

'Nurses from across the world, consider a career in Wales' says Health Secretary Vaughan Gething

Wales swept the boards at nursing and midwifery awards earlier in the year. The RCNi Nurse of the Year, Community Nurse and Healthcare Assistant Awards were all won by nursing staff from Wales; the RCM Midwife of the Year and the Journal of Health Visiting Health Visitor of the Year were also won by Welsh nurses and midwives.

During his visit to Liverpool Vaughan Gething will meet nurse Melanie Davies from Morryston Hospital, Swansea, who has just been named RCNi Nurse of the Year, for her work making far-reaching changes to the care of vulnerable patients with learning disabilities.

Vaughan Gething said:

“Our recent grand slam of nursing award triumphs shows just how exceptional our nursing staff are in Wales.

“Everyone is an ambassador for Wales and I want to congratulate them all; their success tells a story of professionals supported to develop better ways of working, and supported to do the best job they can for their patients.

“That’s what Wales offers to nurses, and I’m going to the RCN Congress to tell that story, and to encourage more nurses to choose Wales for their future career.

“Wales is a fantastic place to train, work and live; a place where we will continue to offer NHS Bursaries for eligible student nurses, midwives and allied health professionals in 2018/19. It’s a place where we will continue to support professional development, and it’s a great place to find the right-life balance, with a great mix of beautiful countryside and vibrant cities.

“We continue to invest in nursing education, and the number of nurses working in NHS Wales continues to increase year on year.

“Wales is the first country in Europe to legislate on nurse staffing areas; empowering nurses and ensuring the resources are in place to care sensitively for patients. The RCN were key to promoting this and we continue to work closely with them.

“We are proud of our nurses, and we work to support them; I hope nurses elsewhere in the UK and the world will consider developing their career with us.”

Wales' thriving events scene contributing to the Welsh economy

In 2016, the Welsh Government supported 35 major sporting and cultural events across Wales which attracted 348,000 visitors and generated a direct economic impact of £53 million for the economy. Local and national events are also being supported for 2017.

Following the Champions League Final, the Summer of Sporting Legends continues with Champions Trophy Cricket and the Senior Open Championship over the summer months.

The cultural events supported by the Welsh Government got underway with another successful Machynlleth Comedy Festival at the beginning of the month which welcomed 6,000 visitors to the town.

Focus Wales festival gets underway this weekend and Economy Secretary Ken Skates, will visit the event's Digital Day on Saturday. 2017 marks the festival's 7th edition, and will welcome over 7,000 people to Wrexham. Focus Wales was established to provide an annual showcase event for the Welsh Music Industry and the Digital Day will focus on digital innovation in the music industry in Wales.

The Economy Secretary, said:

“Whilst major events such as the Champions League Final, being staged in Cardiff in just a few weeks time, provide invaluable profile and exposure for Wales to global audiences of millions, there are of course many smaller scale events, with their roots firmly planted in Wales, that deliver equally valuable benefits to the Welsh economy. I'm delighted that the Welsh Government has been able to support the growth of events such as Focus Wales which make such a valuable contribution to Wales' thriving events scene.”

The Welsh Government has also recently offered funding for further development to the Pembrokeshire Fish Week – having started in 1999 as a small event focussed around a national Sewin competition, the festival now takes place over a week and incorporates over 250 organisations and businesses in over 500 different public events and activities across the breadth of the county; the Steelhouse Festival in Hafod-y-Dafal Farm situated on the southern edge of the Brecon Beacons started out with just under 1,000 visitors over the weekend in 2011 has now grown year on year to a total audience of over 10,000 in 2016. The 4th edition of Cerys Matthews' Good Life Festival will take place at the Hawarden Estate during September and the Welsh Government have agreed to fund the future development of the

festival for the next two years. The Diffusion Festival – Cardiff’s International Festival of Photography also takes place until the end of the month.

Improved access to Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services

Health Secretary, Vaughan Gething, has today [12 May 2017] highlighted the improvements that have been made to the Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services (NEPTS) across Wales, in response to the McClelland strategic review of Welsh Ambulance Services.

The changes have significantly improved access for patients, carers and health care professionals to the service. Abandonment rates have fallen from 11% to 5% and call waiting times have also reduced.

Patients can make a booking through a single national number (0300 1232303) and can cancel or make enquiries about transport by using enhanced on-line services that are available 24/7.

Health Secretary, Vaughan Gething said:

“In January 2016 I announced plans to modernise the provision of Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services (NEPTS) across Wales following the strategic review.

“I am pleased to see that the significant changes made to NEPTS so far have made a real difference to patients. There is far better access and it is simpler to use, meaning patients are getting a higher quality service and inefficiency in the system has been reduced.

“I am keen to see the health boards and the Welsh Ambulance Service Trust continue to work collaboratively to build on this success even further.”

Dan Stevens and Michael Sheen star in

ground-breaking Wales-USA film project

US-based producers XYZ Films have linked up with Cardiff-based production company, Severn Screen, to produce the latest film from acclaimed Welsh director Gareth Evans, whose previous films *The Raid* and *The Raid II* were global hits.

Apostle was commissioned by Netflix and will debut exclusively on the streaming service worldwide in 2018.

Support from the Welsh Government has ensured that the entire shoot and all post-production work on *Apostle* will be undertaken in Wales, providing a £5m plus boost to the economy.

Economy Secretary Ken Skates described *Apostle* as a ground-breaking production for Welsh film.

He said:

“We are thrilled that *Apostle* will be distributed worldwide through Netflix and will provide a global platform for Welsh acting, directing, production and post production talent. I am delighted Welsh Government support was able to help secure the project for Wales.”

Wales Screen, part of the Welsh Government’s creative industries team, has been working with the producers since July 2016, to maximise the economic benefits for Wales. This has involved hosting site visits and identifying key locations for the film, including Margam Park where an elaborate village set has been built for the film.

Ed Talfan, head of Severn Screen, said:

“We are excited to be working with Gareth and the team at XYZ. From the outset they were keen to bring the project to Wales – it’s been a joy working with them to help make that happen. We look forward to bringing similarly ambitious projects to Wales in the future.”

Aram Tertzakian of XYZ Films: said

“We’re thrilled to be working here in Wales. It has always been a dream of Gareth’s to make films in his home country, and the support of the Welsh government has helped us make that a reality.

“We’ve been thoroughly impressed with the professionalism and enthusiasm of our Welsh crew. We hope this film will serve as a foundation for many more productions in Wales.”

Set in 1905, Apostle tells the story of a man (Stevens) who travels to a mysterious island off the coast of the UK in search of his estranged sister. On arriving he encounters a community led by enigmatic preacher (Sheen) who harbours a deep and terrifying secret.

The film also stars Welsh actor Mark Lewis Jones, winner of the 2016 BAFTA Cymru Best Actor Award for his role in Severn Screen's film Yr Ymadawiad (The Passing).

Talfan adds:

"The project is a great opportunity to champion Welsh crews, Welsh cast, Wales based facilities houses and Welsh locations.

"Severn Screen is committed to developing and supporting the sector in Wales, and this is an important step forward for us."

Welsh facilities houses Cinematic and Bang are set to deliver post-production work on the film while local suppliers will also see spin-off benefits within the supply chain.

[£2.7m for libraries, museums and archives in Wales](#)

The new Transformation Fund builds on the success of the Community Learning Libraries Programme for libraries, extending it to museums and archives for the first time. This capital funding will see a number of libraries and museums transform their services to significantly improve the visitor experience, offer new services and develop their sustainability and resilience.

The Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure, Ken Skates, said:

"I am pleased to announce this funding of over £2.7 million for our museums, archives and libraries. These important cultural services are developing ways to engage more people to participate in culture, improving their creative and learning offers, and enabling people to reach their potential through new opportunities.

"Transforming the cultural and learning experience to open up opportunities to participate in culture is central to this funding. I want as many people as possible to experience the varied and stimulating cultural collections and learning experiences which are available in museums, libraries and archives across Wales.

“The Welsh Government is dedicated to supporting these important services and facilities and I’d encourage and recommend everyone to pay them a visit and discover, learn and to enjoy the richness of our culture.”

The Fund will modernise four libraries in Denbigh, Holyhead, Knighton and Townhill, establishing new community hubs where customers can access a range of services such as housing or community facilities, alongside an extensive range of library amenities.

Funding is also provided for Ammanford library to for the creation of a Creative Store (Stordy Creadigol) in partnership with other service providers, offering a high-tech ‘maker space’ where people can learn a range of creative and cultural skills.

Six museums will receive transformation funding to increase public access to their facilities and collections, ranging from tactile signage for Tenby Museum, to creating new educational facilities at Oriel Ynys Mon and installing new lighting as part of the redevelopment of Ceredigion Museum to improve the visitor experience.

Welsh Government funding will also support the digital offer from museums, archives and libraries, including the National Digital Library Service, which allows customers to access free e-books, e-zines, e-audio books, e-comics, and reference sources, wherever and whenever they want.

Archive services across Wales will benefit from funding to address the challenges of preserving our digital heritage, and to improve online access to information about archival resources.