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# BOARD INSIGHTS



**GIG  
CYMRU  
NHS  
WALES**

Iechyd a Gofal  
Digidol Cymru  
Digital Health  
and Care Wales

**Welcome to Board Insights**, as members of the SHA Board, we all feel it's important to keep you updated with some of the work we are undertaking across the organisation and NHS Wales. This edition comes from our **Director of Primary, Community Care and Mental Health Digital Services**,

**Sam Hall**

## Dear colleagues,

I have been lucky enough to be asked to share the latest edition of Board Insights with you all. I think this is a great way for colleagues to get a feel for what it's like being at the SHA Board.

If you've read previous Board Insights you'll know how much our Independent Members contribute to the leadership of our organisation. They share their experience with us, their knowledge and expertise, and for me personally, I value the 1:2:1 conversations I have with them and the feedback they give. It probably won't surprise you to know that this is something we work at – just like any relationship! Since before I joined there has been a Programme of Board Development led by specialists from Deloitte, who have challenged the Board to reflect, grow, learn about each other and how, as individuals, we all have a different way of benefitting DHCW. That probably all sounds a bit woolly, but it was far from it. We went through evaluations, business chemistry sessions and a whole range of exercises designed to strengthen us as a leadership team. I learnt a lot from the experience and have confidence that we've got people on the Board who champion us, understand us and want us to be the best that we can be.

Now back to the actual Board meeting at the end of November. It was a very full agenda, but as always, one of the highlights was the 'Shared Listening and Learning Presentation'. This is where we ask people to come and present to the Board on something that they are passionate about, and that delivers real benefit. This time we had a presentation on the 'Urgent and Emergency Care Operational Dashboard; and it was delivered by Paul Mason, Information Management Standards Lead – DHCW and Dr Jo Mower, Consultant in Emergency Medicine from Cardiff & Vale UHB. We were taken through the background to the project, including how previous dashboards were developed using old technology and how key stakeholders couldn't access them. The new version gives us a better understanding of patient flow and the demand on our system. The platform is flexible, sustainable and the team have a roadmap of further developments to work through. It really is hard to write about just how impressive this work is, so please do have a look at the public board video which brings the topic to life.

I am going to totally hog this next paragraph, because I presented the Primary Care Strategy for approval at the Board. This is something myself and my team have spent the last few months developing, researching, socialising and refining to ensure that we have a strategy that ensures we can deliver with and for our Primary Care colleagues throughout Wales. I have spoken about it at events and I talk about it at pretty much any opportunity I can. Why? Because I think it is a seismic step forward for DHCW in an incredibly important area of healthcare. There were plenty of questions about the Strategy, especially as it's the first from our Directorate, but I was so pleased to be able to talk more about the things that drive us in PCMH, and as such it was great to get the approval. Once the strategy is translated we will be publishing it and developing our delivery plan to make sure we turn the words into actions.

The strategy has been developed around four principles which will be embedded into how we work:

- Delivery quality
- Inform policy
- Build value
- Guide and standardise

Eight priorities have been identified within the strategy:

- Creation of a Product, Project and Programme Transition (PPPT) team
- Development of Health Informatics research and reporting capability
- Development of a Digital Futures team
- Focus more development activity on building connectivity in-house
- Attendance at clinical and managerial expert user groups focused on problem solving
- An agreed and mandated process for transition into BAU
- Addressing system development challenges in Wales
- Development of standards and capability

I must admit it was a real Strategy-fest at the Board, as our Executive Medical Director, Rhidian presented not one but three strategies from his area -

- Information & Analytics
- Clinical Informatics and Business Change
- Information Governance

Each strategy clearly lays out 4 main aims that are focused on maximizing the value, quality, engagement with and use of data to support positive outcomes for the people across Wales. The vision to drive 'Value from Data' is baked into each one to create a cohesive set of strategies that not only articulate the aims of the Clinical Directorate, but also show how they enable and underpin much of the work done across all directorates in DHCW and wider. And again, the Board approved these strategies too, so expect to see more about them in the near future.

We also had presentations on where we are with IMTP delivery for this year which indicates that we've still got a lot to do in the final quarter of the year. And our Executive Director of Finance, Claire, walked us through some slides that illustrated the size of the financial challenge facing NHS Wales. To say it was sobering would be an understatement, but she was able to show where we had been making savings this year in support of easing the deficit. Some of these have been big decisions, but all of us have contributed, be it through not attending events and not catering for workshops with guests, to travelling less and finding more cost-effective ways to achieve the same outcomes. These might seem like small things, but in some way, you have all contributed, so thank you for that.

Sadly, Marian, the Chair of the Audit and Assurance Committee had lost her voice so another Independent Member, Alistair stepped in to give an update on the work of the committee. This covered topics from deep dives into how we are delivering on Strategic Mission 5 and the Financial Response to the challenges mentioned above, to sessions on Welsh Language and the progress being made in DHCW in this space.

There is probably heaps more I could write about, but hey, it's nearly Christmas and you will all be taking at least a few days off for a well earned break. As I marked my first anniversary in DHCW at the beginning of November, this is really the end of my first proper year as a member of DHCW and NHS Wales. To say it's been plain sailing would be a huge fib, but however choppy it has been there's always fantastic people in the boat with me - so thank you.

And finally, I just want to say 'Merry Christmas' and here is to a peaceful and happy 2024 with calmer seas.

## BOARD INSIGHTS

 @DHCWales

**Sam Hall**

Director of Primary, Community Care  
and Mental Health Digital Services

