

Health Professionals Forum

Terms of Reference & Operating
Arrangements

2026-27

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Health Board's (HB's) Standing Orders provide that "The Board has a statutory duty to take account of representations made by persons who represent the interests of the communities it serves, its staff and health professionals. To help discharge this duty, the Board may and, where directed by the Welsh Government must, appoint Advisory Forums to the Health Board to provide advice to the Board in the exercise of its functions. The Board's commitment to openness and transparency in the conduct of all its business extends equally to the work carried out by others to advise it in the conduct of its business."
- 1.2 The Board's Advisory Forums include a Stakeholder Reference Group, Health Professionals Forum and Local Partnership Forum.
- 1.3 In line with Standing Orders, the Board shall establish and operate an Advisory Forum to be known as the **Health Professionals Forum (HPF)**. The detailed terms of reference and operating arrangements set by the Board in respect of this Forum are set out below.
- 1.4 These Terms of Reference should be read in conjunction with Section 4.11 of Standing Orders.

2 PURPOSE

- 2.1 The purpose of the HPF is to:
 - Provide a balanced, multi disciplinary view of professional issues to advise the Board on local strategy and delivery. Its role does not include consideration of professional terms and conditions of service.
 - Facilitate engagement and debate amongst the wide range of clinical interests within the HB's area of activity, with the aim of reaching and presenting a cohesive and balanced professional perspective to inform the HB's decision making.
 - Offer advice and feedback to the Board

3 DELEGATED POWERS AND AUTHORITY

- 3.1 The HPF is an Advisory Forum and therefore has no delegated powers.
Sub Fora
- 3.2 The Forum may [subject to the approval of the HB Board] establish task and finish groups or sub fora to carry out on its behalf specific aspects of its function.

4 MEMBERSHIP

Members

- 4.1 Membership will comprise:

Chair: Appointed with Board approval; The Chair will be an Associate Member of the Board

Vice Chair: Selected by the Forum

Members: The membership of the Health Professionals Forum reflects the structure of the seven health Statutory Professional Advisory Committees set up in accordance with Section 190 of the NHS (Wales) Act 2006. Membership of the Health Professionals Forum shall therefore comprise the following eleven (11) members:

Welsh Medical Committee

- Primary and Community Care Medical representative
- Mental Health Medical representative
- Specialist and Tertiary Care medical representative

Welsh Nursing and Midwifery Committee

Community Nursing and Midwifery representative
Hospital Nursing and Midwifery representative

Welsh Allied Health Professions Advisory Committee

- Therapies representative

Welsh Scientific Advisory Committee

- Scientific representative

Welsh Optometric Committee

- Optometry representative

Welsh Dental Committee

- Dental representative

Welsh Pharmaceutical Committee

- Hospital Pharmacists representative
- Community Pharmacists representative

In order to facilitate an exchange of information, professional leads from the following service areas will also be named members of the forum:

1. Allied Health professionals
2. Dental
3. Health Science
4. Nursing
5. Medical
6. Midwifery
7. Pharmacy

These professional leads will contribute as subject matter experts drawing on professional knowledge and networks, rather than acting as formally mandated representatives of their professions. These leads will identify a named deputy wherever possible to ensure continuity of attendance and contribution.

4.2 In attendance: Executive Directors will attend as required to discuss work

within their portfolios where the advice of the HPF is being sought.

The Board Chair Vice Chair, Independent Members and the Chief Executive shall attend HPF meetings as and when necessary

- 4.3 By invitation: The Forum Chair may extend invitations to attend Forum meetings as required to the following:
- Task and Finish or sub-Forum members
 - Leads from Clusters/ Clinical Teams across the Health Board
 - Others from within or outside the organisation who the Forum should attend, taking account of the matters under consideration at each meeting.

Secretariat

- 4.4 Secretary: As determined by the Director of Corporate Governance.

Member Appointments

- 4.5 Appointments to the Health Professionals Forum shall be made by the Board, based upon nominations received from the relevant professional Forum, and in accordance with any specific requirements or directions made by Welsh Government.
- 4.6 Members shall be appointed for a period specified by the Board, but for no longer than 4 years in any one term. Those members can be reappointed but may not serve a total period of more than 8 years consecutively
- 4.7 Detailed arrangements for the appointment process for the Chair and Vice Chair, resignation, suspension and removal of HPF members is set out in Section 4.15 and 4.16 of Standing Orders
- 4.8 Terms and conditions of appointment, (including any remuneration and reimbursement) in respect of HPF members are determined by the Board, based upon the recommendation of the HB Chair {and, where appropriate on the basis of advice from the HB's Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee}.

Support to HPF Members

The LHB's Director of Corporate Governance, on behalf of the Chair, will ensure that the Forum is properly equipped to carry out its role by:

- co-ordinating and facilitating any appropriate induction and organisational development activity;
- ensuring the provision of governance advice and support to the Forum Chair on the conduct of its business and its relationship with the Health Board and

others;

- ensuring the provision of secretariat support for Forum meetings;
- ensuring that the Forum receives the information it needs on a timely basis; and
- facilitating effective reporting to the Board
- enabling the Board to gain assurance that the conduct of business within the HPF accords with the governance and operating framework it has set.

5 FORUM MEETINGS

Quorum

- 5.1 At least four members must be present to ensure the quorum of the Forum, one of whom should be the Forum Chair or Vice-Chair. Depending on the subject matter of the meeting adequate representation from that particular professional group must be present.

Frequency of Meetings

- 5.2 The forum shall meet at least quarterly and otherwise as the Chair of the Forum deems necessary.

6 RELATIONSHIPS & ACCOUNTABILITIES WITH THE BOARD AND ITS COMMITTEES/FORUMS

- 6.1 The HPF's main link with the Board is through the HPF Chair's membership of the Board as an Associate Member.
- 6.2 The Board may determine that designated Board members or Health Board staff should be in attendance at Advisory Forum meetings. The HPF's Chair may also request the attendance of Board members or Health Board staff, subject to the agreement of the Health Board Chair.
- 6.3 The Board will determine the arrangements for any joint meetings between the Board and the Forum.
- 6.4 The Board's Chair will meet with the HPF Chair on a regular basis to discuss the HPF's activities and operation.

The Health Board Chair, on the advice of the Chief Executive and/or Director of Corporate Governance, may recommend that the Board afford direct right of access to any professional group, in the following, exceptional circumstances:

- where the Forum recommends that a matter should be presented to the Board by a particular professional grouping e.g., due to the specialist nature of the issues concerned; or
- where a professional group has demonstrated that the Forum has not

afforded it due consideration in the determination of its advice to the Board on a particular issue, or

The Board may itself determine that it wishes to seek the views of a particular professional grouping on a specific matter, in accordance with Standing Order 7.5.7.

7 RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE HPF AND OTHERS

7.1 The HPF shall:

- Ensure effective links and relationships with other advisory Forums;
- Ensure its role, responsibilities and activities are known and understood by others; and
- Take care to avoid unnecessary duplication of activity with other bodies/Forums with an interest in the planning and provision of NHS services.

7.2 The Forum Chair will be a member of the National Professional Advisory Forum.

8 REPORTING AND ASSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS

8.1 The Forum Chair shall:

- Report formally, regularly and on a timely basis to the Board on the Forum's activities. This includes verbal updates on activity and, where required the submission of minutes and written reports;
- Bring to the Board's specific attention any significant matters under consideration by the Forum;

8.2 The Board may also require the HPF Chair to report upon the HPF's activities at public meetings, e.g., AGM, or to community partners and other stakeholders, where this is considered appropriate.

The Health Board may specifically request advice and feedback from the Forum on any aspect of its business, and the Forum may also offer advice and feedback even if not specifically requested by the Health Board. The Forum may provide advice to the Board:

- At Board meetings, through the HPF Chair's participation as Associate Member;
- In written advice; and
- In any other form specified by the Board.

9 APPLICABILITY OF STANDING ORDERS TO HPF BUSINESS

9.1 The requirements for the conduct of business as set out in the Health Board's Standing Orders are equally applicable to the operation of the Forum, except in the following areas:

10 REVIEW

- 10.1 These terms of reference and operating arrangements shall be reviewed annually by the HPF with reference to the Board.