

All Wales Nurse Staffing Programme

Health Visiting Workstream Update
September 2022



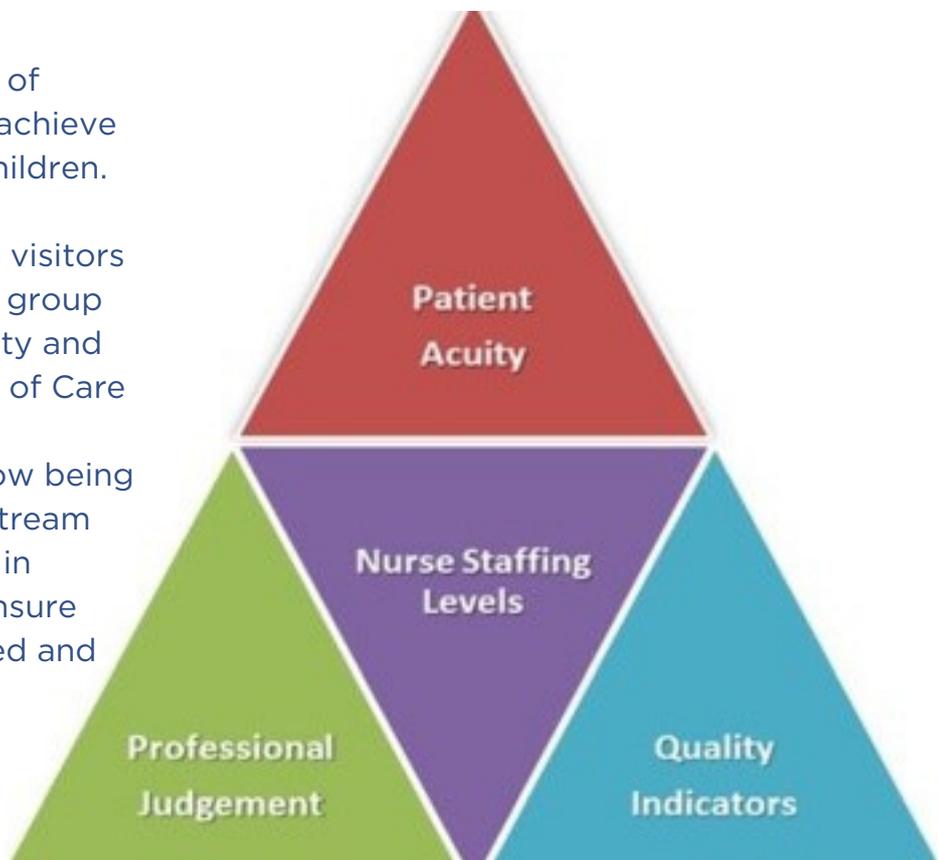
Introduction

The health visiting workstream group consists of senior representatives from each health board across Wales. The workstream lead and chair of the group is Chris Overs (Divisional Nurse at Aneurin Bevan University Health Board), Rhiannon Beaumont Wood is the Executive Sponsor (Executive Director of Nursing and Quality at Public Health Wales), and Rebecca Boore (Health Education and Improvement Wales) is the workstream project lead. The workstream meets at regular intervals to review, develop and strengthen quality and workforce related approaches, methods, and tools, informed by the principles of Prudent Healthcare focused on quality, equity of access and reducing variation across Wales.

The aim of the health visiting workstream is to follow an evidence-based approach to creating robust methods, tools, and techniques to determine appropriate staffing levels within health visiting services across Wales, using the model of triangulation as set out in the 2016 Act. The triangulation method incorporates professional judgement, quality indicators and child and family acuity and dependency. The tools devised by the workstream will enable health visiting teams to calculate the right number of health visitors and skill mix required to deliver the Healthy Child Wales Programme and provide effective care to meet the needs of children, families, and communities. Health visitors work according to the principle of proportionate universalism, providing universal services at a scale and

intensity proportionate to the level of individual and community need to achieve greater equity of outcome for all children.

Through co-production with health visitors from across Wales the workstream group has developed a draft national acuity and dependency tool, the Welsh Levels of Care for Health Visiting. Following two successful pilots the draft tool is now being rolled out across Wales. The workstream group are working with colleagues in Digital Health and Care Wales to ensure that live acuity data can be captured and reported.



The workstream group have identified quality indicators for health visiting and devised a plan for testing. The indicators are:

- Delivery of the Healthy Child Wales programme
- Childhood immunisations
- Breast feeding uptake and duration
- Age at which solid foods are introduced
- Client satisfaction

The workstream group work in a holistic way, ensuring alignment with Welsh Government policy and legislation, Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care, whilst also being cognisant of regulatory factors such as the new Standards for Specialist Community Public Health Nurses (Health Visitors) published by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) 2022.

The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 sets out the seven well-being goals, including a prosperous, resilient, more equal and healthier Wales. The Welsh Government (2019) has set out its long-term future vision in 'A Healthier Wales' and identifies the changes needed in our health and social care system, so that it is able to meet the needs of current and future generations in Wales. It is widely acknowledged that the early years are the most crucial time in shaping life chances. Welsh Government has also set out public sector socio-economic duties in 'A More Equal Wales' (2021), to consider how decisions might help to reduce the inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage. Health visiting teams form part of the wider integrated early years system, providing services to children and families through delivery of the Healthy Child Wales Programme and provision of a range of services to meet child and family needs and tackle health inequalities.

Earlier this year the deputy minister for Social Services announced the expansion of early

years provision via Flying Start. This supports the wider ambition for Wales to be a wonderful place to grow up, live and work, now and in the future as set out in the **Children and Young People's Plan**, included in the vision is the provision of a universal Flying Start service. There are three phases to the planned expansion, with phase one planned for later this year. Enhanced health visiting is one of the four elements of Flying Start alongside parenting support, childcare for two- to three-year-olds and support for speech, language and communication. This expansion has implications for the health visiting workforce in Wales, therefore the workstream will continue to work with colleagues in Welsh Government to collaborate and share our work.

The future health visiting workforce needs to align to the principles and measures of success outlined in 'A Healthier Wales: Our Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care' (HEIW 2020). This includes having a workforce that is inclusive, engaged, sustainable and flexible with better recruitment and retention of staff through attractive and flexible working arrangements, education, and career opportunities. HEIW are currently in the process of reviewing post-graduate education, for health visiting this is in the context of the publication of the new Standards of Proficiency for Specialist Community Public Health Nurses (SCPHNs) (Nursing and Midwifery Council 2022). The Standards have been updated to take into account the changes taking place in society and health care, and the implications these changes have for SCPHNS.

Progress to date

Highlights of progress to date by the workstream:

- The interim nurse staffing principles for health visiting have been developed and agreed by the Chief Nursing Officer and Executive Directors of Nursing. Impact assessments based on the principles have been completed by each health board. Currently there are no plans to publish the principles, however they can be utilised by health boards locally to inform workforce planning.
- The Welsh Levels of Care tool has been developed in collaboration with health visitors from across Wales, it is in draft format and is in the process of being tested. The tool will enable health visitors to measure and record acuity, considering and evidencing the needs of the children and families on their caseload.
- Quality indicators for health visiting have been identified, infant feeding, delivery of the Healthy Child Wales Programme, childhood immunisation uptake and client satisfaction. The precise metrics and methods of data capture and reporting have been identified and a plan for testing agreed.
- Completion of a pilot test of the professional judgement workbook for health visiting. The workbook has now been refined and updated and a minimum data set identified.
- Providing regular reports and position papers on the progress of the workstream against the workstream plan to the All-Wales Nurse Staffing Group and the Executive Directors of Nursing/Chief Nursing Officer.

Next steps

Over the next six months work will continue as set out in the health visiting workstream plan and includes:

- To support health boards in rolling out training on the use of the draft Welsh Levels of Care tool. Obtain feedback from frontline health visitors on the use of the tool in practice. Capture the Welsh Levels of Care data within the Children and Young Persons Information System (CYPrIS) and work with colleagues in DHCW to extrapolate and present the data back to health boards.
- To test the identified quality indicators, reporting the indicator data to health boards and exploring the correlation between the quality indicators and staffing levels.
- To develop the professional judgement workbook into a different format, making it easier.
- To complete and pilot testing it across Wales.
- To complete the annual workforce mapping exercise and compare it with last year's data.

Chris Overs Workstream Lead would like to thank all members of the group for their ongoing support and commitment to progressing this important work. Chris would also like to thank health visitors across Wales for their excellent professional engagement and involvement in the work.

To access previous newsletters and find out more about the All Wales Nurse Staffing Programme and work undertaken by the workstream [please access the website](#).

If you would like any more information about the health visiting workstream please e-mail Rebecca.boore2@wales.nhs.uk.

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