

Expansion of medical education in Wales

By 2019, through collaboration between Cardiff and Bangor Universities, arrangements are expected to be in place for students to be able to study all of their medical degree in north Wales.

This will be accompanied by an immediate expansion of medical education in Wales, with 40 new funded medical places available from September, 20 in each of Cardiff and Swansea medical schools. Swansea University will also collaborate with Aberystwyth University to increase opportunities in west Wales.

Students will undertake as much of their studies as possible in community based settings to reflect Welsh Government policy that care should be delivered as close to patients' homes as possible.

Mr Gething said:

"I am very pleased to announce that students will be now be able to start their journey of becoming doctors by studying medicine in north Wales. This is the result of Welsh universities working together to address the challenges we face in sustaining our medical workforce in Wales.

"I have always been clear that, rather than creating a new medical school in North Wales, the best way to expand medical education there would be through collaboration. This means we will have students studying medicine in north Wales far quicker than we would ever see through the establishment of a new medical school.

"It is also important to acknowledge the challenges faced in other parts of Wales, especially in the west. That is why we are increasing numbers at Swansea and supporting them to work with Aberystwyth University to ensure increased opportunities in west Wales."

Education Secretary, Kirsty Williams, said:

"I am delighted that we are expanding the medical school places available in Wales and students will have the opportunity to study for their degrees in North and West Wales. We have worked closely with the universities to make sure these new places are available as quickly as possible and I am grateful for the work undertaken by them to make this important expansion a reality."

Bangor University Vice-Chancellor, Professor John G. Hughes said:

“This is a tremendously exciting development, and we very much look forward to working with Cardiff University and the health boards to educate many more doctors in north Wales over the coming years.

“This development, starting in 2019, will allow us to rapidly expand the medical education currently provided at Bangor University and introduce more medical students to north Wales, which will no doubt be of benefit to patients and the public in the region. I would like to thank everyone who has been involved in bringing this to fruition. A lot of hard work now lies ahead, and I know that everyone will be doing all they can to make this a great success.”

Dr Stephen Riley, Dean of Medical Education at Cardiff University said:

“We welcome the Minister’s announcement in support of our efforts to deliver innovative and distributed medical education in Wales. It presents an excellent opportunity to build on established relationships with both Bangor University and Aberystwyth University, as well as the associated University Health Boards across Wales. This additional investment will allow us to push forward on widening access to medicine and increasing diversity within the medical profession whilst addressing local population health needs.”