



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

annual wales eyecare conference

2017

Outcomes and Accessibility

#eyecareconference

Conference website:

<http://www.wcb-ccd.org.uk/conference/conference.php>

Programme.

Please submit **your questions** throughout the day on the forms provided. Your questions will be answered and displayed on the website shortly. WCB staff are available to assist with completion of forms if required.

Event Chair: Fiona Jenkins, Chair of the National Wales Eye Health Care Steering Board

09:15 Coffee and registration

09:50 Welcome and Introductions
Chair of the day

09:55 National Eye Health Week
RNIB Cymru

10:00 SKETCH - Accessibility (Barriers)
Storm WCB / UCAN Productions

10:10 Keynote Speech
Vaughan Gething AM, Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport

10:25 Children with sight loss in Wales

Low Vision - Rebecca John, Clinical Lead, Low Vision Service Wales

Qualified Teacher for the Visually Impaired - Sarah Hughes, Head of Visual Impairment Services, Gwent Visual Impairment Service

Habilitation - Adrian Linney, Service Delivery Manager, Children and Young People, Guide Dogs

10:55 Children's Vision Screening Pathway
Nicola Turner, Aneurin Bevan Orthoptics

11:05 Children's Vision Service Advisory Group
Dr Heather Payne.

11:15 COFFEE BREAK

11:45 Prudent Eye Care and Clinical Prioritisation: Reconciling Risks and Waits

Mike Austin, Consultant Ophthalmologist, Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board

Dr Graham Shortland, Executive Medical Director, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

12:00 Update on All Wales Standards for Accessible Communication and Information for people with sensory loss

Marcia Morgan, Senior Equality Manager, Welsh Government
Tracey Good, Interim Director, NHS Centre for Equality and Human Rights

Michelle Fowler-Powe, Access and Inclusion (Advocacy) Officer, British Deaf Association.

12:15 Local Health Board update for outcomes and accessibility
Reports from across Wales.

13:00 LUNCH

14:00 Progress on the Wet Age-related Macular Degeneration (wAMD) pathfinders service evaluation.

Professor Rachel North

14:15 Outcomes from the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act and Population Needs Assessment

Mathew Xerri, Welsh Government

14:30 Patient voice

Ziad Khan, Service user, Cardiff and Vale.

14:40 Delivery Plan and Framework of Action and the outcomes and accessibility issues and solutions for people who are deafblind

Andrew Tait, Deafblind Cymru

14:55 Chief Optometric Advisor for Welsh Government

David O'Sullivan

15:10 SKETCH - Accessibility (when it works)

Storm WCB / UCAN Productions

15.25 Dr. Frank Atherton

Chief Medical Officer, Welsh Government

15.35 Closing remarks

15.45 CLOSE

Stands:

- National Eye Health Week
- Public Health Wales
- Eye Health Examination Wales/Wales Eye Care Service
- Low Vision Service Wales
- Diabetic Eye Screening Wales
- Wales Vision Forum
- Welsh Rehabilitation Officers Forum
- MEGAFOCUS

Presentations from the day will be available on the conference website soon

www.wcb-ccd.org.uk/conference/conference_files.php

Welcome and Introductions.

Dr. Fiona Jenkins

Dr Fiona Jenkins is Executive Director for Therapies Health Science and Information Technology in Cardiff and Vale University Health Board.

Fiona is a Chartered physiotherapist with significant clinical, managerial and leadership experience. She joined Cardiff and Vale UHB in 2010 as Executive Director for Therapies and Health Sciences moving from South Devon.

Fiona has a PhD in Social Sciences related to NHS Management and completed the INSEAD NHS / Leadership Centre Clinical Strategists' Programme, she also holds an MA (Distinction) in Management (Exeter University). Fiona is also a Companion of the Institute of Healthcare Management. She is also a Fellow of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy.

Her Executive portfolio includes:

National lead roles: Chair Wales Eye Care steering group, Chair Wales Respiratory Health Delivery Plan, Chair Wales Stroke Improvement group, Chair National Pathology Programme Board, Chair South Wales Cellular Pathology Programme.

Cardiff and Vale UHB lead roles: Executive lead Information Technology, National Delivery Plans, Stroke, Eye Care, End of Life, Falls, Learning Disabilities, Armed forces and Veterans, Medical Equipment, Decontamination, Nutrition and Musculoskeletal service improvement. She is also particularly interested in health and social care integration and ensuring the delivery of care in community settings. In addition Fiona is accountable for leading the 1800 Therapists and Healthcare Scientists in the organisation.

Fiona lectures both nationally and internationally, and undertakes service reviews and masterclasses. She is also co-editor of a series of "The Allied Health Professions Essential Guides."

National Eye Health Week

“Look After Your Eyes”

This year **National Eye Health Week is 18-24 September** and it's the **eighth year of the campaign!**

Once again, charities, organisations and health professionals from Wales and across the UK are joining together to promote the importance of eye health and the need for everyone to have regular sight tests.

Sight is the sense that people fear losing most yet many of us don't know the best way to look after our eyes.

Almost six million people in the UK currently live with sight-threatening conditions. The extent of the problem means that nearly every family is touched by sight problems in some way.

Every day, about 250 people in the UK, and about 3 people in Wales, start to lose their sight, but more than half of all sight loss is avoidable with early detection and treatment.

Recent research shows that 1 in 4 UK adults have not had a sight test in the last two years and are risking avoidable sight loss. A regular sight test can help detect eye conditions early, including other health conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

Almost 80 per cent of people living with sight loss are over the age of 64. With an ageing population there will be increasing demand on our eye care services so it is more important than ever that we keep our eyes healthy.

There are a number of things you can do to look after your eyes including healthy eating, not smoking and wearing sunglasses in strong sunlight. But, one of the most important things is to make an appointment with your local optician (optometrist) and have a sight test.

Most people should have their eyes examined by an optometrist every two years, although it might need to be more often depending on your age, family or medical history.

The NHS recommends that everyone from the age of three undergoes an eye test, at least every two years to detect uncorrected refractive error and detect any possible eye health conditions.

Many people are entitled to a free NHS sight test and the Welsh Government also provide an additional free eye health examination to help people who may be at risk of eye disease or who have sudden or acute eye problems.

So, this National Eye Health Week “Look After Your Eyes” and make sure you have regular sight tests and encourage you family and friends to make an appointment too!

Top 3 things to do this National Eye Health Week:

1. Book your eye test today and encourage your friends, family and colleagues to do the same.
2. Show your support for NEHW by using the hashtags #EyeWeekWales and #WythnosLlygaid on your social media channels.

This #EyeWeekWales I pledge to have regular sight tests and enjoy a healthier lifestyle because my #VisionMatters

3. Register for your FREE supporter resource pack by sending your name, address and email details to info@visionmatters.org.uk.

For more information about National Eye health Week and how you can get involved contact:

Sian.Biddyr@rnib.org.uk

SKETCHES - Accessibility (*Barriers and When It Works*)

Megan John

Megan John is 23 years old and living in Cardiff. Megan was born with congenital Cataracts, Aniridia, Nystagmus and Photophobia. She is a performance artist, with an interest in directing and production. Megan achieved a BA (Hons) in Drama and Theatre studies at Aberystwyth University. She is a founder member of UCAN Productions, a UCAN Lead graduate and project assistant on the UCAN GO project. UCAN Productions is a creative arts Co-operative run by and for blind and partially sighted young people who work in developing vocal and physical confidence through the arts. Over the last 10 years Megan has performed in all of UCAN's major core group productions. As well as being a long time member Megan is now a part of the team of trainers who deliver workshops across the country.

Mared Jarman

Mared Jarman is 21 years old and lives in Cardiff. She was diagnosed at 10 years of age with Stargart's. She is a performer and singer who works both as a backing vocalist and solo artist. She is a founding member of UCAN Productions, a UCAN Lead graduate and project assistant on the UCAN GO project. UCAN Productions is a creative arts Co-operative run by and for blind and partially sighted young people who work in developing vocal and physical confidence through the arts. Over the last 10 years Mared has performed in all of UCAN's major core group productions. As well as being a long time member Mared is now a part of the team of trainers who deliver workshops across the country.

Taylor Martin

Taylor has been a member of UCAN for just over six years and has been involved in many of their projects both as a performer and a workshop facilitator. Originally from Port Talbot he recently moved to Cardiff after graduating from the University of Wales Trinity Saint David with a BA in acting. Taylor currently works as a Drama teacher at a drama academy and as a freelance Actor, facilitator and stand up comedian.

Jake Sawyers

Jake is 21 years old and lives in Port Talbot. He was born with Norrie Disease and nystagmus. He recently graduated from UWTSD with a first class BA Hons in acting. He has been a member of UCAN Productions for 8 years. He is also a UCAN Lead graduate. Over the last 7 years Jake has performed in all of UCAN's major core group productions. Photography, acting and stand up comedy are Jake's major interests. As well as being a long time member Jake is now a part of the team of trainers who deliver workshops across the country.

Keynote Speech

Vaughan Gething AM, Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport

Vaughan Gething was born in Zambia and brought up in Dorset. He was educated at Aberystwyth and Cardiff universities, and is married to Michelle. Vaughan is a largely retired cricketer and a fan of both rugby and football.

Vaughan was a solicitor and former partner at Thompsons. He is a member of the GMB, UNISON and Unite unions, and was the youngest ever President of the TUC in Wales. He has previously served as a county councilor and school governor. He has also been a community service volunteer – supporting and caring for a student with cerebral palsy, and is former president of NUS Wales.

Between 1999 and 2001, Vaughan worked as a researcher to former AMs Val Feld and Lorraine Barrett. Between 2001 and 2003, Vaughan was the chair of Right to Vote – a cross-party project to encourage greater participation from black minority ethnic communities in Welsh public life.

Vaughan is a member of the Co-operative Party.

In June 2013 Vaughan Gething was appointed Deputy Minister for Tackling Poverty. In September 2014, Vaughan was appointed Deputy Minister for Health. In May 2016 he was appointed Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport.

Children with sight loss in Wales

Rebecca John

Rebecca graduated from Cardiff University in 2004. She has worked in a variety of high street practices and hospital eye services and now works as clinical lead for the Low Vision Service Wales and the Special Schools Pilot Project. She is also Clinical Advisor to the Eye Health Examinations Wales Service.

Rebecca has completed a range of postgraduate education, from the College of Optometrists' Certificate A in glaucoma, to a post graduate certificate in Clinical Optometry.

Sarah Hughes

Sarah Hughes is the Head of Gwent Visual Impairment Service which covers the 5 county borough councils in the South East Wales Consortium. She leads a team of teachers, teaching assistants and habilitation specialists to deliver curriculum access and education support to children and young people with vision impairment, from birth to 25 years of age.

Prior to her move to Wales, Sarah was Deputy Head Teacher at the Royal Blind School in Edinburgh, Head of Science at New College Worcester (a residential school for young people with vision impairment) and a teacher of science in mainstream schools. Her broad experience has provided her with knowledge and understanding of the full range of settings in which children with vision impairment are educated. As Chairperson of WAVIE (Welsh Association of Vision Impairment Educators) Sarah works closely with those involved in the education of children and young people with vision impairment across the country.

Sarah is a Qualified Teacher of Visually Impaired (QTVI) and her award of the Walter Hines Page scholarship in 2012 gave her the opportunity to visit Perkins School for the Blind in Massachusetts, USA. This gave Sarah the chance to recognise that regardless of the National Curriculum offered to children, there are essential additional skills that all children and young people with vision impairment need to learn if they are to be ready for adult life and that it is the role of QTVIs together with Habilitation Specialists to deliver these aspects of their education.

Adrian Linney

Adrian Linney is Service Delivery Manager for Children and Young People at Guide Dogs Cymru. With over 21 years' experience working with young people and adults who are blind or partially sighted, Adrian's background has given him a wealth of experience. He has worked for Herefordshire County Council, RNIB, The Royal National College for the Blind and Brent Council before joining Guide Dogs Cymru. Adrian manages a team of qualified Habilitation Specialists working across Wales. He is an experienced practitioner who feels passionately that children and young people (and their families) should receive timely and appropriate support to maximise their chances of growing into independent and confident adults. Adrian and his team work in partnership with other charities and local authorities in Wales to improve the opportunities for those the charity serve.

Children's Vision Screening Pathway

Nicola Turner, Aneurin Bevan Orthoptics

Nicola is an Advanced Orthoptist with over thirty years in this field. Nicola started her career at St Woolos Eye Hospital Newport, but has also worked at Cwm Taf University Health Board and overseas at Bermuda International Eye Institute, 2000-2008. Nicola returned to the United Kingdom in 2008 and is currently site lead at Nevill Hall Hospital, Abergavenny.

In my current role I am responsible for Orthoptic Service Delivery at Nevill Hall Hospital. This role includes assessment, diagnosis and treatment of patients with ocular motility defects. I also assist the clinical lead for stroke and undertake teaching for Orthoptic undergraduate students.

Children's Vision Service Advisory Group

Dr Heather Payne

Senior Medical Officer Welsh Government, Maternal and Child Health
Professional advice on: Paediatrics and child health. Health aspects of safeguarding children and adults Health aspects of fostering and adoption Early years and child development Service quality, safety and outcome measures for children and maternity Interprofessional working and learning

Prudent Eye Care and Clinical Prioritisation: Reconciling Risks and Waits

Michael Austin, Consultant Ophthalmologist

Mike qualified in 1983 and after house jobs in Cardiff he moved North for ophthalmic training at St. Paul's Eye Hospital Liverpool, University Hospital Aberdeen and Queen's Medical Centre, Nottingham.

As a consultant in Swansea from 1995 Mike has continued to develop his interest in the early detection and management of glaucoma in particular with the then novel concept of a glaucoma assessment clinic led by clinicians in professions allied to medicine backed up by virtual clinic consultant review. A number of audits, research projects, presentations and publications have helped to confirm the place of multidisciplinary team working.

Mike has been active in medical education in Swansea University and is an honorary senior clinical lecturer for the College of Medicine. In 2012 he took on the role of Royal College of Ophthalmologists regional advisor for Wales and this has led to much collaborative work with allied professions and Welsh Government. He is currently chair of the Wales Ophthalmic Planned Care Board.

Dr Graham Shortland

Dr Graham Shortland qualified from the University of Southampton in 1983. He trained in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, then in Paediatrics, in a range of posts in Southampton, Cardiff and Bristol.

Graham has spent time in clinical research and academic medicine as Research Fellow with Professor Peter Fleming in Bristol, and as Lecturer with Professor D P Davies in Cardiff. He has had original research published in the fields of paediatric nutrition, inherited metabolic disease and medical education.

He was appointed as Consultant Paediatrician in Cardiff (1993) , and has had a wide range of clinical responsibilities including general paediatrics, community paediatrics, paediatric intensive care, neonatology and his main interest of inherited metabolic disease.

National and UK recognition includes six years as Chairman of his speciality interest group, the British Inherited Metabolic Disease Group, and more recently as Vice Chair of the UK National Screening Committee following his successful leadership role in the implementation of a number of new UK wide new-born bloodspot screening initiatives.

Graham's career in Medical Leadership includes Clinical Director for Child Health, (commissioning the Children's Hospital for Wales, Phase 1), Associate Medical Director for Patient Safety and Clinical Governance, and Assistant Medical Director for Innovation and Improvement. He has been in his current post as the Executive Medical Director for Cardiff and Vale UHB since 2010 and Chaired a number of All-Wales initiatives/committees on behalf of Welsh Government.

He has three sons and keenly pursues sailing as a hobby and sporting activity. He is a life-long Tottenham Hotspur fan.

Update on All Wales Standards for Accessible Communication and Information for people with sensory loss

Marcia Morgan

Marcia has worked for Welsh Government since 2000 across various departments. Marcia joined the Health and Social Services Group as Senior Equality Manager in 2011 and has been involved in various areas of work including LGBT+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Trans), BME (Black, Minority and Ethnic) and sensory loss. She has worked collaboratively with the NHS Centre for Equality and Human Rights, third sector organisations and service users to help produce the All Wales Standards for Accessible Communication and Information for People with Sensory Loss.

Marcia is now the project manager for the Sensory Loss Information Standard which is a national Welsh Government led project to capture, record, transfer and flag the communication and information needs of those with sensory loss when accessing healthcare.

Tracey Good

Tracey is the Interim Director for the Centre for Equality and Human Rights based in Public Health Wales. Tracey joined the Centre in 2001 and prior to that, spent many years working in NHS human resource management roles in South Wales.

The Centre works with Health Boards and NHS Trusts to embed equality and human rights across service design and delivery and in relation to the workforce. The Centre hosts the all Wales Senior Officers Group that meets every quarter to support the delivery of the All Wales Standards for Accessible Communication and Information for People with Sensory Loss.

In a personal capacity, Tracey is a Board Director for All Wales People First and facilitates the Cardiff Hard of Hearing Friendly Group, a voluntary group that originated through the 'Hear to Meet Project' funded by Action on Hearing Loss, Cymru.

Michelle Fowler

Michelle has been working for the British Deaf Association for ten years as Access and Inclusion (Advocacy) in South Wales working with Deaf community. Michelle works with the community to help ensure that they can access public services using their first language, British Sign Language. Michelle has been involved in lots of initiatives e.g. NHS 111, Local Deaf Health Focus groups etc.

Michelle has been working for the NHS Centre of Equality for Human Rights (CEHR) as a Equality Project Manager for the past year. The focus of Michelle's work has been on the All Wales Standards for communication and information for people with sensory loss. The Centre will be working with the Sensory Loss Communities and Professionals to improve access in to healthcare services. Michelle's speciality is to engage the community, as a Deaf BSL user I have great empathy and understanding of the barriers that prevent people with sensory loss from accessing public services.

Local Health Board update for outcomes and accessibility

Regional Multi-Disciplinary Eye Care Health Groups

Eye Care Health Groups have been set up in every health board. Membership includes clinicians from primary and secondary care, managers and the third sector. All health boards have also developed local eye care plans which outline the eye care needs of their local population and how they plan to meet them.

Each Health Board will talk about their work:

Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board

Gwyn Williams

Aneurin Bevan Health Board

Julie Poole, Jane Roberts, Bethan Hughes, Mr Blyth and Melanie Laidler

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

Helen Jukes-Hughes

Alison Birch

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

Professor James Morgan

Cwm Taf Health Board

Craige Wilson

Hywel Dda Health Board

Peter Llewellyn

Powys Teaching Health Board

Progress on the Wet Age-related Macular Degeneration (wAMD) pathfinders service evaluation.

Professor Rachel North

Professor Rachel North is an optometrist in the School of Optometry & Vision Sciences, Cardiff University. Her primary areas of research involve two of the major causes of blindness, diabetes mellitus and glaucoma. The early detection of both conditions is important for their management and improved prognosis, and she has been investigating the structural and functional changes using digital imaging, electrophysiological and psychophysical techniques. She has also recently been involved in studies assessing the prescribing patterns for portable electronic vision enhancement system devices for people with visual impairment.

Outcomes from the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act and Population Needs Assessment

Mathew Xerri

Mathew is Senior Policy Manager within the Partnership and Integration branch and leads on development of policy and legislation in relation to the following areas under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014:

- Population assessments;
- Area planning in response to population assessment;
- Regional partnership boards; and
- Market stability provisions under the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016

Patient Voice

Ziad Khan

Ziad Khan is a proud Cardiffian living in Grangetown and presently working in Neath. Most of his working life was spent running a family business in Cardiff. However, after suffering a set back of losing 95% of his sight in 2009, a new path through his life was set.

On this pathway he has engaged with different support services from looking for a job to training and finding a career.

For the last four years Ziad has been working as a Website Accessibility Tester for the Digital Accessibility Centre based in Neath. Through this rigorous testing, Ziad knows that his efforts, alongside those of his colleagues, have influenced change within the accessibility sector.

His ambition in life is simple, and that is just to make a difference with positive outcomes for all.

Delivery Plan and Framework of Action and the outcomes and accessibility issues and solutions for people who are deafblind

Andrew Tait

After a number of years working in publishing and bookselling and a variety of other disconnected roles, Andrew undertook an MSC in Tropical Agricultural Development. This combined with his Christian faith, provided the opportunity for him and his young family to live and work in West Africa, as Diocesan Development Officer for the Diocese of Guinea. This in turn, led on to 6 years working as a Regional Programme Officer for Sight Savers International, where he travelled regularly to Africa then India, supporting the local in-country teams and partners to develop medical, rehabilitation and education projects designed to combat the impacts of sight loss. He left this post to spend a period as Chief Executive of Deafblind Scotland.

An unexpected change of direction led him to establish his own company, undertaking systems audits and supporting businesses in developing systems to meet various Environmental Standards. In 2013 he and his wife Ruth became Wardens of a Christian Retreat House in Suffolk.

Earlier this year, the long held desire to move to their house in Wales, coincided with the opportunity for Andrew to take up his current role as Area Manager for Wales with Deafblind Cymru.

Chief Optometric Advisor for Welsh Government

David O'Sullivan

Qualified as an optometrist with a First Class honours degree from Glasgow Caledonian University in 1996 and completed training in Leeds general infirmary. Following a short spell in private practice I relocated to Wales in 1998 where I became a practice owner and over the past 18 years expanded from one practice to a small group of practices within Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.

I became accredited to provide Welsh Eye Care Initiative services (now Eye Health Examination Wales) and low Vision services in the first cohort of practitioners for both services and have subsequently undertaken further postgraduate qualifications in glaucoma management.

In 2001 I became the optometric development officer for Carmarthenshire Local Health group which has subsequently developed into Hywel Dda University Health Board. This was the first position of its kind in Wales and provided a link between primary and secondary care providing the platform for developing services in the community.

In 2015 I became the optometric adviser for Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan University Health Board and in July 2017 became the Chief Optometric Adviser for Wales.

Chief Medical Officer, Welsh Government - Frank Atherton.

Frank took up post of Chief Medical Officer, Medical Director NHS Wales in August 2016.

Frank graduated in medicine from Leeds University and worked in hospital and primary care posts around the North of England for a number of years before undertaking voluntary work as a District Medical Officer in Malawi. On his return to the UK he completed specialist training in Public Health Medicine in the Yorkshire Region and then worked on international health and development issues for WHO and the UK Department for International Development in various locations including the Former Yugoslavia, Tanzania, and Bangladesh. From 2002 to 2012 Frank worked as a Director of Public Health in Lancashire and from 2008 to 2012 he also served as President of the UK Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH). In 2012 Frank moved to Canada to take up post as the Deputy Chief Medical Officer of Health in the Department of Health and Wellness, Nova Scotia.

Exhibitors.

MEGAFOCUS (Minority Ethnic Groups Association for Ophthalmic Care Uptake and Service) Advisory Group

Ethnicity influences the risk of sight loss. People of South Asian and Black origins have indicated 2-6 times more chance of developing eye conditions leading to sight loss compared to the white population. Although they are high-risk groups, a low level of engagement with eye care has been noted amongst these communities. With the growing ethnicity population in Wales there is a growing concern and therefore MEGAFOCUS was set up to tackle the problem and prevent unnecessary sight loss amongst these communities. MEGAFOCUS has brought together eyecare professionals, third sector organisations and policy makers to improve the relationship between ethnic minority communities and eyecare in Wales and thereby prevent unnecessary sight loss.

Wales Vision Forum

The purpose of the Forum is for Third Sector organisations representing people with sight loss to share, discuss and outline work programmes and priorities to enhance joint working and reduce duplication to maximise our collective reach and impact. The Forum is a platform for sharing information, sharing good practice and expertise, consulting and identifying opportunities to support service and campaign planning. The Forum meets a minimum of three times a year. Task and finish groups can be established for specific areas of work.

Membership is open to local, regional and national constituted organisations working with blind and partially sighted people in Wales. Other organisations may be invited to meetings or part of meetings as agreed by members.

The Forum has a representative on the Wales Eye Health Care Steering Board and on each of its sub groups and task and finish groups, as well as each of the Regional Multi-Disciplinary Eye Care Health Groups.

Wales Council of the Blind chairs - and provides secretariat for - the Forum. For further information contact Owen Williams on 029 2047 3954 or by email at owen@wcb-ccd.org.uk

The Welsh Rehabilitation Officers Forum (WROF)

Our Forum was established at the end of 2007 in an attempt to secure a voice for consultation for the Rehabilitation Officers in Wales in the ever-changing visual impairment world whether political, professional or service based. The perennial issue of a UK-wide Rehabilitation Officers' professional body seemed to have stagnated and so an all-Wales response seemed the right next step.

We have secured the membership of all the Rehabilitation Officers, Assistant Rehabilitation Officers, Student Rehabilitation Officers, Mobility Officers in Wales and we have recently approached the Education Department-based Mobility Officers with regard to them joining us.

Since the launch of our Forum we have made ourselves available for consultation to employers, government (in particular the Welsh Government), and also the Third Sector. This has resulted in our direct involvement with the Visual Impairment Service Benchmarking process, the Sensory Impairment National Occupational Standards Technical Reference Group, the Sensory Impairment Workers Qualification Credit Framework Group, the Low Vision Service Implementation Group, and more recently the Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group.

Our focus has been the creation of a formal code of ethics and conduct and a recommended job description which we expect to issue to all employers of ROVIs very soon to be used as a basis to build local services upon.

We have highlighted the lack of consistent, focused, specialized continuous professional development training for our members. To this end we have secured funding from the Welsh Government with which we are able to provide very specific, specialized Continuous Professional Development, which has been very well received and attended and can only help to raise standards for all ROVIs throughout Wales.

The issue of the professional registration of the ROVIs in Wales remains high on the agenda for WROF. The code of ethics/conduct, the formal job description and the continuous development and training programme have all been aimed at meeting the registration requirements of the Care Council for Wales. We continue to negotiate with the Welsh Government for our formal professional recognition and registration which, we are assured, will be achieved very soon.

Diabetic Eye Screening Wales

DESW (formerly DRSSW) is designed to detect sight-threatening retinopathy at an early stage before visual loss occurs. The service was commissioned in July 2002 by Welsh Government as part of the Welsh Eye Care Initiative (WECI) risk reduction programme and the Diabetes National Service Framework (NSF). Every eligible person living with diabetes in Wales is invited for retinal screening on an annual basis.

The service is community-based, delivering from clinics and sites that are chosen to allow all patients reasonable and equitable access. Since its inception DESW has successfully screened 2,000,000 eyes, captured 9,000,000 digital retinal photographs and referred over 40,000 patients - identified as being at risk of sight loss - to specialist eye services.

A recent publication (Thomas et al. BMJ 2017) shows that sight loss in Wales due to diabetes has fallen by half since the retinal screening programme was established. This is really strong evidence for the effectiveness of the care pathway in NHS Wales and an encouragement to people living with diabetes to maintain their diabetic control and attend their DESW screening appointment.



Archwiliadau Iechyd Llygaid Cymru Eye Health Examination Wales

The Eye Health Examination Wales (EHEW) is part of the Wales Eye Care Service (WECS). WECS is inclusive of the EHEW, Low Vision Service Wales (LVSW) and the Diabetic Eye Screening Wales (DESW) service. It is funded by the Welsh Government and Health Boards and managed by the Health Boards in Wales.

The Eye Health Examination Wales is an extended eye care service which is free at the point of access for patients and demonstrates the principles of prudent health care enabling patients to access eye care services closer to their home.

The service has been in operation in different formats in Wales since 2003 and has been partly replicated across England and Northern Ireland due to its success and the impact it has had for patients and professionals here in Wales. Optometrists who provide the service undergo ongoing training and re-accreditation every 3 years. The service is subject to audit and evaluation.

Patients are able to access the EHEW service in a primary care optometry practice if they have an eye problem they feel needs urgent investigation, rather than attending a GP practice, Emergency Department (A & E) or an Eye Department in a hospital. This reduces the demands on GPs and the Emergency Departments.

The service also enables patients who are at greatest risk of developing a serious eye condition or those who would be particularly disadvantaged if they lost their eyesight, to have an annual check at an optometry (optician's) practice. This is a preventative measure as many eye diseases can be undetected until the later stages when significant damage is already done to the vision. Early detection saves sight loss in those pre-disposed to developing eye conditions such as glaucoma.

Finally, the EHEW service has provision to monitor patients discharged from hospitals following uncomplicated cataract extraction and those with Ocular Hypertension (OHT) or who are glaucoma suspects. This reduces the burden on the Hospital Eye Service.

The service is effective in reducing the number of patients being referred to the hospital eye care service, has a very high patient satisfaction rate and means patients can be seen closer to home.

As a patient if you live in Wales or have a GP in Wales you can go along to an EHEW registered optometrist (optician) practice and ask to have an EHEW examination if:

1. You have an eye problem you think needs urgent attention
2. You have sight in one eye only
3. You're registered as sight impaired
4. You have a hearing impairment and are profoundly deaf
5. You suffer from retinitis pigmentosa.
6. You are of Black or Asian ethnicity
7. Your GP has referred you (the optometrist will need to confirm if you can have an EHEW examination)

Over 90% of optometrist (optician) practices offer the EHEW service so it is likely that your local practice provides the service. You can check which optometrist practices offer the service and find out more information by visiting eyecare.wales.nhs.uk.

It is a good idea to telephone ahead to book your appointment. The optometrist (optician) will carefully examine your eyes to see if anything is wrong. The tests and equipment they use will depend on what you tell them and what they find. An eye health examination is more in-depth than and different to a routine vision test, so it may take longer.

Public Health Wales - Smoking, eye health and quitting

Smoking remains the single largest cause of preventable ill health in Wales with 19% of Welsh adults reporting that they smoke (2015). Tobacco smoking is the single most controllable risk factor that contributes to the development of age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Wet (AMD) in particular is one of the leading cause of irreversible blindness in Wales and is the commonest cause of loss of vision in the elderly. More than a quarter of all cases of age-related macular degeneration with blindness or visual impairment are attributable to current or past exposure to smoking.

The majority of smokers want to stop. The recent National Survey for Wales reports 64% of smokers want to quit and 44% actively tried last year. *Smokers are four times more likely to successfully quit smoking with NHS stop smoking support, than going it alone.*

The best way to quit smoking is with free NHS stop smoking support offered through *Help Me Quit*, the single point of access for all NHS stop smoking services in Wales. By contacting *Help Me Quit*, smokers will find it easier to get the best NHS stop smoking support that suits them. Professionals can help their patients who smoke by:

- Displaying posters and contact-cards (print and/or digital).
- Asking about smoking status which can trigger a quit attempt.
- Referring patients to Help Me Quit directly by telephoning *Help Me Quit* (with client permission): 0800 085 2219, through existing referral routes or using the professional referral short-form:
www.helpmequit.wales/professional-referrer/
- Signposting patients to Help Me Quit

Smokers can get support directly by:

- Calling: 0800 085 2219, or
- Texting: HMQ to 80818 (to get a call-back), or
- Visiting: www.helpmequit.wales/quit-now to request a call-back

Wales Eye Care Services: www.eyecare.wales.nhs.uk

for more information about the Low Vision Service Wales, Diabetic Eye Screening Wales, Eye Health Examination Wales and links to third sector organisations.

Optometry Wales

Optometry Wales is the professional, umbrella organisation for all primary care optometrists, dispensing opticians and optometric practices across Wales.

This conference was organised by Wales Council of the Blind on behalf of Welsh Government.

Wales Council of the Blind is the independent umbrella organisation for vision impairment in Wales. We are not a service provider, so our independence enables us act as an impartial advisor, advocate, intermediary and evaluator for a complex, diverse group of organisations and services. We work to channel the voice of people with sight loss and their organisations to influence policy and service planning and delivery.



Wales Council of the Blind
Perspectif

People who lose their sight are often unaware of the support that is available to them to help restore confidence, independence or simply to enable them to maintain their lifestyle. Clubs, sports and leisure opportunities, social care, technical jargon, books and leaflets are all highlighted in the portal, offering crucial help at a critical time.

Perspectif website: www.wcb-ccd.org.uk/perspectif/
or contact Wales Council of the Blind on 029 20 473954.

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg. Dylech ofyn am gopi ar y ddesg gofrestru.



**NATIONAL EYE
HEALTH WEEK**
MONDAY 18 – SUNDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2017
YOUR VISION MATTERS