

# Clinical Systems Implementation - Benefits Realisation

## Final Internal Audit Report

June 2023

Swansea Bay University Health Board



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Review reference:	SBUHB-2223-24
Report status:	Final
Fieldwork commencement:	16 <sup>th</sup> February 2023
Fieldwork completion:	12 <sup>th</sup> May 2023
Debrief meeting:	12 <sup>th</sup> May 2023
Draft report issued:	23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2023
Management response received:	9 <sup>th</sup> June 2023
Final report issued:	9 <sup>th</sup> June 2023
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### Acknowledgement

NHS Wales Audit and Assurance Services would like to acknowledge the time and co-operation given by management and staff during the course of this review.

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## Executive Summary

### Purpose

The objective of the audit is to ensure that the organisation has an appropriate framework and process to ensure that benefits are gained from investment in digital solutions.

### Overview


We have issued substantial assurance on this area.

The health board has improved its benefits approach following the recent definition of a revised benefits realisation framework. This ensures that benefits are accurately and realistically defined within business cases and enables realisation of benefits to be tracked throughout the project and reported accordingly.

The key management actions are:

- Ensuring the benefits realisation process continues in the post-implementation stage; and
- Developing a process for monitoring and reporting on the uptake of digital systems.

### Report Opinion

		Trend
 <p><b>Substantial</b></p>	<p>Few matters require attention and are compliance or advisory in nature.</p> <p><b>Low impact</b> on residual risk exposure</p>	<p>None</p>

### Assurance summary<sup>1</sup>

Objectives	Assurance
Benefits Realisation Framework	Substantial
Benefits Focused Business Case	Substantial
Benefits Realisation Management	Substantial
Benefits Achievement	Reasonable

### Key Matters Arising

	Objective	Control Design or Operation	Recommendation Priority
1 Post Implementation Benefits	3	Design	Low
2 Use of Digital Systems	4	Operational	Medium

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Benefits realisation is the definition, planning, structuring and actual realisation of the benefits of a business change or digital implementation project.
- 1.2 Projects are often considered finished when their deliverables are complete. However, the benefits of a project are typically realised over time. For benefits realisation to work it is crucial to identify clear benefits early in the change life cycle and to assign ownership to those responsible for planning and managing their achievement.
- 1.3 The key risk considered during the review was investment in digital solutions does not produce the anticipated benefits to the health board.

## 2. Detailed Audit Findings

- 2.1 The table below summarises the recommendations raised by priority rating:

	Recommendation Priority			Total
	High	Medium	Low	
Control Design	0	0	1	1
Operating Effectiveness	0	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	0	1	1	2

### **Objective 1: Benefits Realisation Framework – a framework for benefits realisation is in place which defines how benefits should be owned identified, structured, planned, and realised.**

- 2.2 Although the health board has always had a process for including benefits within digital projects, it acknowledged that this could be strengthened. Consequently, a Benefits Realisation Team has been created, with a remit to improve the benefits realisation structure.
- 2.3 The health board Benefits Realisation Team has recently produced a comprehensive Benefits Management Framework for use within the organisation. This sets out a framework with documentation to manage projects and programmes in terms of benefit delivery. The framework identifies the timeline for benefits and the tools to be used to ensure the benefits are fully realised. The framework also provides guidance on the management of potential dis-benefits associated with a project. This enables them to be kept under review and actively mitigated.
- 2.4 The Benefits Management Framework sets out the processes by which benefits will be managed throughout the business change lifecycle. The framework clearly

defines the benefits management lifecycle and ensures benefits are identified within business cases, with a baseline established to enable measurement. The framework includes a Fact-Finding Guide and Benefits Profile Guidance in order to ensure a consistent approach is used within the organisation.

2.5 The key points covered within the framework are:

- the reason for the development of benefits;
- the purpose of benefits management;
- the identification of the potential development benefits, source and stakeholders requesting the enhancements;
- the approach being taken to benefits planning, which includes how benefits will be identified, defined, and prioritised;
- the roles and responsibilities of those involved in benefits planning and benefit realisation; and
- the processes for monitoring and assessing the realisation of benefits.

#### Conclusion:

2.6 The health board has developed a comprehensive benefits management framework which allows the organisation to fully track benefits from inception to realisation. Accordingly, we have provided **substantial** assurance for this objective.

#### **Objective 2: Benefits Focused Business Case – business cases show the value that project or programme will achieve by the proposition in the business case, by identifying specific benefits that will be achieved, with the current position being baselined.**

2.7 There is guidance for developing benefits as part of the business case development process. This guidance sets out how to create a benefits register, with benefits being identified via workshops with the service and fed into the business case.

2.8 From our review of a sample of business cases (Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS), Hospital Electronic Prescribing and Medicines Administration (HEPMA), Theatre Operational Management System (TOMS) and the Cancer Informatics System) it was evident that the Benefits Team followed the appropriate process. Benefits are clearly defined within business cases and our testing confirmed that benefits are supported by backing information that shows how the value of the benefit is calculated.

2.9 We also noted that benefits were identified through the use of workshops with service users to ensure that the benefits were realistic and achievable. This process also included taking a baseline position in order to demonstrate future benefits.

2.10 In general, there are two sources for business cases development. These are locally defined programmes which directly fall out of health board strategic plans, and national programmes.

- 2.11 For national programmes, there is no direct funding provided to the health board and so local business cases are developed which include a translation of the benefits defined within the national business case. We note that benefits within national business cases are sometimes at an elevated level, and as such the Informatics Team filters out what is beneficial to the health board. National business cases make assumptions that all Health Boards work in the same way and therefore a level of scrutiny is applied to national projects.
- 2.12 We note that there are occasions where business cases were developed by project managers or the service before engaging the Benefits Team. These projects may follow a different set of procedures developed by the service project manager and do not fully comply with the procedures used by the Benefits Team.
- 2.13 We note that in some instances the business case development process may have started before the Benefits Team was established. Where this is the case there is a degree of retrofitting required to ensure that the benefits that feed into the register are accurate and realistic.

#### Conclusion:

- 2.14 Business cases contain statements of benefits, the identification of benefits is done in conjunction with the service area to ensure that they are realistic, and as part of this process the current position is baselined. Accordingly, we have provided **substantial** assurance for this objective.

### **Objective 3: Benefits Realisation Management – benefits are tracked, and the structure ensures that these are achieved, with actions taken if they do not accrue.**

- 2.15 Our testing noted that although there was some discussion of benefits within project groups, there was not a focus on the benefits realisation aspect. We note that the Benefits Team and framework is new and still bedding in, and anticipate greater visibility within project groups going forward.
- 2.16 As noted previously, there are some projects where business cases have been developed outside of digital, or prior to the benefits framework being established. In some cases, the benefits within the business case have not been fully defined or baselined, and in these cases the Benefits Team has worked to ensure that the project benefits are accurate, realistic and measurable.
- 2.17 The Benefits Team oversee the realisation of the benefits, with the baseline identified within the business case used to measure the progress from inception to realisation.
- 2.18 The Benefits Team maintains a benefits register for each project, which forms the basis for monitoring the realisation of benefits. Our testing confirmed that benefits for projects are appropriately included on the register, with responsible owners identified from the relevant service.

- 2.19 The Benefits Team and change managers work alongside the service as part of the project implementation culminating in the handover of the project to the department. This ensures that benefits are measured and tracked throughout the project.
- 2.20 Project groups are formed which include benefit owners and operational leads. The benefit team collates the benefit information and feed into the project group reporting framework.
- 2.21 Further reporting on the achievement of benefits is provided by regular updates on the overall status of digital transformation projects. There is quarterly reporting to the Digital Transformation Leadership Group and these reports include discussion on benefits and provide links to the benefits register for each item.
- 2.22 We note that whilst the health board has always included benefits within projects, there has been a historical lack of clarity and evidence for the delivery of the benefits to the end of the project lifecycle. In particular, the structures for identifying where benefits have not been fully delivered and ensuring an appropriate action plan is produced have not been fully defined. The Benefits Team was established to enable this, supported by the framework that the Team has developed.
- 2.23 We further note that a dashboard is currently being developed for the Benefit team to better display the measurable benefits of projects and demonstrate the benefits realisation process.
- 2.24 Upon completion of a project, control is passed to the service department. We note that some benefits may take several months post implementation to be realised. The framework is unclear over how the Benefits Team will engage with the department to monitor the on-going realisation of benefits of the project post implementation. There is an expectation the receiving department will self-monitor the realisation. **Matter Arising 1**

#### Conclusion:

- 2.25 The new Benefits Framework provides a comprehensive realisation framework in place for digital projects. Each will have a benefits plan that's sets out the expected benefits with a monitoring process in place, although the ongoing monitoring post implementation is not fully defined. Accordingly, we have provided **Substantial** assurance for this objective.

#### **Objective 4: Benefits Achievement – there is appropriate uptake and integration of national digital solutions within the health board.**

- 2.26 The health board implements a variety of information systems, both national systems and locally procured systems. The use of these systems within the clinical service areas varies and there is reliance on staff within the service making use of them, with the uptake of some systems being low.

- 2.27 A low uptake of an implemented information system will impact on the realisation of the benefits defined within the business case and can lead to inefficiencies within the health board, with enhanced working practices not being achieved. It may also reduce the quality of service delivery, and prevent the health board from delivering its digital transformation aims.
- 2.28 There is some monitoring of the use of information systems, although we note this is not a formal structured process with associated reporting. **Matter Arising 2**
- 2.29 Where it is identified that uptake of an information system is low, or that use is dropping, then there is work undertaken to identify the reasons why, and to overcome the barriers to use.
- 2.30 The use of Attend Anywhere has declined post covid, with the use at the end of 2022 being 42%. The Benefits Team are engaging with the service in order to understand why this is the case.
- 2.31 The Admission Discharge and Transfer (ADT) system provided through Welsh Clinical Portal (WCP) is not currently utilised within Mental Health. The reason for this has been established and is due to the fact that Mental Health currently use an in-house ADT application which is linked to the Mental Health Act, and this functionality is not developed in WCP at present.
- 2.32 The improved benefits realisation process which is being implemented should improve the use of implemented digital systems and so improve the extent to which benefits are realised.

**Conclusion:**

- 2.33 The uptake of digital systems can vary within the health board, which impacts on the extent to which benefits are realised. Whilst there is some monitoring of use, this is not a structured process. Where it is identified that use is low, we note that work is undertaken to establish the reasons and resolve. Accordingly, we have provided **reasonable** assurance for this objective.



## Appendix A: Management Action Plan






Matter Arising 1: Post Implementation Benefits (Design)		Impact	
<p>Upon completion of a project, control is passed to the service department. We note that some benefits may take several months post implementation to be realised. The framework is unclear over how the Benefits Team will engage with the department to monitor the on-going realisation of benefits of the project post implementation. There is an expectation the receiving department will self-monitor the realisation.</p>		<p>Potential risk of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benefits not being achieved</li> </ul>	
Recommendations		Priority	
1.1	The benefits framework should ensure that tracking of benefits is maintained post implementation, with regular engagement and reporting of benefits.	Low	
Agreed Management Action		Target Date	Responsible Officer
1.1	Digital services believe that the tracking of benefits post implementation/ transition to service are predominately the responsibility of the service/system owner. However, Digital Services will add the process for the ongoing tracking of benefits from digital solutions to the agenda for the Digital SDG meetings to agree how this process can be enhanced/supported. This could include the introduction of Digital Services Business Partners to work with SDGs on ongoing benefits realisation (subject to availability of funding/resources).	30 September 2023	Head of Digital Change and Benefits

<b>Matter Arising 2: Use of digital systems (Operational)</b>		<b>Impact</b>
There is some monitoring of the use of information systems, although we note this is not a formal structured process with associated reporting.		Potential risk of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits not being achieved</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendations</b>		<b>Priority</b>
2	A formal process for monitoring the uptake and use of implemented digital systems should be established, with reporting that demonstrates that uptake is improved where appropriate.	Medium
<b>Agreed Management Action</b>		<b>Target Date</b>
2	Digital services believe that the tracking of user adoption post implementation/ transition to service are predominately the responsibility of the service/system owner. This process is currently supported through user groups etc. However, Digital Services will add the process for the ongoing tracking of user adoption from of solutions to the agenda for the Digital SDG meetings to agree how this process can be enhanced/supported. This could include the introduction of Digital Services Business Partners to work with SDGs on ongoing user adoption of digital solutions (subject to availability of funding/resources).	30 September 2023
		<b>Responsible Officer</b>
		Head of Digital Change and Benefits

## Appendix B: Assurance opinion and action plan risk rating

### Audit Assurance Ratings

We define the following levels of assurance that governance, risk management and internal control within the area under review are suitable designed and applied effectively:

	<b>Substantial assurance</b>	Few matters require attention and are compliance or advisory in nature. <b>Low impact</b> on residual risk exposure.
	<b>Reasonable assurance</b>	Some matters require management attention in control design or compliance. <b>Low to moderate impact</b> on residual risk exposure until resolved.
	<b>Limited assurance</b>	More significant matters require management attention. <b>Moderate impact</b> on residual risk exposure until resolved.
	<b>No assurance</b>	Action is required to address the whole control framework in this area. <b>High impact</b> on residual risk exposure until resolved.
	<b>Assurance not applicable</b>	Given to reviews and support provided to management which form part of the internal audit plan, to which the assurance definitions are not appropriate. These reviews are still relevant to the evidence base upon which the overall opinion is formed.

### Prioritisation of Recommendations

We categorise our recommendations according to their level of priority as follows:

Priority level	Explanation	Management action
High	Poor system design OR widespread non-compliance. Significant risk to achievement of a system objective OR evidence present of material loss, error, or misstatement.	Immediate*
Medium	Minor weakness in system design OR limited non-compliance. Some risk to achievement of a system objective.	Within one month*
Low	Potential to enhance system design to improve efficiency or effectiveness of controls. Generally issues of good practice for management consideration.	Within three months*

\* Unless a more appropriate timescale is identified/agreed at the assignment.



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