life and improve health outcomes. They are actively involved in the prevention of and protection against disease and ill health and engage in public health, community development and global health agendas, and in the reduction of health inequalities." (Nursing Midwifery Council 2018:p10)

The Nursing Now Cymru/Wales campaign has seen Public Health Wales engaging with higher education institutions (HEIs) across Wales, to ensure that the curriculum for nursing education in Wales meets the NMC proficiencies in relation to promoting health and preventing ill health.

Making Every Contact Count

Nursing Now Cymru/Wales has also focused on embedding the Making Every Contact Count (MECC)⁵ approach into education. MECC supports better public health by encouraging health professionals to use behaviour change techniques during the many day-to-day interactions they have with the public, supporting people to make positive changes to their lifestyle.

The Nursing Now team has successfully campaigned to ensure that Making Every Contact Count is included in every pre-registration nursing and midwifery programme offered by educational providers throughout the country. Academic partners, including the Universities of Swansea, Cardiff, South Wales, and Bangor, supported the development of a level 2 Making Every Contact Count standardised generic skills-based module. Additional topic-based modules have also been developed, in collaboration with the National MECC Collaboration Group.

Public Health Wales has provided training in MECC to university academics to ensure consistency and quality in the delivery of MECC training in pre-registration and post-registration/postgraduate programmes across HEIs in Wales.

An e-learning package has also been produced and is actively promoted by HEIs. Health Education and Improvement Wales who are the commissioners of health education for the country have supported the MECC initiatives.

"This approach has encouraged consistency in health promotion messaging and ensured that all programmes to prepare nurses and midwives for registration contain important elements linked with the current evidence base to underpin practice."

Professor Dianne Watkins,
Cardiff University

The Royal College of Nursing Wales has disseminated MECC information to all its members and has included it on its website. This allows access to MECC education for all student nurses and qualified nurses who are members of the Royal College of Nursing.

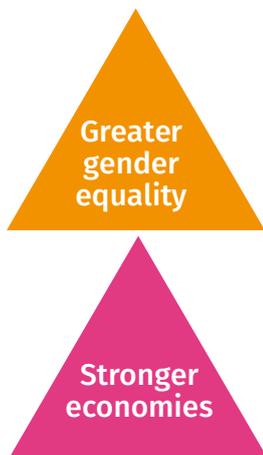
Nightingale Scholarship Fellowships in North Wales

There were three successful Nightingale Scholarship Fellowships awarded to staff at Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. The fellows are working on a range of projects, to address the following questions:

- How possible and valuable would it be to set up a pop-up social prescribing service across rural North Wales?
- How confident are nurses about providing care for LGBTQ communities, and in particular people who identify as transgender? What training is available and what is required?
- Is current leadership training for newly qualified nurses sufficient to prepare them for practice?



Theme 3: To actively encourage and increase diversity in nursing and midwifery to positively influence inclusion of underrepresented groups promoting social and economic developments



Stronger economies Greater gender equality

Developing a diverse workforce across care sectors and settings in Wales is hugely important. We want our nursing and midwifery workforce to reflect the communities that we serve across Wales, because we know that diversity and inclusion leads to improved health for all and greater staff and patient experiences.

It is also important that underrepresented groups (such as women, people with disabilities, people from minority ethnic communities and LGBT people) are able to realise their potential in leadership and management roles. However, senior teams in NHS organisations are currently under representative of the communities they serve and staff they lead.

Over the Nursing Now campaign, we have supported and encouraged a range of work to promote inclusion and diversity in nursing. The way that the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted existing inequalities in our society has made this particularly important, as has the development of the Black Lives Matter movement and the introduction of Black History Cymru 365⁶:

Supporting and developing nurses from minority ethnic communities

Directors of Nursing were asked to consider diversity within their nursing and midwifery workforce. The Chief Nursing Officer issued a letter in October 2020 to the Nurse Directors of all health boards and trusts, encouraging action in this area and asking them to lay out how they are supporting the development of nursing and midwifery staff from minority ethnic groups.

This showed the breadth of work already happening across Wales, and enabled the sharing of good practice and innovation in this area. It is clear that all organisations recognise that workforce diversity is everyone's responsibility and that diversity in leadership brings an opportunity for richness and depth in understanding and associated action.

Examples of work underway across Wales:

- Three health boards are participating in reverse mentoring schemes, with the Welsh Ambulance Service Trust due to launch a scheme imminently.
- Ethnic minority support group forums exist or are being established across all the health boards and trusts.
- NHS organisations are being encouraged to actively engage with the aims, objectives and actions outlined in the Welsh Government's Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024⁷.
- Public Health Wales has submitted evidence to Diverse Cymru who undertake an assessment using a Race Inclusion Tool.
- Nurse Directors were given information about a leadership development opportunity with The King's Fund, and asked to nominate staff from minority ethnic groups to take part.

Feeding into government work on equality action

The Nursing Now team, working closely with the Chief Nursing Officer, has also led on a range of other activities in this area. This includes contributing to the First Minister's Black, Asian and minority ethnic COVID-19 steering group, and supporting the development and implementation of the Welsh Workforce Risk Assessment Tool, which was rolled out initially to health and social care settings. The team are also now represented in the Race Equality Action Plan working group.

"We strive to increase diversity in the nursing and midwifery workforce in Wales whilst also supporting nurses and midwives currently in our workforce who identify as Black, Asian or minority ethnic to develop in their roles and experience positive careers within our health and care sectors in Wales."

Richard Desir, Director of Nursing Primary Community and Intermediate Care Clinical Board

Podcast episode on diversity in nursing

In an episode of *Nurses & Midwives Talk*, Dr Ruth Oshikanlu MBE interviewed Richard Desir, Director of Nursing for the Primary, Community and Intermediate Care Clinical Board with Cardiff and Vale University Health Board⁸. They talk about the impact of COVID-19 on nursing, and how it has exposed existing inequalities within the workforce, the need to widen gender and ethnic diversity in nursing, and the Nursing Now Cymru/Wales workstreams in this area. Richard also talks about his involvement in developing the Wales Race Equality Action Plan.

Promoting Black History Month

Nursing Now Cymru/Wales supported a range of activity around Black History Month in October 2020, including involvement in webinars, interviews, podcasts and presentations. This included supporting a webinar session hosted by the RCN titled *Nursing care is colour blind? Welsh lessons from 2020: RCN Wales Black History Month* event. The first of a series, this webinar gave an overview of the work of Nursing Now Cymru/Wales and the First Minister's Black, Asian and minority ethnic advisory group.

Beyond the bump conference

Following the global development of the #BlackLivesMatter campaign during 2020, a dynamic group of midwifery students from Cardiff University got together to request more education on matters relating to equity, human rights and racism, specifically noting the relevance to maternity care. This also followed on from the MBRRACE-UK Confidential Enquiry into Maternal Deaths⁹ published in 2020, which highlighted that black women in the UK are five times more likely to die in childbirth.

Supported by the university and the Royal College of Midwives, this group of students went on to organise a conference to highlight racism, inequity and unconscious bias in maternity services. Titled *Beyond the bump: how ethnic minority families are failed by maternity services*, the virtual conference took place in November 2020 with 450 delegates from across the UK and other countries.

“All the speakers were from ethnic minority backgrounds and their insight and honesty was uncomfortable to hear but so necessary. They challenged the audience to listen, and to do something about the racism, inequity and unconscious bias that exist both in healthcare and society as a whole.”

Grace Thomas, Lead Midwife for Education, Cardiff University

Auditing access to training and development for minority ethnic staff

A Nursing Now Cymru/Wales working group has been set up to conduct an audit of minority ethnic nurses working at each level across NHS Wales. This will include all registered nurses and midwives, bands 5-9, working across NHS Wales, broken down by care sectors: primary care, secondary care, and the Ambulance Service.

The audit will assess how these nurses are accessing training and career development, by looking at individual performance review and development plan information recorded on their NHS Electronic Staff Record. The initial audit will cover 2019 (with 2020 excluded from this snapshot due to the exceptional impact of COVID-19). Published in spring 2021, this will provide baseline data to inform further audits, analysis and action planning.

Recruiting nursing students from underrepresented groups

All higher education institutions in Wales focus on the Athena Swan Charter, a framework used across the globe to support and transform gender equality within higher education and research. Swansea University hold an institutional Athena Swan Silver award and the University of South Wales and Bangor University both hold Bronze awards.

Swansea University have been actively trying to broaden the diversity of people training to be a nurse or midwife at the university. They share promotional videos on their websites showing nursing students from a range of genders and backgrounds, and promote careers in nursing to local schools, with talks provided by staff and male student nurses. They ensure all marketing materials reflect diversity and inclusivity and use positive action statements to recruit from underrepresented groups as an employer. The university's most recent Athena Swan initiative involves supporting students who are carers, providing them with access to a range of digital resources through membership of both Carers UK and Employers for Carers Wales.

RCN Prince of Wales Nursing Cadet Scheme

In 2017, the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) collaborated with HRH the Prince of Wales to develop an exciting programme that would offer young people aged 16-25 exposure to nursing as a potential career. The Nursing Cadet Scheme introduces cadets to potential careers in nursing, running alongside their usual uniformed organisation activities. Once they have completed their certificate, cadets are supported to consider next steps, which can include a related diploma, a foundation degree or an undergraduate nursing degree.

RCN Wales led on the original pilot of the scheme, bringing together the Welsh Government, NHS Wales, and other health and social care providers and education institutions. The scheme was successfully launched in 2019¹⁰ and has continued to grow from strength to strength as it is rolled out across the UK.

“Athena Swan activities are seeking to ensure that the nursing profession reflects the diversity of the population that nurses serve, supporting the development of an inclusive learning and working environment where all are able to fulfil their full potential.”

Professor Joy Merrell,
Swansea University

“It's been great to see results from the scheme starting to promote better gender equality in nursing. A male cadet from the first cohort of cadets has just gained a place to study mental health nursing at Cardiff University. We really believe this model could be adopted by other countries across the globe to assist in meeting the shortage of nurses.”

Diane Powles, Associate
Director Nursing Policy and
Professional Practice, RCN
Wales

Theme 4: Strengthening and building leadership and influencing capability at all levels

Better health Stronger economies Greater gender equality

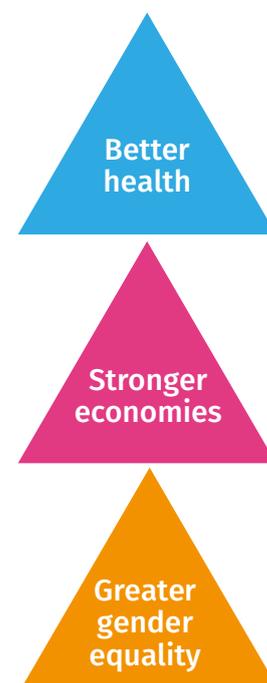
Good leadership in healthcare settings is linked to high quality care, patient satisfaction, and better staff wellbeing and morale. The promotion of leadership in nursing at all levels has been an instrumental part of the work of the Nursing Now Campaign in Wales, aligned with the Welsh Government's vision: *A Healthier Wales*, published in 2018, and subsequent workforce strategy. We also work closely with partners in other countries to spread good practice and promote the development of nursing leadership in health systems less developed than our own.

Creating a healthier Wales

*A Healthier Wales: Our Plan for Health and Social Care*¹¹ was published in 2018, setting out a long-term vision for a 'whole system approach to health and social care' in Wales, which is focused on health and wellbeing, and on preventing illness. This included a strong commitment to strengthen national leadership and direction in Wales.

Building on this commitment, a 10-year workforce strategy was launched in October 2020 by Health Education and Improvement Wales and Social Care Wales. *A Healthier Wales: Our Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care*¹² shows how the health and care workforce are the key to bringing the vision outlined in *A Healthier Wales* into reality. It provides a high-level strategic framework, which signals our ambition to value and support our workforce, engaging and motivating them through compassionate leadership embedded throughout our system, and empowering them to develop their skills and agility to respond quickly to future challenge and opportunities.

The plan in Wales is "to build a culture of compassionate and inclusive leadership, which will attract, continuously support and develop a flexible and agile workforce who feel valued, and are valued, by an inclusive and modern health and social care system." (p.3)



National support to develop nurse leadership talent in Wales

The Chief Nursing Officer, and Nurse Directors across Wales, recognise the need for strong clinical leadership and have been working to develop a more consistent pipeline of nurse leadership talent in Wales. This has involved exploring the many leadership and development opportunities that currently exist across health boards and trusts in Wales.

This work culminated in the Chief Nursing Officer supporting a number of bespoke nursing and midwifery leadership development opportunities throughout the Nursing Now campaign.

Examples include support for:

- The 'Understanding and Influencing Health Policy' course in collaboration with the RCN to expand knowledge of how health policy is shaped politically in Wales and encourage participants to engage with the policy development process.
- The Swansea Leadership Academy programme.
- Florence Nightingale Foundation leadership scholarships: both digital and senior leadership opportunities were supported over the last two years with Health Education Improvement Wales (HEIW) committing to sponsor a further four places each year over the next three years.
- Midwifery leadership development programmes, in collaboration with the RCN.

- Senior Leadership Experience programme in collaboration with Academi Wales. This programme included time in Welsh Government meeting policy leads and shadowing senior leaders, to support senior nursing and midwifery leaders in Wales towards deputy and director level posts.
- The development of a ‘Leading Policy to Shape Care’ leadership programme for nurses and midwives who identify as being from an ethnic minority, due to launch in 2021.

HEIW has a leading role in the delivery of these projects, as part of developing the national workforce leadership agenda. It is also creating several other new programmes, including a multidisciplinary clinical leadership programme (launching in autumn 2021) and an aspiring executive leadership programme (launching in summer 2021).

A range of new leadership networks, webinars and masterclasses have also been developed, alongside Gwella, a new leadership portal for NHS Wales staff:

<https://nhs.wales/leadershipportal.heiw.wales/>

For further information on leadership opportunities, access Gwella, contact workforce leads within organisations, or visit the HEIW website: <https://heiw.nhs.wales/programmes/leadership/>

Swansea University Student Leadership Academy

The Swansea University Student Leadership Academy was established in 2019, building on the success of #150 leaders, the UK student leadership programme developed by the Council of Deans of Health and Burdett Trust for Nursing.

Swansea’s inter-professional leadership programme supports students to develop and apply leadership qualities to their own personal, professional and organisational context, with direct relevance to future employers.

The programme has made a positive impact on many levels, with 95% of students in the first cohort saying that their overall experience at Swansea University was enhanced by engaging in the programme. Just some of the benefits mentioned by students include: networking and building relationships across disciplines, peer support, meeting and learning from inspirational employers and leadership experts, improved self-confidence, and enhanced employability.

On a wider scale, details of the content and delivery of the programme have been shared with several universities in the process of developing their own academies based on Swansea University’s model. The Student Leadership Academy was also a finalist in the best student experience category at the Student Nursing Times Awards 2020.

Nightingale Challenge

The Nightingale Challenge was developed by the global Nursing Now campaign and launched in 2019. It asked every health employer around the world to provide leadership and development training for a group of young nurses and midwives during 2020 the Year of the Nurse and the Midwife.

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board was one of the first organisations globally and the first in Wales to initiate the Nightingale Challenge. They delivered a leadership programme designed specifically for future leaders and delivered to a cohort of newly registered nurses from across a wide variety of disciplines.

The programme provided taught sessions, opportunities for shadowing existing leaders, and a number of presentations from senior nurses, including consultant nurses and nurse directors, to understand their leadership journey. The programme concluded in November 2020 with a presentation from the participants who reflected on what they had gained

“We hear, time and again, that nurses are being held back as leaders. We need to seize the opportunity that 2020 gives us to shape a different future for our profession by investing in the next generation. By accepting the Nightingale Challenge, we give them new skills, experiences and confidence – together we will take down the barriers that hold nurses back and see our profession soar to greater heights.”

Annette Kennedy, President of the International Council of Nurses

from taking part. Many had already moved into more senior positions, and some had faced challenges that they were able to manage due to the learning from the course and support from peers and tutors. All reported a positive experience.

A commitment to the importance of nursing in global rural areas

WONCA is the World Organization of National Colleges, Academies and Academic Associations of General Practitioners/Family Physicians. Rural WONCA is an active and dynamic network of rural family doctors and healthcare professionals from around the world, including members from Wales.

Wanting to contribute to the global Nursing Now campaign to empower nurses to tackle health challenges and help achieve universal healthcare coverage, two thought leadership workshops were held at the 16th WONCA World Rural Health Conference in Albuquerque in October 2019. The workshops were a chance to explore what actions could help to develop and strengthen the role and voice of nursing and midwifery leaders in the rural sector across the globe. At the end of the conference, delegates and council members unanimously agreed a statement and a commitment to the importance of nursing in rural healthcare and to 'Nursing Now 2020'.

They pledged to:

- support the rural and remote nurse and midwife voice by inviting nurses and midwives to participate in decision making and leadership
- promote partnerships by advocating the need for equity in participation
- promote the importance of generalism in nurse training and practice
- promote collaboration in reviewing Rural WONCA's mandate, to further promote nursing and midwifery inclusiveness
- actively embed research and data collection to demonstrate a better understanding of the value of rural and remote nursing and midwifery and of nursing and midwifery led care
- actively promote full scope of practice in rural generalist nursing
- support an integrated patient and family centred, team-based care that addresses community needs.

The statement puts nursing at the forefront of rural healthcare and this is demonstrated through a special edition on Rural Health in the Journal of Research in Nursing, co-edited by University of South Wales (USW) Professor Joyce Kenkre who is also a Council member of Rural WONCA.

There has been a delay in taking this initiative forward due to the pandemic. However, a global meeting will be held soon to plan how to turn the pledges within the Albuquerque Statement into practical actions to take the initiative forward.

Promoting nurse leadership in Africa

For more than a decade, the Wales and Africa programme has supported people to be more actively involved in international development by working and collaborating with individuals, communities, the third sector and the public sector – including NHS Wales.

Aimed at tackling global poverty and helping to achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, the programme has meant that Wales has led on several projects to promote nursing leadership in sub-Saharan Africa. This has been delivered through a mix of international learning opportunities, where participants learn new skills while working on the ground with African organisations, and a grant scheme to fund small-scale Wales-Africa projects.

“I have gained more experience about leadership in general, characteristics of a good leader and leadership skills. I have also learned about people's culture. The amazing part was learning about nursing in the UK. Who knows maybe one day I will be a nurse in the UK.”

Namibian nursing student

“Interacting with other nursing students in the UK was one of the best moments of my life.”

Namibian nursing student

Buddying with nurses in Namibia

Cardiff University worked in collaboration with the University of Namibia to establish a buddying system between nursing students in each country. This facilitated an understanding of nursing in Namibia and Wales and allowed the opportunity to discuss and debate what leadership is and how this can be developed while studying nursing. Feedback from students involved in the programme show a strong positive impact.

Buddying was also established between qualified nurses in Namibia and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) to allow for a similar exchange of experience and culture between those already working in nursing.

Films that portrayed ‘a day in the life of a nurse in various specialties of ABUHB’ were produced to provide Namibian nurses with an understanding of nursing in Wales. Workshops were also held for nurse leaders in Namibia by staff from Cardiff University, covering topics such as quality improvement methodology and compassionate leadership.

Developing a Practice Development Unit in Malawi

Cardiff University also have a project with the University of Malawi, where they established a ‘Practice Development Unit’ on a medical ward in a hospital.

The unit aims to develop practitioners and improve practice through active engagement in evidence-based education and research, using a quality improvement approach. The values underpinning the work relate to promoting person-centred care, multi-professional working, transforming the workplace culture and active learning and development.

A leadership development programme in Ghana

In 2020, the Chief Nursing Officer and Welsh Government began working with the Office of the Director General in the Ghana Health Service to plan a tailored leadership development programme for a cohort of 20 experienced Ghanaian nurses.

The aim was to facilitate the development of future nursing leaders in Ghana, helping participants to:

- understand the characteristics of effective leadership and how this underpins their role
- develop skills to positively influence those around them including colleagues, managers and the wider health and social care teams
- learn to identify and challenge barriers which have an impact on the safe delivery of care
- develop strategies for developing resilience and maintaining momentum during times of change.

This programme was to be commissioned by Welsh Government, and delivered in Ghana by the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) Wales in March 2020. Unfortunately, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, plans for delivery had to be put on hold.

“The unit is focusing on improving ward cleanliness, evidence-based admission and discharge of patients with diabetes, and improving multidisciplinary working through effective and efficient ward rounds. We've now also secured a Global Challenge Research Grant to enable us to thoroughly evaluate the impact of the project.”

Professor Dianne Watkins
OBE, Deputy Head, School of
Healthcare, Cardiff University

Welsh colleagues have continued to engage with the Ghanaian team. While in-country training is still not yet possible, virtual learning opportunities are now being explored.

Exploring leadership development needs in Uganda

This one-year project was funded through a small grant from the Wales and Africa Grant Scheme and Heb Ffin (a Welsh non-governmental organisation). It explored the leadership development needs of nurses and midwives in Uganda and made recommendations for further actions to develop nursing and midwifery leadership in the country.

Following a detailed review of literature and published documents (relating to nursing and midwifery in Uganda and the availability of leadership training and development), the views of nurses and midwives practising in Uganda were sought using nine focus group discussions. Held across the country, these involved nurses and midwives at all levels of career, from a range of settings and organisations. In total 117 nurses and midwives (93 women, 24 men) took part.

Based on the findings, a competency level framework was drafted and key recommendations were made for development. The original project plan had included face-to-face feedback and discussion of the results of the project with stakeholders in Uganda, and it was anticipated that the framework would be developed at the stakeholders' meeting, thus ensuring ownership, suitability and practicality of the framework. However, this has not yet been possible due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Email feedback has been sought from key Ugandan stakeholders, and plans are in place to continue the discussion virtually and meet when possible.

Funding is now being sought to support Uganda to take the recommendations from this project forward.

Mentoring support in Lesotho

Bangor University has links with the National Health Training College (NHTC) in Lesotho, where they are providing mentoring support and helping to implement a Mentorship Framework. This focuses on a partnership between academic staff at NHTC and at the School of Health Sciences in Bangor University, who provide peer support to one another.



L-R: Catherine Odeke (Chair, Nursing Now Uganda), Dr Ruth Davis (Visiting Fellow, University of South Wales), Professor Julia Downing (Visiting Chair, University of South Wales and Makerere University) and Sister Petua (Acting Commissioner of Nursing).

Theme 5: Increasing and improving dissemination of effective and innovative practice in nursing to drive consistency in system wide adoption



Better health

“The knowledge transfer and development of midwifery education that is enabled through the WHOCC is unique, involving all members of the midwifery education team as well as student midwives and qualified midwives.”

Professor Grace Thomas,
Deputy Director of the Centre for Midwifery Development,
Cardiff University

“MATE is designed to enable countries to evaluate their current position in relation to midwifery education, consider what future development is required, and resources are provided to support this.”

Professor Billie Hunter,
Director of the Centre for Midwifery Development,
Cardiff University

Better health

“Improving quality is about making health care safe, effective, patient-centred, timely, efficient and equitable. In the history of the NHS, there has never been a greater focus on improving the quality of health services.” The Health Foundation¹³ (2013:p3).

There is currently a strong drive in Wales to ensure nurses are trained in quality improvement (QI) methodology, giving them the skills and confidence to be able to innovate and improve services and care, and implement best practice. Health boards in Wales currently offer training to qualified nurses in QI and, as the commissioning body in Wales, Health Education Improvement Wales (HEIW) works with education providers to ensure that all student nurses and midwives undertake QI training as part of their educational programmes.

WHO Collaborating Centre for Midwifery Development

The World Health Organization (WHO) allocates Collaborating Centre (CC) status to institutions with exceptional academic standing. Cardiff University was designated by the European Office as a WHOCC for midwifery development in 2016, one of only two midwifery-specific centres in the world.

In August 2020, WHO Europe acknowledged Cardiff University’s excellent contribution to global midwifery by redesignating them as a Collaborating Centre for the next four years.

The WHOCC provides advice and support to both WHO Europe in Copenhagen and WHO headquarters in Geneva. This included contributing to an important WHO publication *Strengthening quality midwifery education for Universal Health Coverage 2030: Framework for action*¹⁴, launched at the 72nd World Health Assembly in 2019. This significant WHO publication draws on the Lancet Series evidence, demonstrating that high quality, sustainable midwifery education saves lives of mothers and babies globally.

Midwifery Assessment Tool for Education

Midwifery education that is person-centred, evidence-based, and able to meet the needs of women and families is a priority for health systems that want to advance universal health coverage and progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

2020 saw our WHOCC publish the Midwifery Assessment Tool for Education (MATE), an important new resource for policymakers around the world. The tool is designed to be used at the early stages of planning to identify the status, needs and future direction of a country’s midwifery education.

MATE was piloted and field-tested in the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Bulgaria, with extremely positive evaluations from both midwifery educators and clinical midwives.

The tool was published on the WHO Europe website¹⁵, following rigorous review, on International Day of the Midwife in May 2020.



“Improvement is learning about the system in which you work, testing ways to make it work better for you, your team and the people you care for – to give it the best chance of succeeding.”

Improvement Cymru

“If the role of the only professional group specifically trained to work with people with learning disabilities is not well understood, what might that mean for the experience of those with learning disabilities?”

Paula Hopes, Learning Disability Nurse Consultant, Swansea Bay University Health Board

“Through the Learning disability: improving lives programme Wales will continue to invest in the workforce to enable ongoing sustainable improvements in the health and wellbeing of people with a learning disability.”

Gillian Knight, Nursing Officer, Office of Chief Nursing Officer, Welsh Government

Recruiting a future generation of learning disability nurses

People with learning disabilities continue to face health inequalities, dying younger than the rest of the population and facing barriers and discrimination when accessing healthcare. This has further been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic, when people with learning disabilities and their families have reported feeling afraid, disregarded and disadvantaged. The use of tools such as the frailty score or the inappropriate application of ‘do not resuscitate’ decisions has impacted on this.

Learning disability nurses provide specialist healthcare and support to people with a learning disability, supporting their health, wellbeing and social inclusion. It can be a challenging, varied and rewarding career. However, there are still misconceptions about learning disability nursing, which create problems for recruiting a future generation of nurses in this area.

A collaborative project between Bangor University and the University of South Wales set out to address this with an awareness campaign, recognising the need to highlight career opportunities, job satisfaction, and the variety of roles and routes into nursing.

They co-produced an advert highlighting the role of the learning disability nurse and the views of those who use learning disability services. This was produced in partnership with people with learning disabilities, meaning the very people who experience support from learning disability nurses were in control of the messaging.

The partnership has continued to promote awareness of learning disability nursing through blogs and social media, capturing stories for the Learning Disability Nursing Future project, and by contributing to the development of a learning disability nursing forum that highlights the value of the role and access to nursing programmes.

The University of South Wales also targeted alumni with relevant degrees as a route into a PG Dip, accepting direct applications onto the programme and reducing barriers to access. The university is also looking at how to support healthcare support workers via a flexible route, taking into account prior learning and experience.

Bangor University and University of South Wales have increased opportunities by providing two intakes onto the programme, widening access, opening up opportunities, and relieving pressure on placements. This has led to an improvement in uptake to learning disability nursing courses of 25% and 17% respectively.

Professional judgement initiative

A nurse’s professional judgement and the clinical decisions they make on a daily basis are invaluable when allocating resources effectively and efficiently, reducing risk and promoting positive outcomes for patients.

The Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 requires Health Board/NHS Trusts to use a triangulated approach, which utilises information from three sources; patient acuity, quality indicators and professional judgement, to calculate the number of nurses required to provide individualised person-centred care.

The paediatric workstream have explored how to evidence professional judgement as part of the triangulated approach and reviewed a range of existing tools. As part of this work the project lead, Dawn Parry, has developed a professional judgement board game. The game provides nurses with a platform to explore, learn and develop their experiences and build on their practical wisdom to enhance their professional judgement in the clinical setting.

The game provides a unique opportunity for nurses and other health professionals to explore the use of professional judgement in a safe environment to aid learning, promote reflective practice and enable participants to share their experiences and explore a variety of factors that influence decision-making.



The game has been tested and refined following feedback from student nurses at Cardiff University and from frontline nursing staff. It received positive feedback from stakeholders and was highlighted as an exemplar at the National Nurse Staffing Conference. The opportunities for developing the game are endless; it could be modified for use within a wide range of nursing specialties and has the potential to be used by other healthcare professionals.

The paediatric workstream are working collaboratively with Accelerate, which is a group that supports new and innovative ideas that can be adapted into healthcare, to create the game and explore a digital application. HEIW are also exploring the development of an app to take forward this work.



Nurses delivering advances in genomics

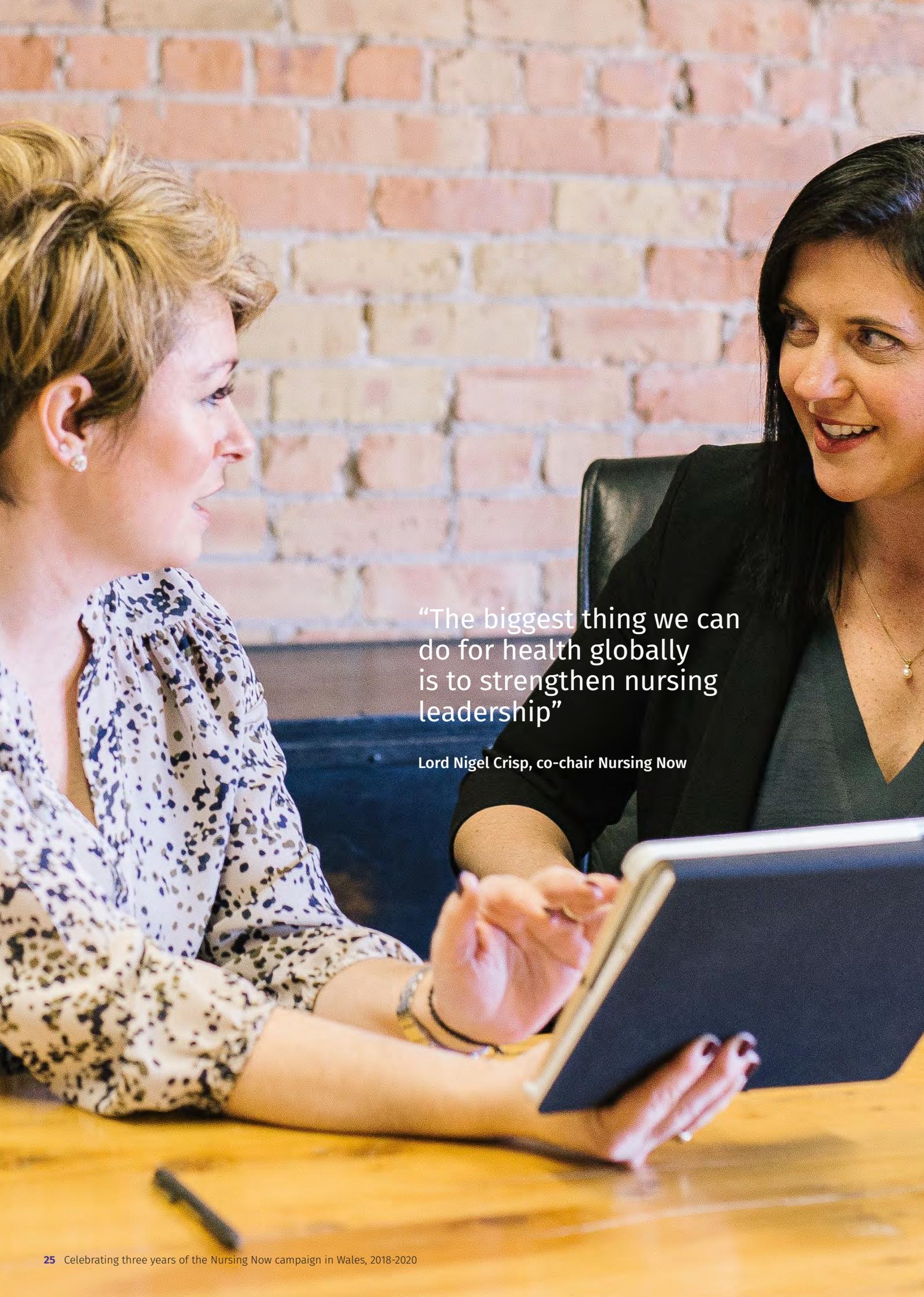
Advances in genomics are enabling earlier detection of disease with improved disease classification, better-targeted and more effective treatments, and greater opportunities for disease prevention.

Nurses have a central role in delivering these advances, improving health outcomes for individuals, families, communities and populations. They are already providing care for patients with genetic conditions and some are involved in offering screening and diagnostic tests. These roles will increase, as genomics becomes more mainstream and a key component of precision health.

Recognising that until recently nursing education contained minimal information about genomics, an all-Wales nursing and midwifery survey has been undertaken to assess the current capacity of the workforce to work in this area. The findings will be used by Genomics Partnership Wales to develop clinically relevant training for staff as new ways of using genomics become the norm in healthcare.

With genomics now included within NMC standards, genomics should be incorporated meaningfully in all pre-registration education. Wales is supporting this through the Telling Stories, Understanding Real-Life Genetics website (tellingstories.nhs.uk).

Through co-leadership of the Global Genomics Nursing Alliance (g2na.org) Wales is also helping to lead the way in supporting nursing colleagues internationally to integrate genomics across practice, education, policy and research.



“The biggest thing we can do for health globally is to strengthen nursing leadership”

Lord Nigel Crisp, co-chair Nursing Now

Conclusion

Reflecting on our achievements

In conclusion, this report represents examples of the excellence happening in nursing and midwifery practice in Wales. It is clear we have a lot to be very proud of.

The Nursing Now Cymru/Wales Steering Group has embraced the opportunity to bring together cross-sector representation from the NHS, academia, social care, professional bodies and third sector organisations. This has enabled everyone to benefit from the rich contributions resulting from this cross-sector collaboration, to harness and promote best practice across Wales.

This work will ultimately lead to improved experience and outcomes for people in our communities when they need to use health and care services. Through our collaboration with partners across the world, we are also improving health outcomes for people beyond Wales.

In addition, we have placed significant emphasis on how we can better invest in the health, wellbeing and equity of our future and current nursing, midwifery and support worker workforce. We have focused on building resilience, supporting better health, and on the important matter of ensuring a more equitable and diverse workforce.

By focusing on our five high level themes, we have been able to galvanise commitment across the sectors represented in the steering group. All of our focus can be directly linked back to the important strategic issues identified in the *Triple Impact* report produced by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Global Health.

What's next?

The Nursing Now Cymru/Wales Steering group has gathered momentum and shared experiences with a genuine desire to continuously promote and demonstrate the contribution which nurses and midwives make each and every day to improving health and care. Health is our most important asset and we need to take care of it with and through our communities.

The group has unanimously expressed a desire to continue working collaboratively through this steering group, which demonstrates that this cross collaboration is highly valued.

It is now time to celebrate our achievements and to reflect on how we want to go forward and achieve greater impact and influence through what we have learnt to date.

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