



Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2021–22

Foreword

At the time of writing last year's Welsh Language Standards Annual Report there was much optimism that we would soon be moving out of the Coronavirus pandemic and back to a 'new normal', and while that has happened to some extent it has taken a lot longer than anyone anticipated. Despite a certain frustration at not having been able to progress the Welsh language agenda as much as had been anticipated during last year's Annual Report, we are nonetheless pleased with the progress we have been able to make. There is much positive news within this report, such as increases in the number and percentages of people speaking and learning Welsh among the workforce, and improvements in our infrastructure that are continuing to facilitate how we communicate in, and about, Welsh.

The pandemic ushered in a radical change to how we work as an organisation; the enforced move to home working for a large proportion of our workforce brought many challenges but also opportunities. The lessons learned from this period have informed our new working arrangements for the future, and the days of enforced full-time presence in an office environment seem to be at an end for many. This revolution

has brought both challenges and opportunities for our use of the Welsh language as well.

There is no doubt that the potential application of technological solutions to Welsh language communication (such as the machine translation of the Teams chat function) is exciting to all of us who want Welsh to be a natural part of our day-to-day work. However, when our digital platforms exist in an 'either/or' format (e.g. our staff can choose to access our intranet home page in Welsh or English; all of our staff now have the option to set up their Microsoft Office programs to run in Welsh), this entails the staff member making a binary choice of which language to use. While undoubtedly positive for those who want to live and work more naturally through the medium of Welsh, this has the effect of taking away much of the exposure to the language for people who can't or would prefer not to purposefully engage in this way. In other words, the casual exposure to the language found by encountering bilingual signage or announcements in the office, or by overhearing colleagues talking naturally in Welsh, is not yet replicated in the digital environment. This presents a risk to us that Welsh could become entrenched within its own digital ghetto. There is no simple solution to this, but mitigating against this possibility needs to be part of the work on developing our bilingual culture described below.

One thing that has not changed, though, is PHW's commitment to the Welsh language. We continue to benefit from the leadership shown by our Board and Executive team ensuring that Welsh is visibly and audibly part of their communication; from the eagerness of our staff at all levels to learn, improve and use Welsh; and from the particular good will and commitment of our staff providing frontline services, who recognise the importance of the language in improving the health experiences of the people of Wales.

Introduction

The requirement for Public Health Wales to comply with the Welsh Language Standards (No.7) Regulations 2018 came into effect on 30 May 2019; the standards with which Public Health Wales must comply are set out in a Compliance Notice issued by the Welsh Language Commissioner in accordance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

This is our third Annual Report, and covers the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

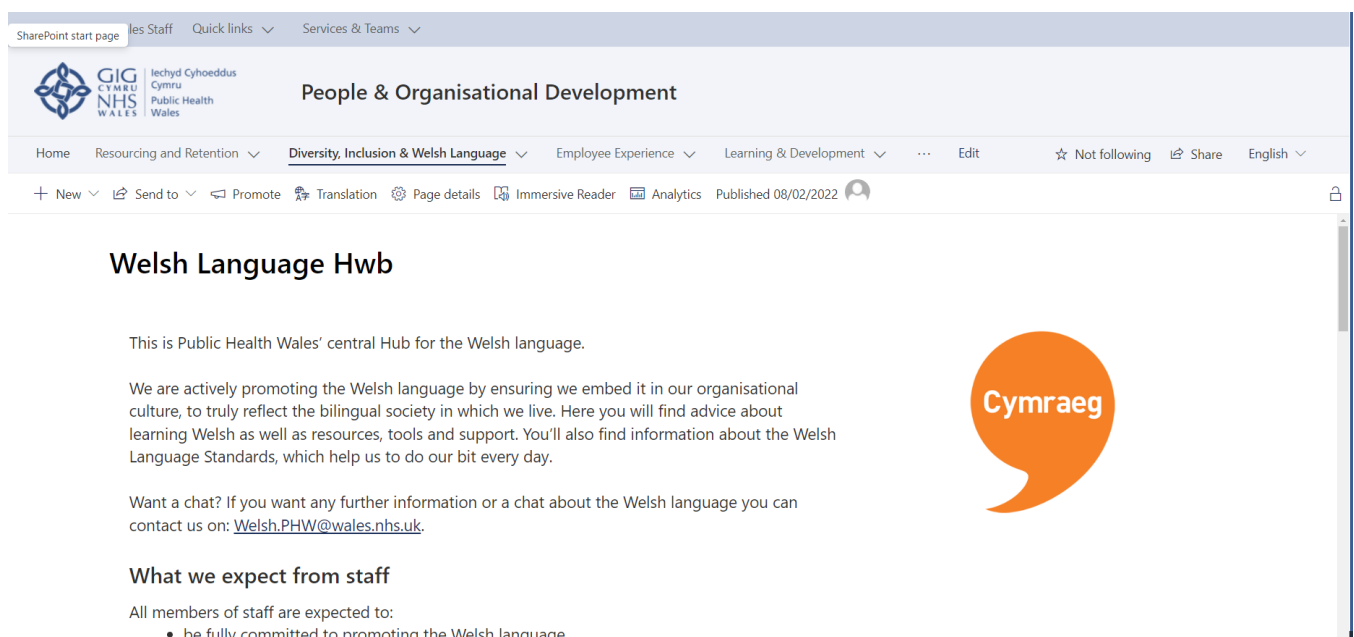
Implementing the Welsh Language Standards

Arrangements for facilitating implementation of the standards

The Director of People and Organisational Development has lead responsibility for the Welsh language in Public Health Wales; the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead is responsible for the strategic and operational planning of the Welsh language agenda.

During this period, the NHS Wales Health Collaborative (NHSWHC) also employed a full-time Welsh Language Support Officer who worked across National Clinical Networks, National Programmes and teams within the organisation to embed the Welsh language. The Public Health Wales and NHSWHC Welsh Language teams worked closely together, and they also had close working relationships with the Welsh Language Officers of other health boards and trusts, and the Welsh Language Unit within the Welsh Government's Department for Health and Social Services. These relationships help to facilitate joint working and sharing experiences and learning with the aim of improving Welsh language provision.

The Public Health Wales staff intranet includes a Welsh language section called 'Hwb', the purpose of which is to promote Welsh language services and to provide support, guidance and information in relation to implementing the Welsh Language Standards. This information was not updated during 2021–22, while a new site was in preparation; that site was launched in March 2022.



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Welsh Language Hwb

This is Public Health Wales' central Hub for the Welsh language.

We are actively promoting the Welsh language by ensuring we embed it in our organisational culture, to truly reflect the bilingual society in which we live. Here you will find advice about learning Welsh as well as resources, tools and support. You'll also find information about the Welsh Language Standards, which help us to do our bit every day.

Want a chat? If you want any further information or a chat about the Welsh language you can contact us on: Welsh.PHW@wales.nhs.uk.

What we expect from staff

All members of staff are expected to:

- be fully committed to promoting the Welsh language

Cymraeg

Public Health Wales procures translation and interpretation services through the Welsh Translation and Interpretation Framework Agreement, which is managed by the National Procurement Service (NPS). We also have a Service Level Agreement with the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership for document translation services. We continue to consider how we will meet our future translation needs.

Self-regulation

Individual directors are responsible for putting arrangements in place in their own directorates, which provide them with assurance that Welsh language requirements are being met in full. For example, our Screening Division has a Welsh language group chaired by a Public Health Consultant and attended by managers from each of the screening programmes; there are action plans, minutes and action logs, and progress is monitored closely and reported to the division's senior management team. The NHSWCH has its own Welsh Language Implementation group, which is chaired by the Assistant Director of Finance and has representatives across all areas of the organisation. This group supports the Welsh Language Officer to gather information in order to monitor and report progress to the senior management team while also enabling collaboration across the organisation to find opportunities for improvement and share best practice.

Directorates are required to self-assess their compliance with each standard and to submit exception reports to the Director of People and Organisational Development. The reports should highlight only the implementation challenges they are experiencing, confirmation of the standards with which they are not compliant and the reasons for non-compliance. Any standards not mentioned in directorate reports indicate full compliance.

The Board's People and Organisational Development Committee and the Executive Team both receive regular reports on Welsh language matters. The Welsh Language Group, comprising representatives from every directorate and the NHSWCH, meets quarterly to consider performance issues.

Handling concerns

Public Health Wales welcomes feedback from service users, the public and employees on the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards. We want to learn from their experiences, good or bad, and we will make improvements where there are deficiencies.

We deal with concerns from service users and the public regarding the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards in accordance with our

corporate 'Putting Things Right' procedures. We deal with concerns from our employees in accordance with the All Wales Respect & Resolution policy.

Service Delivery Standards (1–64)

Correspondence and telephone (Standards 1–20)

We have an organisation-wide Language Preference Database to facilitate corresponding with colleagues in other organisations in accordance with their language preference. The database was populated following a mailing to all our stakeholders to ask them for their language preference, and is available via the Hwb for all staff to access, consult and add to.

A statement that Public Health Wales welcomes the use of the Welsh language by others has been shared with directorates with the instruction that it must be included in all correspondence. Our Service Level Agreement with the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership ensures that we can access timely translation of correspondence.

The requirement of Standard 17 (that all calls to direct dial lines be dealt with in Welsh until the caller needs to be transferred to someone to deal with a specific subject matter) continues to be a challenge. At the time of writing, that challenge is theoretical rather than practical given that the majority of our staff are still working from home. We continue to monitor this situation and consider possible solutions should our staff return to working on our premises more regularly. It is noted that many of our teams are working on Health Board premises (rather than on estates owned or managed by PHW) so some of the telephony issues will be beyond our control and dependent on Health Boards themselves meeting their obligations under the Standards.

Meetings, events and documents (Standards 21–38)

We continue to hold the majority of our meetings online, and the lack of an interpreters' channel on Teams has continued to present a logistical challenge. During 2021–22 the EDI Lead and the Head of Informatics worked with Microsoft, testing the beta version of the interpretation channel being developed for Teams. Microsoft have advised of their target to roll this out internationally before summer 2022. We encourage staff to use the machine translation available in the Teams chat function to enable

This document is also available in Welsh

meeting participants to contribute in writing naturally in the Welsh language, should that be their choice.

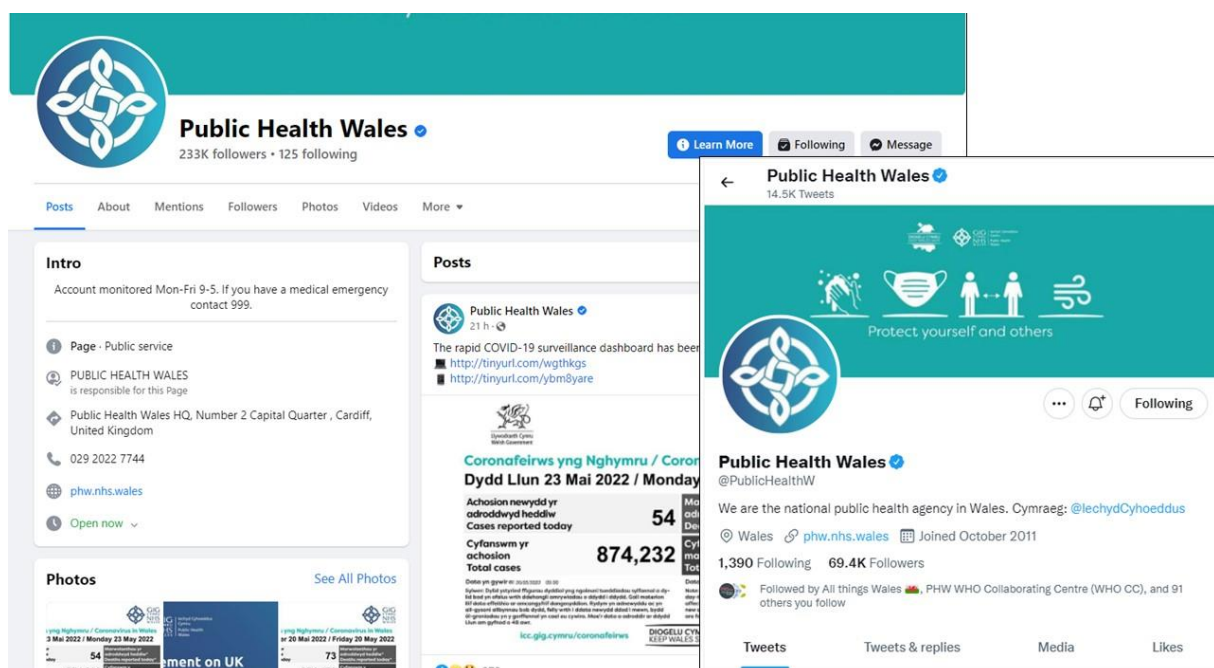
Among the guidance available to our staff on the Welsh Hwb pages of our intranet is a tool to help identify easily whether a document should be made available in Welsh, along with standard statements for inclusion on all translated documents.

The Hwb pages also have extensive advice for staff on procuring translations, including tips on briefing a translator for best results and on quality assurance once a translation is returned, to ensure that all relevant documents are produced in Welsh of the highest standard.

Electronic communication (Standards 39–46)

Our corporate website can be found at <https://phw.nhs.wales> (English) and <https://icc.gig.cymru> (Welsh), on which we publish new Welsh and English content simultaneously. We ensure that we regularly audit our webpages and digital content, and if we discover that any English and Welsh pages do not correspond, this is rectified by the Welsh language team and digital editors working together.

We have parallel Welsh and English Twitter feeds (@IechydCyhoeddus and @PublicHealth Wales), and Facebook pages (www.Facebook.com/IechydCyhoeddusCymru and www.Facebook.com/PublicHealthWales).



Signage and reception services (Standards 47–53)



All new signs are displayed in Welsh and English. The vast majority of our signs that pre-existed the Welsh language standards are bilingual. Where they are in English only, we will replace them with bilingual signs when they require replacement due to poor condition or require amendment.

The Welsh Language Commissioner's 'Work Welsh' signage is used in our reception areas, offices and laboratories, and bilingual staff have been issued with 'Work Welsh' badges and lanyards, all of which convey to service users that they are welcome to use the Welsh language with us. There is now a simple online order form staff can use to obtain 'Work Welsh' materials, both 'speaker' and 'learner' versions, and electronic versions of the logos for staff to download from the Hwb, to use in their email signatures, Teams backgrounds, etc.

All vacancies for staff working on receptions continue to be advertised as 'Welsh essential', and we often face challenges in recruiting to these posts as people with Welsh skills are so sought-after in the workplace.

Procurement and contracts (Standards 54–64)

There was work planned for this year to strengthen our procurement arrangements with regard to the Welsh language, which had been paused during the pandemic. A finding by the Welsh Language Commissioner that a third-party supplier acting on our behalf had been in breach of the Standards gave us further incentive to drive this work forward.

We had been relying on the NHS Wales standard terms and conditions in our contracts with third parties, which include the following clause:

'The Contractor warrants and undertakes that it will not perform this Contract in such a way as to render the Authority or any Beneficiary in breach of its obligations in respect of the Welsh language including but not limited to its obligations under the Government of

Wales Act 2006, the Welsh Language Act 1993 or the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.'

However, this was not considered robust enough to ensure that the third parties providing services on our behalf were fully aware of detail the Standards that would apply, and how these would work in practice. Working with procurement colleagues from the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP), we implemented the following improvements:

- The Head of Procurement at NWSSP shares the PHW procurement workplan with the EDI Lead to enable identification of projects where the Standards will apply before the procurement exercise has even begun.
- Guidance on Welsh language considerations has been strengthened in the standard procurement training given to PHW teams, including the need to be explicit about the relevant Standards and their practical application, how to score against those requirements when selecting a supplier, and signposting to PHW support for any queries associated with Welsh language needs.
- Procurement colleagues refer draft specification documents to the EDI Lead if Welsh language needs are not sufficiently detailed.
- Full guidance on best practice when detailing Welsh requirements within specification documents, including worked examples and advice on building quality assurance of Welsh provision into the management of the contract, is available on the Welsh Hwb intranet area, and supplied to colleagues when they undergo procurement training.
- Full details of these new arrangements were shared with colleagues in an organisation-wide news article, and cascaded through the Welsh Language Group.

Policy Making Standards (65–77)

The Public Health Wales 'Policy and Written Control Documents' procedures require an Equality and Health Impact Assessment (EHIA) to be undertaken and submitted before a policy can be approved. Questions regarding the effect of a decision on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English have been mainstreamed into this process, which also stipulates the need to seek views relating to the Welsh language in consultation exercises.

In January 2020, our Board agreed to publish all new policies bilingually on our website. With the advent of the pandemic, policy development and

renewal was paused but restarted during 2021–22, and Welsh versions are uploaded whenever new policies are added or current policies revised.

Operational Standards (79–114)

Internal language use (Standards 79–95)

A policy and procedure on the internal use of the Welsh language within Public Health Wales was another piece of work that had been stalled due to the pandemic; a draft had been prepared but had not progressed through governance arrangements.

A review of the draft during 2021 indicated areas for improvement, so working with stakeholders within the organisation, such as the Welsh Language Group and Welsh speakers and learners on our dedicated Teams channel, a revised draft was produced. This gave less detail of the Welsh Language Standards and compliance (full information on which is available elsewhere in our resources), and put more emphasis on culture, leadership, and encouragement of all to progress along the language continuum by using whatever Welsh they have. This draft has now been entered into the consultation process, the start of the governance route, for 2022–23.

The Welsh language has prominence in our 'People Strategy 2020–30: Our Workforce to achieve a healthier future for Wales'. It identifies that Public Health Wales needs to:

- attract subject specialists with high level Welsh language skills in front-line roles
- prioritise identification of skills gaps, recruitment and learning of Welsh to ensure that we have sufficient Welsh speakers in front-line roles
- support the users of diversity and Welsh language data to help monitor the take-up of services and review health inequalities and Welsh language provision
- support our employees to use Welsh language interfaces and software
- understand the impact of Welsh language requirements on our ability to attract and recruit
- attract a rich pool of applicants for every vacancy including sufficient numbers of Welsh speakers
- increase capability and capacity in relation to Welsh language skills
- make available to employees a clear, sustainable and targeted offering for acquiring, developing and supporting Welsh language skills based on identified service needs and outcomes

We have been capitalising on the opportunities presented to us by the new digital environment, such as Teams. We have a dedicated Cymraeg Teams channel, which has sub-threads for General, 'Siaradwyr' and 'Dysgwyr' (all are welcome to join and participate in any thread in whichever language they choose).

The Siaradwyr thread enables our fluent Welsh speakers to converse on any topic in Welsh, and also to discuss linguistic matters (e.g. terminology) that arise in their work.

The Dysgwyr thread is where our staff who are learning Welsh can share questions, successes or items of interest to other learners, and the Welsh team can support and encourage, and publicise events within and outside of the organisation. In this channel we encourage the use of written Welsh wherever possible; those who are learning the language are encouraged to 'have a go' – if they can't quite understand something that is written, we recommend using the machine translation in the Teams chat to translate to English to pick up the parts they have missed, which is a great learning opportunity.

Through this Teams channel we have developed regular drop-in sessions for those who would like to practise their Welsh. Given our national spread (PHW has in excess of 50 locations), it has historically been difficult to organise practice sessions anywhere but our largest office in Cardiff. But with online sessions, staff can join from wherever they are – we also have the ability to separate the session out into "breakout rooms" for smaller group chats, if appropriate.

During 2021–22 we were unable to update the staff intranet as a new version was being produced. With the launch of the new site in 2022 we have been able to supply our staff with improved information and resources covering all aspects of using and learning Welsh in the workplace. We now have much more flexibility in the content of these pages, and during 2022–23 will be continuing to improve and develop the content, including such features as a regularly updated 'events' area, and a revision and refresh of our Standards 'quick guides'.

Staff training (Standards 96–103)

Public Health Wales has continued to promote learning Welsh during this time via the National Centre for Learning Welsh (NCLW) 'Work Welsh' scheme. All employees are encouraged to complete the online courses offered by the NCLW in work time or in their own time as they prefer. During 2021–22, 97 staff members registered for courses offered by the NCLW. Table 1 shows the number of employees who have registered for each course. This constitutes a marked increase on the numbers of registrations from the previous year, and illustrates that the organisation

is moving forward positively, with members of staff having an enthusiastic outlook towards the Welsh language. Both this and the previous year will have been affected by the pandemic, so we aim to increase these numbers again during 2022–23.

Table 1: PHW registration on NCLW courses

Course	Number of registrations
Welcome / Croeso 1	57
Welcome / Croeso 2	18
Welcome Back / Croeso Nôl 1	9
Welcome Back / Croeso Nôl 2	4
Healthcare Sector 1	3
Healthcare Sector 2	2
Improving Your Welsh 1	4
TOTAL	97

In addition, four of our staff have taken the opportunity to attend the week-long, intensive 'Defnyddio Cymraeg Gwaith' courses run by Nant Gwrtheyrn to help individuals upskill their ability to operate at work in Welsh: one at Intermediate level, two at the Higher level and one on the Written Skills course for fluent speakers. One of these learners attended the residential course, while three chose to attend the virtual offering online; this added flexibility in how to attend courses has increased the accessibility for our staff.

Public Health Wales Staff Quick links Services & Teams

People & Organisational Development

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+ New Send to Promote Translation Page details Immersive Reader Analytics Draft saved 18/02/2022 Edit Republish

Learning Welsh

Public Health Wales is committed to supporting all colleagues to start learning Welsh or to develop existing Welsh language skills and will continue to update you all on current and new opportunities via these pages, the Cymraeg Teams channels and our regular staff updates.

Cymraeg Teams channel

We have a Cymraeg Team, with channels for learners and for fluent speakers – this is where you can find out about learning/practice opportunities and cultural events, share questions and tips with other learners or just get to know other Welsh speakers in the organisation. If you would like to join, just drop us a line at Welsh.PHW@wales.nhs.uk.

DW I'N DYSGU CYMRAEG

In the autumn of 2021 we entered into arrangements with Bangor and Cardiff universities to make their year-long Welsh courses available to our staff; 6 members of staff enrolled with Bangor and 16 with Cardiff. The majority of these (20) were at the Entry level, with 3 at Foundation and 1 at Advanced. Once again, the added flexibility and accessibility of new online arrangements for classes has made them more feasible for our staff to attend. We will be reviewing these arrangements with our staff before deciding whether to enter into the same arrangements again for courses beginning in autumn 2022.

With the advent of remote working, the regular in-person induction programme ('Welcome, Engage, Network, Develop') had to be paused. However, a new approach was trialled for the mass recruitment to our Microbiology laboratories in the autumn of 2020 which involved a dedicated micro-site containing videos from different areas of the business. Among these was a video from the Welsh Language team giving an introduction to the language (history, geography, general context, Welsh as a living and community language, the importance of bilingual services); information on statutory requirements such as the Welsh Language Standards, and the *Cymraeg 2050* and *More Than Just Words* strategies; introduction to the PHW Welsh culture and what the new employee can expect to see and hear; and signposting to support available within the organisation, such as the internet 'Hwb' and the contribution of the Welsh Language Officer. This format proved to be successful and was been rolled out to all new employees until in-person induction can recommence. A review of all induction procedures, including Welsh language, is scheduled for 2022–23.

Additionally, all Public Health Wales employees are required to complete the NHS Wales Welsh Language Awareness e-learning module. As of 31 March 2022, 92.84% of the organisation were compliant with this module. This is a small drop when compared with last year's compliance levels at year-end (which was 94.01%), and this is consistent with our statutory



and mandatory training compliance levels overall in the organisation. This none the less is in excess of the Welsh Government's target rate, and we will continue to strive to drive this up towards our organisational 95% target rate.

Recruitment (Standards 106–109)

Alongside developing the Welsh language skills of our employees, recruiting bilingual staff is part of our workforce planning approach to ensure the delivery of Welsh-medium services. A Welsh language skills assessment tool is now an integral part of the managers' recruitment process for each job, and the Welsh Language team regularly works with managers to make sure their Welsh-essential vacancies are targeted and marketed towards Welsh-speaking communities.

As with many things, the move towards having all of our job descriptions and advertisements published bilingually was slowed by the pandemic, but the revision of the central NHS recruitment system ('Trac 3') has given our recruitment team the opportunity to strengthen the guidance given at the beginning of the process – a window appears that makes explicit the need to upload English and Welsh versions separately to different areas of the website. The PHW archive of translated job descriptions, which will relieve some of the financial burden of translating standard documents, was also delayed but is near completion and launch at time of writing.

Work for 2022–23, in conjunction with the recruitment team, includes organisation-wide awareness-raising of the Welsh language requirements for publishing recruitment documents, and a remodelling of the Welsh skills assessment form into an online version to reduce 'friction cost' and facilitate compliance.

Remaining Operational Standards (Standards 110–114)

We welcomed the guidance from the Welsh Language Commissioner's office regarding the Clinical Consultation Plan that was received in March 2022. This has brought more clarity to the requirements and much-needed advice on structure, content and approach. Completion and publication of this plan, revised to reflect the guidance supplied in March, is now one of the main priorities for 2022–23.

Record Keeping Standards (119–121)

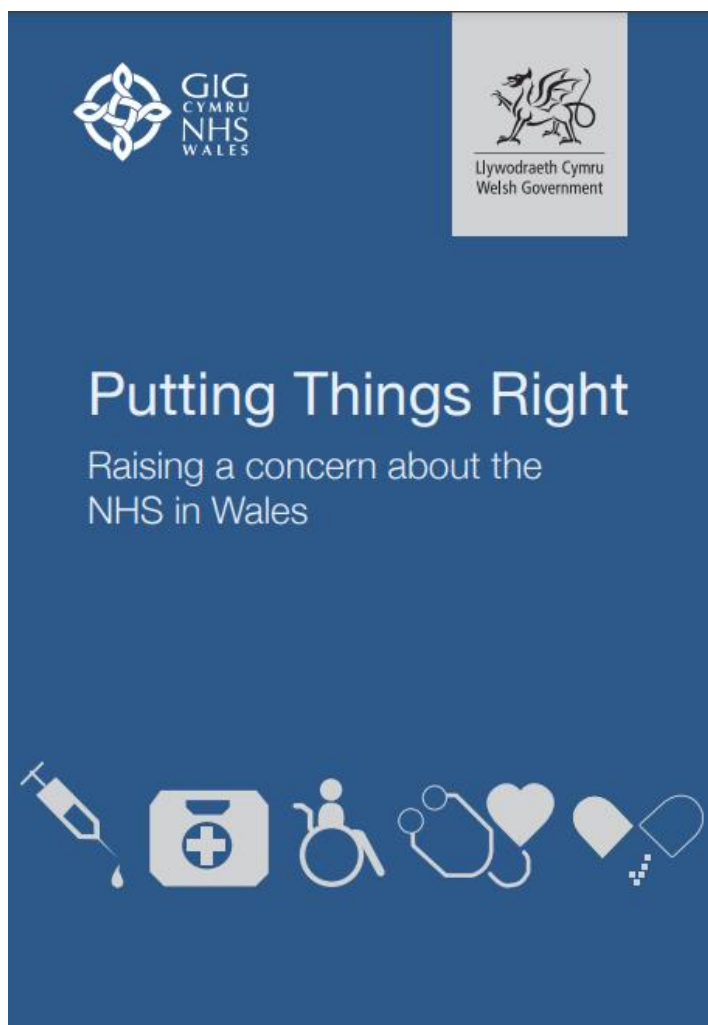
Complaints procedure (Standard 119)

Public Health Wales has a complaints policy and procedure, published on the Public Health Wales website. Both documents reflect the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. We have also published a document on

the website relating specifically to concerns about complying with Welsh language standards.

All complaints must be recorded on Datix, which is the NHS Wales healthcare risk management, incident reporting and adverse event reporting system. When complaints relating to the Welsh language are recorded on the system, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead receives an email notification, and these complaints are also reported to the Welsh Language Group and to the Board Quality and Safety Committee.

Number of complaints received (Standard 115)



Public Health Wales received four Welsh-related complaints and comments during 2021–22 via our own Putting Things Right (PTR) procedure. In addition, we received a complaint via the Welsh Language Commissioner, and resolved a complaint received in the previous year via the Welsh Language Commissioner.

Only two of the four comments or complaints received through the PTR route concerned possible breaches of the Standards, while the other two were recommendations for how we might make the Welsh service even more effective for the Welsh speakers we contact.

However, they also give us much to think about in terms

of how we might be able to go above and beyond the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards, and how that has the potential to improve the quality of the data we gather and the services that we provide for the Welsh population. We will continue to embrace the opportunity to improve presented by this feedback, and be grateful to those members of the public who take the time to contact us with their thoughts and concerns.

Employees' Welsh language skills (Standard 116)

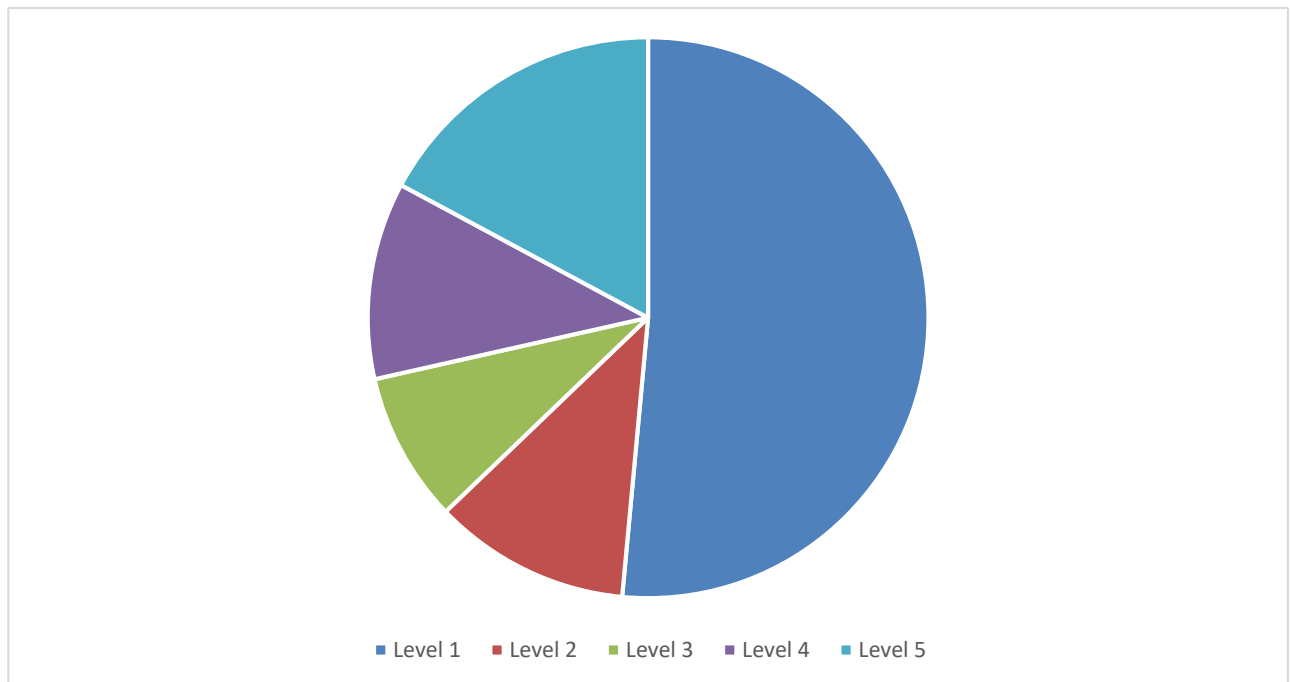
2096 employees (90% of the workforce) have recorded their ability to speak Welsh on the Electronic Staff Record (ESR). Table 2 shows the number and percentage of these employees who are proficient at each level (see also Figure 1); 251 employees (12% of those declared) have Welsh language skills at Levels 4 and 5 (10.8% of the total workforce), which is a rise in both number and percentage on the corresponding figure from 2020–21 (208 staff and 11.6% of those declared). We have also seen a small rise in staff reporting basic (Level 1) skills, and a drop in those reporting no Welsh skills at all.

This all shows movement in the right direction, in terms of both reporting and levels of Welsh skills within the workforce. However, what is most important is making sure that those skills are put to use where they are needed most, whether that is in service provision, communication or administrative duties.

Table 2: PHW Welsh skills declaration rates

	Number	Percentage
Public Health Wales headcount as at 31/03/2022	2331	100%
Employees who have recorded their Welsh speaking skills as at 31/03/2022	2096	90%
Employees who have not recorded their Welsh speaking skills as at 31/03/2022	235	10%
Level 0	1216	58.0%
Level 1	453	21.6%
Level 2	100	4.8%
Level 3	76	3.6%
Level 4	100	4.8%
Level 5	151	7.2%
TOTAL	2096	100.0%

Figure 1: Skill levels of those staff who have some Welsh



Welsh language skill requirements of new and vacant posts (Standard 117)

Standard 106 requires Public Health Wales to categorise every new and vacant post by its Welsh language skill requirements. During 2021–22, Public Health Wales advertised 802 posts. Table 3 shows the number and percentage of posts advertised by each language category.

Table 3: Welsh skills in PHW recruitment

Categorisation of posts	Number	Percentage
Welsh language skills are essential	35	4.4%
Welsh language skills need to be learnt when appointed to the post	0	0.0%
Welsh language skills are desirable	655	81.7%
Welsh language skills are not necessary	112	14.0%

The percentage of posts advertised as 'Welsh Essential' has increased from 2.6% in 2020–21 to 4.4% in 2021–22; most of these are in our front-line services. This is matched by a slight drop in those posts listed as

'Welsh Desirable' (from 83.1% in 2020–21 to 81.7% in 2021–22) and 'Welsh not necessary' (from 14.2% in 2020–21 to 14.0% in 2021–22; most of these were in our highly technical occupations, such as specialist biomedical sciences).

Priorities for 2022–23

We will focus on the following areas:

- Ensuring that the outstanding areas of compliance, such as the Clinical Consultation Plan and Internal use of Welsh Policy, are completed and signed off.
- Embedding expertise and responsibility for Welsh language issues across the People and Organisational Development team.
- Refreshing the PHW Welsh Language Group to ensure robust communication channels, and monitoring and reporting arrangements for compliance.
- A reinvigoration of the organisation's bilingual culture, including investigating solutions to the challenges presented to Welsh visibility by the digital environment.