

 <p> GIG CYMRU NHS WALES </p> <p> Iechyd Cyhoeddus Cymru Public Health Wales </p>	<p> Name of Meeting Knowledge, Research and Information Committee Date of Meeting 23 September 2025 Agenda item: 3.3 </p>
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Strategic Priority 1 – Influencing the Wider Determinants of Health	
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Approval/Scrutiny route:	Sumina Azam, National Director of Policy and International Health
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<p> Purpose The purpose of the report is to provide the Knowledge, Research and Information Committee with an update on Public Health Wales’ International Health Strategy progress to date. </p>

Recommendation:				
APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/>	CONSIDER <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	RECOMMEND <input type="checkbox"/>	ADOPT <input type="checkbox"/>	ASSURANCE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the work that has been undertaken and future plans for Public Health Wales’ International Health Strategy and • Take assurance on progress to date. 				



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
Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	Choose an item.
Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	Choose an item.

Summary impact analysis

Equality and Health Impact Assessment	No Equality and Health Impact Assessment has been undertaken as no decision is required.
Risk and Assurance	Risks are being managed in accordance with the Board Assurance Framework.
Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act	This report supports the implementation of the Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act by demonstrating a transparent approach to delivering improvements, in line with the Duty of Quality.
Financial implications	Financial implications are being considered as part of this work programme.
People implications	People implications are being considered as part of this work programme.

1. Purpose / situation

This paper provides assurance to the Committee on progress being made with implementation of Public Health Wales' International Health Strategy.

2. Overview

Public Health Wales's [International Health Strategy 2023-2035](#) was updated and published in October 2023 to align with, and enable delivery of, [Public Health Wales' Long Term Strategy](#) (LTS) and to better reflect the significant changes in the global landscape since the original International Health Strategy was published in 2017. A wide consultation process, supported by a literature review and mapping of international partnerships, research and collaborations across the organisation, enabled us to identify and articulate our vision, aims and enabling activities for the next ten years. This work was carried out and is now led by the International Health Coordination Centre (IHCC).

Our international health vision is to be a globally connected and inspiring national public health organisation, working towards a healthier and fairer Wales to address worldwide challenges and shared goals.

The aims of the International Health Strategy are to:

- Maximise benefits for the health and well-being of the people in Wales
- Develop globally responsible people and organisations
- Respond to global health threats and benefit from international opportunities

The six enabling international health activities which underpin the aims are:

1. Strengthen partnerships, collaborations, and networks.
2. Drive best practice and innovation.
3. Build globally responsible citizens through building relationships nationally and internationally and fulfilling international commitments.
4. Provide an 'International Health Forum'
5. Create an international health repository and Newsletter.
6. Support international opportunities for funding and capacity building.

The Strategy has taken a high-level overarching approach to our international work and collaborations, allowing dynamic reflection, flexibility and response to emerging global, European and UK developments, challenges and opportunities, including the cost of living crisis and the Ukraine War.

Successful implementation involves:

- Facilitation and sharing of knowledge, expertise and good practice with the UK and international / global health organisations and partners
- High-level cross-directorate strategic action
- Integration into existing planning models
- Strengthening existing, and developing new, international collaborations, networks and sustainable partnerships

- Dissemination and communication to raise awareness of global learning and knowledge exchange.
- Monitoring and evaluation of implementation and impact of the International Health Strategy.

3. Progress Update

During 2023-2025, the International Health Coordination Centre (IHCC) has facilitated the implementation and delivery of our International Health Strategy through focusing on activity which can mobilise knowledge and actions to benefit the people of Wales. The IHCC is an enabling vehicle for International Health activity in Public Health Wales and across the NHS in Wales.

Examples of actions include:

- Strengthening partnerships, collaborations and networks by providing space for teams to connect and learn from one another through our [International Public Health Forum](#) and International Health Activity Group;
- Refreshing the Charter for International Health Partnerships [Toolkit](#) with new resources to enable cross collaboration;
- Sharing insight and learning via [newsletters](#) and providing information on best practice and how this can be adapted to the Wales wide context;
- Facilitating learning about Global Citizenship and what it means to be a global citizen across NHS Wales.

A highlight was a visit by representatives from the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) and the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) in October 2024. Other participants at the learning exchange included Welsh Government health leaders and a representative from the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner.

The latest [IHCC Progress Report](#) (2022-24) was published in June 2025. This report showcased findings from key informant interviews, International Health activity research and knowledge exchange and case studies from colleagues in Public Health Wales, NHS Wales, Welsh Government, academia and the third sector.

3.1 Monitoring and Evaluation

Year 1 International Health Strategy monitoring and evaluation was carried out in December 2024. It used key indicators taken from the Implementation Plan developed by the IHCC to identify activities and actions to date. The evaluation drew upon evidence from a range of evidence sources, for example newsletter ‘opens’, forum attendance, publications and feedback from workshops and lectures. Table 1 highlights activities carried out by the IHCC.

Table 1. International Health strategy implementation - year 1 mapping

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Key indicators (activities and outreach)	Delivery to IH Strategy enabling activities
8 Strategy awareness presentations across Directorates and networks	1, 3, 5
2 Strategy implementation webinars	1, 5
2 International Public Health Forums attended by 88 participants	2, 5
8 NHS International Health Activity Group meetings; the group has grown by 28% year on year	1, 2, 6
7 Global Citizenship workshops in person and online, including the Early Careers Network	3
2 UK Four Nations Global Public Health Forums (with the CMOs) organised and chaired by Wales	1, 2, 6
2 National Public Health Institute visits to Wales organised (the Netherlands and Quebec)	1, 2, 6
1 High-level (Ministerial) Policy Dialogue organised with Welsh Government and WHO	1,2, 6
9 Horizon Scanning and Learning reports developed, 7 published with over 1,000 views and over 700 unique opens	2, 6
7 International Health Newsletters published with nearly 1,000 opens - a 75% open rate.	2, 4, 6
The International Health Newsletter Mailchimp list has grown by 15% year on year	5
5 Global Health Lectures at Cardiff University	3
1 Charter for International Health Partnerships Toolkit Refreshed and published	1, 2, 3

Table 1 shows activities mapped to the Strategy's enabling activities, demonstrating progress in establishing networks for sharing international learning and knowledge exchange and engagement activity to communicate our offer of support as well as promoting capability across the public health workforce.

There is also International Health activity and partnership working across the organisation; Table 2 summarises Key Strategic International Partnerships 2023-25.



Table 2. Organisational International Partnerships

<p>WHO Regional Office's for Europe (WHO EURO) and the WHO European Regions for Health Network (RHN)</p>	<p>The renewed MOU between WHO EURO and Welsh Government (2023-2026) aims to advance progress towards health and equity in Wales and the WHO European region and strengthen the role of Wales in the WHO European Region and globally. Public Health Wales is key to the delivery of the MOU commitments through work such as the Welsh Health Equity Status Report initiative (WHESRI) and unique Solutions Platform (WHESP); the Health in the Well-Being Economy initiative; and Sustainable Investment in prevention innovative tools.</p> <p>Through joint work the WHO Regional Office for Europe (Venice, Italy), we have been involved in co-authoring and leading the development of four country deep dive reports on Well-Being Economies in Iceland, Finland, Scotland, and Wales (published 2024), and supporting / working with the WHO Regional Office for Europe, Venice in organising events and webinars. Events include <i>“Reimagining an economy for resilient and healthier societies that leave no one behind”</i>, a <i>“WHO Healthy Cities”</i> webinar, and the second <i>Well-being Forum</i> in Iceland. The Country Deep Dive on Wales focuses on Wales’s innovative approaches to advancing a Well-being Economy. Public Health Wales representatives have also supported Wales’ First Minister Eluned Morgan as WHO Champion for the European Wellbeing Economy initiative.</p> <p>The Wales Health Impact Assessment Support Unit have provided expert advice and peer reviewed policy briefs for the WHO Regional Office for Environment and Health in Bonn to support practice and advocacy for HIA in Ministries for Health and National Public Health Institutes.</p>
<p>The International Association of National Public Health Institutes (IANPHI)</p>	<p>Public Health Wales has full IANPHI membership, and its role has been strengthened with Prof. Meng Khaw, National Director of Screening and Health Protection Services serving as an IANPHI Focal Point Lead and Tracey Cooper (CEO) becoming an IANPHI Executive Board member.</p>
<p>EuroHealthNet</p>	<p>Public Health Wales is a member of EuroHealthNet, which advocates for policies that target the determinants of health, fostering collaboration and cross-sectoral engagement and improving the sustainability of health systems. Sumina Azam (National Director of Policy and International Health) is the Vice President of the EuroHealthNet Executive Board. Membership has enabled Public Health Wales to promote its work to a European audience, participate in cross-country exchanges and working groups on relevant topics.</p>
<p>UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)</p>	<p>Amanda Daniel, Infection Prevention and Control Specialist Community Nurse and Trustee of Global Health Partnerships Cymru,</p>

	<p>has recently been recruited to the UKHSA Public Health Rapid Support Team.</p> <p>UKHSA's quarterly Global Health Security group meetings are attended by Public Health Wales representatives Liz Green and Meng Khaw.</p> <p>Public Health Wales collaborates with UKHSA on a range of areas that require a UK Four Nations approach.</p>
The UK Faculty of Public Health (FPH)	<p>Public health professionals across Wales take part in FPH Special Interest Groups (SIGs) covering a range of topics, such as global violence prevention, sustainable development, and global health, as well as specific geographical areas including Europe, Africa and South Asia. Public Health Wales is a member of the Global Health committee, a quarterly meeting of these SIGs.</p> <p>Giri Shankar, Director of Health Protection, is co-chair of the India Special Interest Group.</p>
<p>Wales and Africa programme, including Hub Cymru Africa and the Global Health Partnerships Cymru</p>	<p>Public Health Wales continues a strong relationship with Wales and Africa, Hub Cymru Africa and Global Health Partnerships Cymru (formerly WaAHLN).</p> <p>Hub Cymru Africa have worked collaboratively with Public Health Wales, for example on the Charter for International Partnerships Toolkit refresh. Global Health Partnerships Cymru (formerly the Tropical Health Education Trust) have a new Chair, Israa Mohammed, Advanced Epidemiological Scientist, Public Health Wales.</p> <p>Global Health Partnerships UK also has a strong partnership with Public Health Wales with work underway on the 2022-24 progress report.</p> <p>Representatives from each organisation are members of the International Health Activity (IHA) Group whose members include Health Boards, Trusts, Welsh Government, 3rd Sector Partners and Academia. The group meets quarterly to discuss international health updates and opportunities.</p>

A broader organisational review including mapping of international partnerships and activity will be carried out at the end of year three of the Strategy (2026). This will be a significant undertaking for the IHCC.

3.2 Global Citizenship

[Global Citizenship E-learning](#) is available to all NHS staff. Uptake data are currently unavailable, but action is underway to address this. We are also encouraging participation through a series of webinars and in person workshops, for example Global Citizenship and Gender Equity, which have had over 100 people attend across 7 workshops to date.

4. Strategic alignment

Work is underway to ensure that the International Health Strategy is embedded in the development of the Long-Term Strategy Strategic Priority route maps. Table 3 provides examples of how the Strategic Priorities benefit from international partnerships and knowledge exchange.

Table 3. International Health Partnerships and Long Term Strategy Strategic Priorities

PHW Strategic Priority	Example of International Activity
Influencing Wider Determinants of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying solutions with WHO for health equity and supporting the NHS and wider system in Wales to reduce the health gap. Chairing of International Health Impact Assessment (HIA) conferences and events. Wales Health Impact Assessment Support Unit are established as global leaders in the field.
Promoting Mental and Social Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established as global leaders in tackling Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and multi-sectoral trauma informed approach. Members of the Five Nations Public Mental Health Network. Working with WHO and international partners on the first Global Report on social connection and health.
Promoting Healthy Behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavioural Science Unit has close working relationship with WHO and international collaborators. Wales remains among the leading countries globally in tobacco control.
Supporting a Sustainable Health and Care System Focused on Prevention and Early Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening our national and global role as a live innovation site for sustainable, Value-Based, and equity-oriented spending and investment in health and well-being through our WHO Collaborating Centre. Providing leadership on a range of global health risks, including Health Care Acquired Infections (HCAI) and Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) and vaccine preventable diseases.

<p>Delivering Excellent Public Health Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK-wide plans for pathogen genomics services have identified, where possible, a shared roadmap for service development/adoption. • UK Health Protection Committee and Four Nations Oversight Group. • Close collaboration between Health Protection and Screening Services and IANPHI and WHO.
<p>Tackling the Public Health Effects of Climate Change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Route Map follows the IANPHI roadmap for action on health and climate change. • Working with national public health institutes across Europe and globally to address the health impacts of climate change. • Working with 4 nations colleagues to address data and evidence gaps for climate change and health.

4.1 Alignment with the Research and Evaluation Strategy

Public Health Wales' Research and Evaluation Strategy highlights collaboration with researchers across Wales, UK and internationally with the aim of strengthening and extending these relationships.

Examples of alignment between the International Health Strategy and the Research and Evaluation Strategy include:

- Supporting Pathways for International Research Partnerships to deliver meaningful and impactful research and evaluation initiatives.
- Enhancing research and evaluation through global knowledge exchange by facilitating exchanges of international policy, practice, and research insights.
- Insights gained from international networks help Public Health Wales refine its research agenda to address shared global challenges such as inequalities, mental health, climate impacts.

4.2 Alignment with the Digital and Data Strategy

Public Health Wales' Digital and Data Strategy aims to 'Build in Alignment – Connecting to Global Goals and Standards.' Examples of alignment between the International Health Strategy and the Digital and Data Strategy include:

- Facilitating Global Collaboration and Shared Digital Learning for example, through the International Health Forum.
- Enabling Workforce Digital Literacy & Global Responsiveness - through digital enabled capacity building, such as the [Global Citizenship e-learning module](#).

- Platforms such as the [Welsh Health Equity Solutions Platform \(WHESP\)](#), enable co-development and knowledge exchange through digital tools.
- Using digital systems for [Horizon Scanning](#) and to support evidence-informed policy and global linkages in data.
- Global collaboration and insight are accelerators for improving the accessibility, quality, security, and utility of Public Health Wales’ digital and data systems.

4.3 International Health Partnerships and Opportunities

Public Health Wales has many UK and International partners for a range of purposes outlined in Table 4.

Table 4. Policy, Practice, Research and Funding

Engagement Type and Purpose	Example partners - UK	Example partners - international
Policy and Advocacy Driving public health policy through advocacy and engagement at all levels	Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), UK Faculty of Public Health (FPH), UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), Public Health Scotland, Institute of Public Health, Ireland, Global Health Partnerships Cymru (GHPC) Four Nations Forums/ Groups, NHS Confederation.	UN and WHO bodies, IANPHI, EuroHealthNet, European Public Health Association, Global Network for Health in All Policies (GNHiAP), Wellbeing Economy Governments (WEGO) and Wellbeing Economy Alliance.
Practice and Implementation Translating evidence/ innovation into action through system leadership, capacity and capability building	UKHSA, FPH, Four Nations Forums/ Groups, National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), NHS England.	WHO & WHO Collaborating Centres, IANPHI, EuroHealthNet, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Centre on Well-Being, Inclusion, Sustainability and Equal Opportunity (WISE), countries/ regions/ National Public Health Institutes.
Research and Evaluation Advancing evidence, research, and innovation to guide public	National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), UKHSA, UK Research Councils (RC), Wellcome Trust, King’s Fund, UCL	WHO & WHO Collaborating Centres, Universities, EUPHA, EuroHealthNet, The Lancet Commissions.

health decisions and investments	Institute of Health Equity, universities.	
Funding and Income Generation Securing existing and new funding for strategic priorities and interventions	UK Research Council & Think Tanks, the Health Foundation, Wellcome Trust, Joseph Rowntree Foundation	WHO/ Pan American Health Organization, EU Horizon Europe Cluster 1: Health, Impact Investment alliances and funders.

5. Next steps for 2025-2028

Looking forward, alignment with and delivery of the Long-Term Strategy is the focus of future actions. Future data collection and feedback will align with, and feed into, the LTS route maps.

The following activities are planned to further embed the International Health Strategy across the organisation:

- Continued alignment with the LTS route maps.
- Global Citizenship e-learning review and update.
- Strengthening collaborations and networks via quarterly newsletters, International Health Activity meetings and the bi-annual virtual International Public Health Forum.
- A publication on the advantages of international partnerships, with good practice and key learning.
- Ongoing monitoring and review of the Strategy.

An International Health Strategy update was presented to the Executive Team in August 2025, with the following additional actions agreed:

- Identifying international health ‘champions’ in each Directorate to act as conduits for international information sharing.
- Advocating for International Health working and the benefits for the people of Wales. A short animation will be created to boost engagement and key messaging around the benefits of international learning and knowledge exchange.



6. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

- **Consider** the work that has been undertaken and future plans for Public Health Wales' International Health Strategy
- **Take assurance** on progress to date