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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Bae Abertawe  
Swansea Bay University  
Health Board



<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>11 April 2023</b>		<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>7.3</b>
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Therapies &amp; Health Sciences Workforce &amp; OD Key Issues Report</b>			
<b>Report Author</b>	Alison Clarke – Deputy Director of Therapies & Health Science			
<b>Report Sponsor</b>	Christine Morrell – Director of Therapies & Health Science			
<b>Presented by</b>	Alison Clarke – Deputy Director of Therapies & Health Science			
<b>Freedom of Information</b>	Open			
<b>Purpose of the Report</b>	The report informs the W&OD Committee on current, relevant key workforce issues relating to the Therapy and Health Science professions.			
<b>Key Issues</b>	<p><b>Education and Workforce Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education commissioning completed</li> <li>• NHS bursary monitoring 2023 support for Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW)</li> <li>• Support for existing staff to access the new part-time Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy pre-registration programmes</li> <li>• Level 4 Therapy Assistant Practitioner qualification</li> </ul> <p><b>Cross Cutting Service and Legislative Developments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and Care Practitioners Council (HCPC) standards and processes for fitness to practice and standards of proficiency</li> <li>• Engagement in digital transformation on the primary care workforce</li> </ul> <p><b>Profession Specific</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audiology assistant practitioners 2023/24</li> <li>• Psychology education</li> </ul> <p><b>Celebratory Events</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Therapies &amp; Health Sciences learning events engaging the workforce</li> </ul>			
<b>Specific Action Required (please choose one only)</b>	<b>Information</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Assurance</b>	<b>Approval</b>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Receive</b> the information in the report.</li> </ul>			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Note</b> the work on education commissioning and continued engagement with HEIW on programme development to deliver a sustainable workforce.</li> <li>• <b>Assurance</b> Staff regulated by HCPC are informed of changes to the HCPC Standards of Proficiency. The Executive Director of Therapies and Health Science is seeking assurance from the HCPC in relation to concerns raised.</li> <li>• <b>Note</b> the series of Therapies &amp; Health Sciences learning events.</li> </ul>
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# **Therapies and Health Sciences Workforce & OD Key Issues Report**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this report is to draw to the attention of the committee, key workforce issues and risks relating to the Therapies and Health Science professions and any mitigation undertaken.

## **2. KEY ISSUES**

### **2.1 Education and Workforce Development**

#### **2.1.1 Education Commissioning**

SBU HB submitted its annual education-commissioning plan to HEIW in February 2023. This comprises a broad range of undergraduate, postgraduate, professional and occupational learning education courses commissioned by HEIW on behalf of NHS Wales. The current submission is for the academic year 2024, with the out-turn for a 2 year course being 2026, and the out-turn for a 3 year course being 2027. Therapies and Health Science professional leads have determined the figures for submission taking into account intelligence relating to the existing workforce, retirements, turnover and anticipated service changes within the health board and on a regional basis, which may influence the composition of the workforce, competency requirements for new service delivery models and any impending changes to regulations. In areas where the health board struggles to recruit, there is a focus on advanced practice to support the development opportunities for the existing workforce. Succession planning is a key focus for this workforce and access to appropriate post registration programmes is highlighted through the education commissioning submission.

#### **2.1.2 NHS Bursary Monitoring 2023**

The health board continues to engage with HEIW the implementation of the bursary scheme for Allied Health Professions (AHP) and Healthcare Scientists (HCS). HEIW alerted the health board to a complication with the monitoring arrangements for graduates who chose to take the bursary as undergraduates and who are required to work in Wales for two years on graduating. With the cessation of the student streamlining process for AHPs and HCS graduates the information relating to final year graduate recruitment and job vacancies into NHS positions is no longer available from NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP). The SBU HB AHP and HCS recruitment leads for each profession have agreed to support the HEIW bursary team and graduates with Q&A sessions, newsletters etc. on the bursary agreement. Relevant information will be provided on induction, at staff meetings and at appraisals. It should be noted that the contract is between the graduate and HEIW and that it is incumbent on the bursary graduate to adhere to the terms and conditions of the bursary and not for the health board to pursue and police. HEIW indicated its appreciation of the engagement of the health board with regard to this matter.

### **2.1.3 Support for existing staff to access the new part-time Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy pre-registration programmes**

In September 2022, three new part-time programmes commenced in Wales for pre-registration Occupational Therapy (OT) and Physiotherapy education. These are:

1. Part-time physiotherapy programme at the University of South Wales (USW)
2. Part-time occupational therapy programme at the USW
3. Part-time occupational therapy programme at Swansea University

These new programmes enhance equity of access for healthcare support workers (HCSW) already working in these professions who are unable to cease employment to follow a full-time degree programme.

This academic year 22/23, three SBUHB staff members (two OT support staff & one Physiotherapy support staff) have secured places on the programmes, each securing a place on one of the three courses listed above. Two of the staff members were successful in gaining support through the HEIW bursary designed specifically for the part-time programmes. The bursary covers all course fees and provides funding for backfill at 0.43wte mid-point band 3 for each student. Whilst the financial support is essential to facilitate the organisation to support the employees to access the programme concern has been raised regarding the on-going support from HEIW, the equity of access for staff across professions and the impact on services as the finances do not cover the cost. The employees applying for the qualification to progress from a support worker to a registrant OT or Physiotherapist are at agenda for change Band 4 grade not Band 3.

There is considerable interest in the part-time programmes from existing OT and Physiotherapy support workers and it is anticipated that there will be increased competition for places year on year. No formal selection process was required this year however, a formal selection process must be developed for use with future cohorts, to ensure a fair and equitable system of selection and support. Collaboration with neighbouring health boards has informed the development of a selection pathway for implementation this year. (See Appendix 1).

The new programmes offer the opportunity for existing OT and Physiotherapy support workers to access part-time pre-registrations programmes to support their development to registered therapists.

### **2.1.4 Level 4 Therapy Assistant Practitioner (TAP) Qualification**

The Therapy Assistant Practitioner qualification has been developed in collaboration with the University of Wales Trinity St. David (UWTSD) with agreement that this will be delivered by UWTSD for all NHS organisations across West, South and East Wales.

The programme is currently 11 months into its first cohort. Re-validation is proceeding; the course is currently an 18-month programme, which runs every 18 months. Feedback from learners has raised concern that the schedule does not allow for breaks and annual leave; consequently it has been agreed to extend the programme to 24 months.

The qualification is open to Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Podiatry, Speech and Language Therapy, and Nutrition and Dietetic professions. The qualification comprises 120 credits at Level 4, however with only 95 credits available at this level it is a requirement for each learner to map 25 credits from a Level 3 *profession specific* Agored diploma qualification prior to accessing the Level 4 programme. Unfortunately, level 3 modules are not yet available to Podiatry, S&LT and Nutrition & Dietetics so staff from these professions are unable to access the programme. National work is progressing to resolve this position and SBU HB have staff engaged in this work.

Numbers are limited to two to three learners per health board for each cohort, with further pressure on places as the training offer is opened to local authorities. SBU HB will identify staff who meet the criteria and will link with Hywel Dda UHB as the host organisation to support access for SBU HB workforce.

## **2.2. Cross Cutting Service and Legislative Developments**

### **2.2.1 HCPC Standards and Processes for Fitness to Practice**

The Executive Director of Therapies and Health Science for SBUHB and currently chair of the national DoTHs peer group has written to the chair of the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) raising a number of concerns regarding HCPC's response time to referrals and safeguarding processes. The letter seeks assurance from the HCPC that the concerns outlined are being addressed to protect the public and the integrity of health boards.

### **2.2.2 HCPC Standards of Proficiency**

The HCPC Standards of Proficiency are professional standards registrants must adhere to in order to become a registered professional. The HCPC has revised the standards for each of the 15 professions, which will come into effect on 1st September 2023. It requires all members to be aware of these changes and to be able to demonstrate that their practice meets the new standards.

The revisions for each profession reflect the extent of developments in practice within that profession. Each of the professional bodies will be raising awareness of the changes with their professions and providing guidance.

As an employer of HCPC registrants, the health board has a duty to be aware of these changes and provide staff with an environment to meet these standards for registration as healthcare professionals. It is essential that as an employer the health board supports staff to respond to the changes and supports staff to have the opportunity to raise concerns.

The changes to HCPC standards have been shared with staff at Therapies & Health Science workforce meetings. HCPC has published a gap analysis tool to understand how the changes to the standards will effect staff and their scope of practice.

### **2.2.3 Exploring the impact of Digital Transformation on the Primary Care Workforce**

HEIW are working together with the Strategic Programme for Primary Care (SPPC) to develop a strategic workforce plan for primary care. Key to this is the consideration of how digital technologies, artificial intelligence, robotics and automation will affect the workforce. The Therapies & Health Sciences workforce will be actively engaged in an online event focussing on digital in Primary and Community Care to inform future workforce planning.

## **2.3. Profession Specific**

### **2.3.1 Audiology Assistant Practitioners 2023/24**

The education commissioning plan for 2023/24 submitted to Welsh Government, included a request for funding for a cohort of Audiology Assistant Practitioners for 2023/24 recruitment. The plan was funding available for ten salaried Band 4 posts across Wales (fixed term) for 24 months in addition to the training costs. Swansea University will deliver the programme with the individuals recruited and employed by the health boards and will commence employment on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023. As per the all Wales contractual arrangement for bursary funded student employees, they will be tied to work in Wales for a period of two years on completion of the programme.

HEIW have confirmed the allocation of two places for Swansea Bay University Health Board. Funding has been secured at mid-point Band 4, allowing a level of incremental flexibility to support existing members of staff who are currently employed on Band 4 / 3 to access the development opportunity.

The health board is supportive of the approach to recruit training posts, and applicants will be employed under the All Wales job description.

### **2.3.2 Psychology Education**

Psychology continues to be a national shortage profession; latest figures from the Clinical Psychology Doctorate training course in Cardiff reveal that in 2022, one out of the potential 16 trainees registering came to work at SBUHB. This is despite at least four trainees being allocated to the health board on an annual basis for their training and excellent feedback from them regarding placement experience. There is a clear tendency for trainees to choose jobs towards South East Wales and across the border in Bristol, with eleven settling in the east and six more west (Cwm Taf, Swansea Bay and Hywel Dda health boards) in 2022.

Three years ago, SBUHB initiated the 'Grow our Own Psychologists' training scheme in partnership with Bristol University West of England (UWE) Doctorate in Counselling Psychology. The health board funded three existing Assistant Psychologists on Band 6 training contracts to complete their training with UWE, and funded their tuition and travel fees. The three trainees are currently seeking employment in the health board once registered in October 2023.

This scheme has been a success and as such, the Psychology service would like to extend and expand this scheme to ensure a regular supply of psychologists until

there is further dialogue with HEIW and the Cardiff programme regarding the needs of South West Wales. The Head of Psychology has submitted a business paper to Mental Health & Learning Disabilities (MHL) Group for consideration. Both Newport Doctorate of Counselling Psychology (DCOP) and Bristol DCOP wish to collaborate with SBUHB on this grow our own initiative. Finance and other factors allowing, the service are seeking to expand to 5/6 trainees.

Further developments have occurred in psychology with the advent of the Clinical Applied Associate Psychology (CAAP) scheme launched by Cardiff Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DCLinPsy) and HEIW in 2023. The health board has funded one CAAP in Older People's Mental Health from this cohort. It has been announced that the CAAP training course is to take on another cohort of 20 trainees in September 2023/January 2024, however there is no existing funding stream identified for SBUHB to include CAAP into their existing workforce unless vacancies are repurposed to this. At present, the health board's psychology workforce is at good establishment and registrant posts are filled, so much so that Assistant Psychology positions are being repurposed for Grow Our Own. The Head of Psychology is to submit a business case to MHL service group for additional CAAPS to be secured from the Mental Health Service Improvement Funds (MHSIF) in 2023. The allocation is likely to be significantly diminished this year, however there is sufficient demand for psychological intervention with the referral rate into Psychological Therapies having increased with the advent of Covid 19.

## **2.4. Celebratory Events**

### **2.4.1 Therapies & Health Sciences Learning Events**

The Director of Therapies and Health Science continues to sponsor a series of learning events for the Therapies and Health Science professions. The learning event in March gave an insight into quality management systems (QMS) and the value QMSs bring to our patients in supporting safe and effective care. Aligning with the health board's recently developed Quality Strategy, QMS frameworks work to strengthen our pathways and drive efficiency, supporting both innovation and improvement.

This event focussed on an opportunity to learn more on the concepts of quality, its practical application and different QMS approaches and experiences, as well as to discuss and ask questions of individuals and services who have practical experience, and to make suggestions for future shared learning.

## **3. GOVERNANCE AND RISK ISSUES**

Governance and risks have been highlighted in the individual sections identifying the current key issues for the AHP and HCS workforce.

## **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**


Service group finance partners are informed of financial risks highlighted in the report.

## 5. RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to:

- **Receive** the information in the report.
- **Note** the work on education commissioning and continued engagement with HEIW on programme development to deliver a sustainable workforce.
- **Assurance** Staff regulated by HCPC are informed of changes to the HCPC Standards of Proficiency. The Executive Director of Therapies and Health Science is seeking assurance from the HCPC in relation to concerns raised.
- **Note** the series of Therapies & Health Sciences learning events.



<b>Governance and Assurance</b>		
<b>Link to Enabling Objectives</b> (please choose)	<b>Supporting better health and wellbeing by actively promoting and empowering people to live well in resilient communities</b>	
	Partnerships for Improving Health and Wellbeing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Co-Production and Health Literacy	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Digitally Enabled Health and Wellbeing	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Deliver better care through excellent health and care services achieving the outcomes that matter most to people</b>	
	Best Value Outcomes and High Quality Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Partnerships for Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Excellent Staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Digitally Enabled Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Outstanding Research, Innovation, Education and Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Health and Care Standards</b>		
(please choose)	Staying Healthy	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Safe Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Effective Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Dignified Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Timely Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Individual Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Staff and Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Quality, Safety and Patient Experience</b>		
<p>A sustainable AHP and HCS workforce is essential to provide effective, patient centred care with improved outcomes for patient, carer and workforce.</p> <p>Patient safety runs through education standards and requirements and is inseparable from an excellent learning environment and culture that values and supports learners and educators.</p>		
<b>Financial Implications</b>		
Financial risks associated with the key themes described are not specified in the paper and are operationally managed via Service Groups.		
<b>Legal Implications (including equality and diversity assessment)</b>		
As set out in the paper.		
<b>Staffing Implications</b>		
As described in the paper.		
<b>Long Term Implications (including the impact of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015)</b>		
This paper reflects <i>The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015)</i> and working relationships between organisations helping to meet the longer-term needs of NHS Wales and enhance the sustainability of the healthcare workforce.		
<b>Report History</b>	Ninth report	
<b>Appendices</b>	 Appendix 1.docx	

