

Record breaking numbers of NHS staff in Wales welcomed by Vaughan Gething

Stats show:

- The number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) directly employed NHS staff in September 2016 was 76,288. This was up 3.2 per cent (2,330) from 2015 and at a record high.
- The number of FTE hospital consultants was 2,369 in 2016, up 2.9 per cent (66) from 2015 and at a record high.
- The number of FTE qualified nurses, midwives and health visitors was 22,479 in 2016, up 1.3 per cent (286) from 2015.
- The number of FTE ambulance staff was 2,045 in 2016, up 0.7 per cent (14) from 2015 and at a record high.
- The number of FTE scientific, therapeutic and technical staff was 12,429 in 2016, up 3.8 per cent (457) from 2015 and at a record high.

Statistics on the numbers of GPs in Wales have also been published today showing that there were 2,009 GP practitioners in Wales in 2016, an increase since 2015 and up 127 or 7% since 2006.

In 2016, the total GP workforce stood at 2,944, which includes GPs, GP registrars, GP retainers and GP locums. This compares to 2,887 in 2015.

Health Secretary Vaughan Gething said:

“The record numbers of staff we’re seeing in our NHS in Wales is clearly good news and demonstrates the strength of our commitment to the NHS. More qualified nurses; more hospital consultants; more ambulance staff and more GPs is evidence of a government that is investing in the future of its health service.

“We recently announced a significant package to support a range of education and training programmes for healthcare professionals in Wales. The good progress we’ve made around staffing, announced today, is a positive but we recognise there’s always more work to be done.

“We have achieved this increase in NHS staff across a wide range of professions in the teeth of continual UK Government cuts to the Welsh Government budget. Even in the most difficult financial position in the history of devolution we continue to invest in our NHS.”

Children's Secretary committed to national approach to advocacy services

Ahead of a debate on the Children, Young People and Education Committee's inquiry into advocacy provision, the Cabinet Secretary said he wanted to ensure that all eligible children from across Wales can access an independent professional advocate. He added that this will be implemented by all Local Authorities by June 2017.

Carl Sargeant said:

"Statutory independent advocacy services are crucial in protecting and safeguarding some of the most vulnerable children in Wales.

"We can't have children in one area getting a different service to others, so we absolutely have to have every local authority signed up. I have committed to providing additional funding to meet the cost of this national approach.

"Local Authorities have confirmed their support and we are monitoring progress to ensure implementation by June 2017."

First Minister Carwyn Jones – "We're committed to a sensible Brexit that secures Wales' future"

First Minister Carwyn Jones said:

"Today signals the end of months of speculation and the start of a critical period of negotiation which will shape our future relationship with Europe and the wider world.

"We remain committed to the priorities set out in our white paper, Securing Wales' Future, which puts full and unfettered access to the Single Market first and foremost.

"Our white paper sets out a sensible negotiating position for the UK as a whole, and has already influenced the UK Government's approach in important areas including maintaining full access to the Single Market, upholding existing employment rights and the

importance of transitional arrangements.

“While we have often been frustrated with the processes by which we’ve arrived at this point today, we must now concentrate on the job in hand. We stand ready to work constructively with the UK Government to secure a deal which protects Welsh businesses, our economy and the future prosperity of Wales.

“If, as negotiations progress, we believe our priorities are not being championed or our representation falls below a level we find acceptable, we will not remain silent. We will not allow Wales to be side-lined – we will be outspoken and our voice will be heard.

“As a leader of a country which voted to leave the EU, we are wholly focused on securing Wales’ future. We will step up to the plate and do all we can to deliver the best possible outcome for Wales.”

Treforest Glass expands with Welsh Government support creating and securing 25 jobs

Treforest Glass, which currently employs more than 40 people, is moving to a 52,745 sq ft factory on a 2.3acre site in Tonyrefail which is significantly larger than its current base on Pontypridd’s Upper Boat Business Park.

The £1.3m investment, which includes the purchase and fit of the premises and new equipment, is supported by £80,000 from the Welsh Government’s Growth & Prosperity Fund, a non-repayable grant fund to support Welsh SMEs to grow and increase employment. It will create ten new jobs and safeguard a further 15.

The business was started in 1986 to offer glazing services to clients across South Wales but was acquired by the present owners in 2006.

Following the recession of 2010 when a number of glazing companies went out of business they began targeting more opportunities to produce manufactured sealed glass units for specialised niche markets. The company has grown considerably since and now produce high specification acoustic units used by hotels to help with sound proofing and units for listed buildings and restoration projects.

Manufacturing now accounts for more than 80% of turnover with customers throughout the UK.

The company has now reached full capacity at its current base and needed larger premises with height to accommodate an overhead crane. This will enable it to supply larger units and improve manufacturing productivity making it more competitive and cost effective.

Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

“Treforest Glass has found a niche market in what is a highly competitive industry and this significant investment will enable the company to expand, target new markets and create jobs.

“The Growth & Prosperity Fund forms part of the Business Confidence Plan announced after the Brexit vote to ensure business in Wales had access to funding to enable them to grow and create jobs and I am pleased it is doing just that.”

Peter Zehetmayr from Treforest Glass said:

“We have continually developed and produced new products in line with current market trends which has helped drive business growth. To maintain that competitive edge it was essential to move into larger premises which will open up new opportunities and enable us to meet the growing demand for our specialist products.

“Support from the Welsh Government meant we are able to do this sooner rather than later and I look forward to be able to offer job and training opportunities for young people in the area.”

[Online Safety remains a key priority as internet use rises](#)

The Education Secretary Kirsty Williams has announced that online safety will remain a key priority for the Welsh Government with an extensive programme to enhance online safety practice in schools over the next two years, to continue to support young people to stay safe online.

The figures from the National Survey of Wales show:

- 95% of children aged 7 to 15 used the internet at home.
- The device most commonly used by these children was a tablet or similar (71%).
- 64% of children aged 7 to 15, who access the internet outside school, accessed a school learning platform and 67% used the internet to find

other information related to schoolwork.

- 87% of parents felt that their child knew how to stay safe when using the internet.
- 56% of households with children aged 7-15 used parental control filters.
- Further analysis showed that the parents are more likely to use a parental control filter if they are more highly educated, if they also use the internet themselves, if they have more children, and if their children are younger.

Over the last two and a half years, the Welsh Government has strengthened online safety practice in education with:

- 63 online safety training days across all 22 local authorities, training approximately 2,300 educational professionals.
- An increase in take-up of the 360 degree Safe Cymru tool from 196 schools (19% schools in Wales) in 2014 to 1,375 (85% of schools in Wales).
- Production of the Online Safety Resource for Wales.
- A range of resources for learners, parents & carers and educational practitioners on online safety issues such as Cyberbullying, Online Trust and Social Media.

Last month the Cabinet Secretary for Education launched the Online Safety Zone on Hwb, the digital learning platform for schools in Wales. The Online Safety Zone provides young people, teachers, parents and governors with access to a wide range of bilingual online safety materials.

The Welsh Government is also supporting Operation Netsafe – a pan-Wales campaign led by South Wales Police in partnership with the Lucy Faithful Foundation, which aims to stop the creation, viewing and sharing of indecent images of children online.

Kirsty Williams said:

“Being online is increasingly part of all of our lives. Alongside the many benefits of the internet come very real risks and that is why we are taking action to safeguard our children and young people and preparing them to become safe and responsible digital citizens.

“We’ll continue to build on the progress we’ve made to date and drive improvements in online safety practice with an extensive online safety education and awareness programme across Wales. This provides schools with access to online resources and classroom materials to support learners in thinking critically behaving safely and participating responsibly online.”