

Edition Ten  
OCT 2023

# BOARD INSIGHTS



GIG  
CYMRU  
NHS  
WALES

Iechyd a Gofal  
Digidol Cymru  
Digital Health  
and Care Wales

**Welcome to Board Insights,** as members of the SHA Board, we all feel it's important to keep you updated with some of the work we are undertaking across the organisation and NHS Wales. This edition comes from our Independent Member,

**Marian Wyn Jones**

## **Annwyl gyfeillion/ Dear colleagues,**

I was delighted to be asked to share the Board Insights reflection with you all this month. It is timely as we've just held our second Annual General Meeting since DHCW was established as a Special Health Authority, a little later than normal this year due to the extended audit period across NHS Wales.

It was a great opportunity to reflect on all we've achieved during the last financial year and indeed, to consider the challenges over the year ahead. The annual report for 2022/23 is now on [the website](#) and as you'll see, it gives a clear overview of who we are, what we do and crucially, signals the transformation in the way we use digital to support health and care in Wales. You'll also learn about our financial position as a statutory organisation, our services, and our plans for the future.

Above all, it was an opportunity for the Board to say thank you to colleagues across the organisation for all your hard work this past year and especially those who helped prepare the annual report and accounts. They're well worth reading.

This comes at a period of huge challenge for us. It's a matter of public record that NHS Wales is forecasting a significant deficit for year-end driven by inflation, workforce and service pressures. It's clear that the underlying financial position is unsustainable. As an organisation which has delivered a balanced plan, DHCW has now been asked to deliver a series of ambitious savings to help the position of the wider NHS Wales family. The Board met several times over the summer to agree its approach following a review by the Executive team of all non-committed spend. Whilst we are still waiting for Welsh Government's response, it will inevitably be challenging for us knowing that digital has the power to transform services, leading to greater effectiveness and efficiency across NHS Wales and we need to continue to make that case.

As Chair of Audit and Assurance Committee, I can assure you that we shall be undertaking deep dives to review the delivery of our plans. It was reported at our last committee meeting that this year's Structured Assessment of DHCW is well underway, and we look forward to Audit Wales's latest review of our corporate arrangements that the use of our resources is efficient, effective and economical.

Meanwhile, we continue to focus on strategy development in a number of critical areas. At our last Board Development session, we considered the draft Primary Care Strategy led by Sam Hall, Director of Primary, Community & Mental Health Digital Services, which should ultimately help meet the changing needs of the people of Wales. We reviewed the proposed approach

for the organisation's long term strategy and heard from the Chief Digital Officer for Wales how DHCW can help support the implementation of Welsh Government's Health and Care Digital Strategy.

In my capacity as Independent Member Board Champion for the Welsh Language, it was a pleasure to join colleagues in a meeting with Welsh Language Commissioner, Efa Gruffydd Jones as she engages with stakeholders across Wales. She was briefed by Ifan Evans, DHCW's Executive Director of Strategy and Executive Board Champion on our statutory role and strategic priorities, highlighting our commitment to create an appropriate environment for Welsh speaking staff, learners and stakeholders to use the language.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the staff in North Wales for their welcome when I visited the Mold Office. It was enlightening to hear about their contribution to the work of DHCWales and about the opportunities and challenges there. Diolch yn fawr!

## BOARD INSIGHTS



**Marian Wyn Jones**

Gan ein Haelod Annibynnol -  
Independent Member