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Iechyd Cyhoeddus
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Public Health
Wales

Name of Meeting

Knowledge, Research
and Information
Committee

Date of Meeting

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Agenda item:

5

Prevalence of disease

Executive lead:

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Directorate

Author:

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Analysis

Approval/Scrutiny route:

Director of Research, Data and Digital
Directorate

Purpose

To update KRIC on the prevalence of disease publications

Recommendation:

APPROVE

CONSIDER

RECOMMEND

ADOPT

ASSURANCE

The Committee is asked to:

- **Note** the update for information

Link to Public Health Wales [Strategic Plan](#)

Public Health Wales has an agreed strategic plan, which has identified seven strategic priorities and well-being objectives.

This report contributes to the following:

Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	All Strategic Priorities/Well-being Objectives
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Summary impact analysis

Equality and Health Impact Assessment	Not applicable, this is a series of publications setting out the state of play for disease and modifiable risk factors in Wales.
Risk and Assurance	Risks are being managed in accordance with the Board Assurance Framework.
Health and Care Standards	This report supports the implementation of the Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act by demonstrating a transparent approach to delivering improvements that address the wider determinants of health, in line with the Duty of Quality.
Financial implications	Not Applicable
People implications	Not applicable

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to update KRIC on the prevalence of disease work that has been undertaken by the Data Science and Analysis division, in collaboration with public health colleagues across PHW and subject matter experts across the system.

Background to the prevalence of disease work

In 2023, we embarked on a new programme of work, to explore:

- The prevalence of a set of common non-communicable diseases and cancer in Wales, including an overview of inequalities
- 10-year disease projections, where possible
- Modifiable risk factors for those diseases, and their trends
- The impact of these diseases on the health system
- How we are working with our partners across the system to bring together evidence-based action to improve the health and well-being of the people of Wales.

These articles bring together a comprehensive view of the state of play in Wales for these diseases and their modifiable risk factors, and the actions we are taking in response. They are intended to help policy, planning and decision-makers understand the current prevalence and incidence of these conditions, and how they might look in the future if nothing changes, such as the introduction of a health or policy intervention, aimed at the factors influencing prevalence. The work builds on and updates [Health and its determinants in Wales \(2018\)](#).

These articles took a novel approach for Public Health Wales for two reasons.

Firstly, we included projections of trends 10 years into the future, where this is possible. This allows us to estimate what the future holds, in the absence of significant changes. We can use this to focus activity on those areas where pressure is likely to become unsustainable, and to identify those areas where pressures are increasing.

Secondly, in response to feedback from the Annual Impact Survey we have combined the data-driven analysis and expert interpretation with sections on how we are working across the system to tackle these diseases and their modifiable risks factors.

What we have achieved

Diabetes

The first disease we covered was diabetes. We found that, if current trends continue, by 2035/36, we estimate that around 1 in 11 adults (17+ years old) will be living with diabetes in Wales. This is 260,000 people, an increase of nearly 48,000 people (22%) compared with 2021/2022.

This analysis was a call to arms for the system. As a result, the [Tackling Diabetes Together Programme](#) (TDTP), led by Public Health Wales, was created. The programme unites the knowledge, research and expertise of NHS Wales including Health Boards, NHS Trusts, Public Health Wales, the Welsh Value in Health Centre, the clinical diabetes network and third-party partners, along with the lived experience of those with diabetes, to enable system-wide benefits of focusing on prevention and effective care for those with diabetes.

TDTP has two goals, that by 2028: we will have fewer people in Wales living with diabetes, and we will have better care and outcomes for those already living with diabetes.

Outcomes

In addition to driving the inception of the Tackling Diabetes Together Programme, our projections work has had a significant reach across the system. We have informed and supported decision-making, and built analytical capability across a diverse set of use cases and stakeholders. Some examples of how our work has been used are:

- [Challenges NHS Wales will face over the next 10 to 25 years](#), Welsh Government, 2023 – providing analysis and text into this report, which set the scene for Welsh Government health policy and priorities
- Supporting the shift to focus on prevention, through NHS Confederation member briefings on the prevalence of disease projections for the Senedd Elections
- Informing NHS planning, through a workshop at the NHS Wales planning event, with directors of planning and finance
- Informing planning for future requirements for cardiac surgery services in the South Wales region, 2023
- Increasing our reach through sharing code and coaching NHS Executive staff to embed projections into their disease-specific dashboards to support value in health in Wales
- Informing workforce planning at HEIW for diabetes and respiratory disease, sharing methodology to upskill their team in projections capability
- Presented and shared outputs with cancer, diabetes, respiratory disease, cardiovascular disease and musculoskeletal disease networks, clinical and stakeholder groups, Welsh Government, NHS Executive, Directors of Public Health
- Supporting Welsh Government's mental health policy-makers, including mapping data sources and data gaps.
- Capability-building in collaboration with Cardiff University, leading an interactive seminar on what-if scenario analysis.

Publications and quality assurance

We are publishing our work in a series of web articles, as set out in the section Publications – links and schedule.

As we have developed each article, the team have presented work in progress to a wide range of stakeholders, including clinical networks, expert groups, public health consultants, planning and finance professionals, and the Welsh Government. We have sought feedback, input and quality assurance from across the system, to enrich the analysis we have carried out. Whilst this process has taken longer than anticipated, it has undoubtedly improved the quality and content of our articles.

This process of development and quality assurance has ensured that we have had a wide audience for this work, even in advance of publication. We are now seeking feedback on the articles and process, so that we can improve in the future.

Publications – links and schedule

This is a list of our publications, and the schedule for publication of the remaining articles.

- [Diabetes prevalence – trends, risk factors, and 10-year projections](#)
- [A summary of prevalence of non-communicable disease and cancer incidence in Wales – trends and 10-year projections](#)
- [A summary of trends for risk factors for non-communicable diseases](#)
- [Cardiovascular disease - trends and 10-year projections](#)
- Respiratory disease - trends and 10-year projections – 19 June 2025
- Musculoskeletal disease - trends and 10-year projections - August 2025
- Cancer – July 2025
- Smoking - TBD
- Mental health - TBD

Data available to us is somewhat fragmented for mental health. We intend to publish a wiki on GitHub, a collaborative platform. This will allow partners and stakeholders to add to the review of mental health (non-identifiable) data and knowledge we have collated, updating and improving the range and quality of information made available, and providing a focus for collaboration.

Next Steps

Our next steps are to:

- complete the publication series
- review feedback on the engagement, process and outcomes, from stakeholders and the team
- consider the publication of projections in the future, particularly in the light of the opportunities the new Public Health Wales website and the National

Data and Analytics Platform (NDAP) offer us for streamlining and improving processes.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- **Note** the update for information

Acknowledgements

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