

New Band 6 paramedic role to deliver enhanced care for patients in Wales

The new deal will enable current Band 5 paramedics in Wales to move up to a newly created Band 6 paramedic role.

It will deliver enhanced care for patients in Wales and the agreement has been reached through successful and positive partnership discussions between the Welsh Ambulance Service, its trade unions, the Emergency Ambulance Services Committee and Welsh Government.

Letters will now be sent to paramedics outlining what is involved in carrying out the new Band 6 role. Changes will take effect from 1 October 2017, and a framework of support and development will be put in place to enable staff to gain a number of extra skills and competencies required as part of the deal. It is expected the process will be complete by 2021.

Health Secretary Vaughan Gething said:

“Over time the role of the paramedic has fundamentally changed.

“Today their enhanced role spans both emergency and unscheduled care, providing advanced treatments for patients with serious clinical needs but also assessing and signposting patients to the right part of the health system to deliver the care they need.

“They provide advanced life support, make emergency treatment decisions and practice in an environment with a level autonomy not experienced by others working in our health service. Paramedics are also able to work across the whole healthcare sector rather than being restricted to traditional ambulance crew roles.

“Paramedics work tirelessly day in day out saving lives and supporting the communities they serve, today’s announcement recognises their increasing responsibilities and is something that should be welcomed.”

Richard Lee, Director of Operations for the Welsh Ambulance Service, said:

“Our paramedics provide excellent clinical care across Wales every day and this new job description and development package will allow patients to receive even better care, in many cases closer to home.

“It also recognises the skills of our staff as the paramedic role develops into the 21st century, not only providing treatment for those in need of urgent care, but also assessing patients with less urgent needs who need help accessing the right part of the health

system.”

Claire Vaughan, the Trust’s Director of Workforce and Organisational Development, said:

“We would like thank our trade unions, our commissioners and Welsh Government for working closely with us to achieve this important step forward for the paramedic profession.

“An important element of the deal, which will see an improved career framework for our staff, is the creation of further development opportunities and mentorship arrangements for our newly qualified paramedics.”

Stephen Harray, Chief Ambulance Service Commissioner for Wales, said:

“I greatly welcome today’s announcement. The role of paramedics has evolved and this agreement, which has been achieved through successful partnership working, recognises the additional responsibilities and skills needed to carry out their work.”

Darron Dupre, Ambulance Lead for UNISON in Wales, said:

“This is a win-win for paramedics and patients. This announcement is all about giving paramedics the cutting edge skills to deal with the changing face of healthcare in Wales.

“These new skills are directly aligned to the most frequent conditions which lead people to call the ambulance service. It’s a great deal for paramedics and it’s a great deal for the people of Wales.”

Nathan Holman, Welsh Ambulance Service branch secretary for the GMB Union, said:

“The GMB Union is highly supportive of the move from Band 5 to Band 6 for paramedics. This is a landmark move that is long overdue.

“This not only rewards the past, but also looks to develop the

future of paramedicine, by setting out its role, not only in emergency situations, but also in unscheduled and primary care as a whole.”

Roger John, Welsh Ambulance Service branch secretary for Unite the Union, said:

“The current Welsh deal has been agreed after debate and true partnership working.

“The deal will increase the scope of practice and skill level of paramedics in Wales, offering a more holistic and appropriate treatment option to the patients that access the Welsh Ambulance Service.”