

Cwm Taf Morgannwg Community Health Council

Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2019-2020



Community Health Councils (CHCs) are the independent voice of people in Wales who use NHS services. We are made up of local volunteers who act as the eyes and ears of patients and the public. There are 7 CHCs covering different parts of Wales.

An electronic copy of this document can be found on our website:

www.communityhealthcouncils.org.uk/cwmtafmorgannwg

If you would like this publication in an alternative format and/or language, please contact us:

Tŷ Antur

Parc Navigation

Abercynon

CF45 4SN

Tel: 01443 405830

Email: enquiries.ctmchc@waleschc.org.uk

Twitter: @CTMCHC

Facebook: @CTMCHC

Contents

4. Executive summary
6. Introduction
7. Our year at a glance
8. What we've been doing
10. How we've met the Welsh Language Standards during 2019-2020
14. Conclusion
16. Apenndix 1

Executive summary

Cwm Taf Morgannwg CHC represents the people of Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr Tydfil and Bridgend. Whilst the Welsh language is not widely used across our communities within the public sector, there is requirement and demand for a bi-lingual service so that people can talk about the things that are important to them, in the language of their choice.

People who contact Cwm Taf Morgannwg CHC generally have issues relating to health services. When speaking about health matters we want to make it easy for people to talk to us. This means enabling people to do this through the medium of Welsh if this is their preferred language. This can be particularly important if people have sensitive health issues or mental health worries.

Cwm Taf Morgannwg CHC recognise that there is a need for the Welsh language to be part of our everyday work. It is also what many people in the area want so that they can communicate in ways that are comfortable and natural to them. It is not just about producing written information in Welsh but routinely enabling people to speak with us in Welsh. We have taken the same approach in our workplace by making sure there are regular opportunities during the day for learning phrases and useful words.

Since the implementation of our Welsh language standards in May 2019 we have not received any formal concerns in relation to our performance against the standards over the last year.

Our compliance is evidenced by the following:

- All advocacy materials are available bilingually
- All public engagement materials including newsletters, surveys and information literature is available bilingually
- Fully accessible Welsh and English website

- Bilingual corporate branding and signage
- Reasonable mechanisms in place to offer bilingual services at meetings and engagement events
- All social media posts are bilingual

In summary, we are not where we want to be as yet as far as the Welsh language is concerned but we are moving in the right direction, and making positive progress.

Introduction

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 sets out a legal framework which imposes a duty on the Board of Community Health Councils (CHCs) and the 7 CHCs across Wales, among other public institutions, to comply with the Standards relating to the Welsh language.

Since 30 May 2019, the Board of CHCs (BCHCW) and CHCs in Wales is required to implement the Welsh Language Standards that apply to them. As 8 separate statutory bodies, the Board of CHCs and each CHC in Wales has received separate notification of the Standards that apply to them.

The link below provides details of the standards that apply to Cwm Taf Morgannwg CHC:

<http://www.comisiynyddygybraeg.cymru/English/Organisation/s/Pages/SearchStandards.aspx>

This is Cwm Taf Morgannwg CHC's first annual report on compliance with the Welsh Language Standards (WLS) since the standards came into force on 30 May 2019. The standards are being embedded, and have become a working reality for Cwm Taf Morgannwg CHC.

Our CHC movement's aim is to ensure that the people of Wales can engage with their local CHC and the Board in their choice of Welsh or English on all occasions.

This report recognises that we have made a lot of progress in this first year of operation.

It also shows that we have more to do to develop and improve how we deliver our functions through the medium of Welsh.

Our year at a glance

We employed a Welsh speaker to help with public engagement when a local emergency department was threatened with closure.

We have increased our use of social media and other electronic communications and it is fully bilingual.

We have worked closely with the Board of CHCs, the Welsh Language Commissioner's Officer and Welsh Government to agree plans to introduce a bilingual telephone service for the CHC movement

Staff have been offered opportunities to develop their Welsh Language Skills

What we have been doing

The Board and CHCs have responded positively to the introduction of the Welsh Language Standards. It provides an opportunity to reinforce the requirements and to improve the quality and availability of services through the medium of Welsh.

During 2019/20, Cwm Taf Morgannwg CHC worked closely with other CHCs across Wales and the Board of Community Health Councils to implement the WLS.

The CHC movement has been raising awareness of the requirements of the WLS through a workgroup which has included representation from the Board and CHCs across Wales.

The working group was a significant part of the jigsaw of complying with the Standards. The group:

- enabled key messages on compliance to be shared across the CHC movement
- acted as a first point of contact for colleagues on advice about compliance and
- provided assurance about compliance to the Corporate Governance Committee of the Board of CHCs.
- People who communicate with Cwm Taf Morgannwg CHC in Welsh are responded to in Welsh. People can use their language of choice when dealing with us.
- Our Social media platforms are in both Welsh and English, giving people the choice on how they interact with us.
- Ensured that published material for the public to access the CHC is equally available in Welsh and English.

Following the publication of the CHC movement's guidance on using the Welsh language internally (an interim guide for staff and members) (May 2019) a key focus of our work has been to support our staff and members to use Welsh in their day-to-day work.

The aim is to increase the opportunities available to learn the language, and to build confidence in using it in the workplace.

We have actively monitored how well we are doing against the standards through an all Wales self-assessment programme.

Cathy Moss, Chief Officer has overall responsibility for the Welsh language for Cwm Taf Morgannwg CHC and is responsible for implementing the standards day-to-day. Alyson Thomas, Chief Executive Officer is responsible for providing advice and support on behalf of the Board of Community Health Councils in Wales across the CHC movement in relation to the WLS.

Cwm Taf Morgannwg CHC Executive Committee approved this report prior to its review by the Board of Community Health Councils in Wales' Standards and Performance Committee.

Handling complaints about the Welsh language

Our 'making a complaint about us' procedure sets out the process for dealing with complaints about compliance with the Welsh language standards –

<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/899/page/71618>.

During the period 30 May 2019 and 31 March 2020, we received 0 complaints in relation to the Welsh language.

How we have met the Welsh language standards in 2019-2020

Cwm Taf Morgannwg CHC has worked to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language in all our areas of work, as well as ensure compliance. We have encouraged staff and members to sign up to Welsh language courses on offer. These have included offering staff online taster courses on the Welsh language offered by Welsh Government.

Service delivery standards

These standards focus on providing services. Their aim is to promote and facilitate the use of Welsh or to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language in service provision.

They cover the Welsh language services we provide to the public, e.g. services by telephone, using the Welsh language in meetings, letters and documents and on-line services.

- A database is held recording an individual's language preference (written and/or oral). This database is updated by all staff on an ongoing basis
- All staff have received Welsh Language awareness training on how to respond to correspondence, answer the telephone and greet visitors
- Our documentation complies with the standards
- Our telephone answering systems are bilingual, with Welsh first
- All public notices are bilingual
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg CHC's website is bilingual, as is all social media. There were a number of weeks early on in

the Corona virus pandemic whereby posts were not bilingual. However, since then all our original posts are bilingual.

- Any signage produced 'in-house' complies with the standards

Through our self-assessment, we were able to show that we were doing what we needed to do to meet the majority of the standards that apply to us.

Policy making standards

The policy-making standards require us to undertake the following three things:

- consider the effects or impacts of our policy decisions on the Welsh language (both positive and negative);
- consider how to increase positive effects, mitigate or reduce adverse effects and take all opportunities to promote the use of Welsh;
- seek views on the effects of the Welsh language when engaging or consulting and to seek the view of Welsh speakers and users of the language.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is used to consider the effects of policy decisions on opportunities for use of the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English. The EIA is one of the mandatory assessments our staff must complete when developing, revising or amending policies.

Cwm Taf Morgannwg CHC staff regularly visit the Welsh Language Commissioner website for up to date information on reports, guides and publications. This ensures that we are staying up to date and continuing to develop.

Prior to undertaking any engagement event, Cwm Taf Morgannwg CHC staff make sure that all Welsh Language standards are adhered to.

Operational standards

During 2019-2020, the Board of CHCs issued guidance for Board and CHC staff and members about the use of the Welsh language. These included:

- using the Welsh language internally
- using Welsh effectively in bilingual meetings
- bilingual out of office messages
- bilingual signage in the workplace.

The Board of CHCs in Wales also published guidance on learning the Welsh language and made it available to all CHC staff and members across the CHC movement. It provided links to resources for learning the Welsh language.

- Wording and logos have been provided to staff for use with their email signatures to enable them to show their levels of proficiency in the Welsh language
- A pictorial/phonetic guide has been produced to assist non-Welsh speakers in answering the phone
- Computer software has been provided to all members of staff who required it to check spelling and grammar in Welsh (Cysgair)

Staff skills

Please see Appendix 1

The number of staff:

	Reading	Speaking	Understanding	Writing
0	1	1	1	1
1	9	9	9	9
2	1	1	1	1
3				
4				
5				
X				

The percentage of staff:

	Reading	Speaking	Understanding	Writing
0	9%	9%	9%	9%
1	82%	82%	82%	82%
2	9%	9%	9%	9%
3				
4				
5				
X				

Staff attending Welsh language courses

No staff members are currently attending any formal Welsh language courses. A staff member has previously been supported in attending a Welsh language course.

Staff recruitment

The number of new and vacant posts advertised and categorised as:

- Welsh language skills essential
- Welsh language skills need to be learnt when appointed
- Welsh language skills desirable
- Welsh language skills not necessary

Category	Advertised internally	Advertised externally
Essential		1
Learnt when appointed		
Desirable		1
Not necessary		
Total		2

Conclusion

Cwm Taf Morgannwg CHC is working hard to ensure Welsh language is part of its day to day life. We recognise that although we do not currently have any Welsh speaking staff, we will look to recruit Welsh language speakers by making Welsh an essential requirement in more staff roles.

We are pleased to report the bilingual delivery of:

- All advocacy materials
- All public engagement materials including: newsletters, surveys and information literature
- Fully accessible Welsh and English website
- Full consideration to Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)
- Bilingual corporate branding and signage

- Reasonable mechanisms in place to offer bilingual services at meeting and engagement events

We will continue to think about opportunities to develop our use of the Welsh language further including:

- Continuing to learn from others
- Expand opportunities for staff and members to develop their Welsh language skills within the workplace on a daily basis
- Encourage and support staff who wish to further develop their Welsh Language skills by online courses
- Continue to develop our reach in the communities with bilingual social media posts and distribution of bilingual newsletters

Appendix 1 - WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL – NHS WALES

	LISTENING / SPEAKING	READING / UNDERSTANDING	WRITING
LEVEL 0 NO SKILL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No appreciable ability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No appreciable ability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No appreciable ability
LEVEL 1 ENTRY	<p style="text-align: center;">I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronounce Welsh words, place names, department names, etc. • Greet and understand a greeting. • Use basic every day words and phrases, e.g. thank you, please, excuse me, etc. • Understand / pass on simple verbal requests of a routine / familiar / predictable kind using simple language, e.g. 'May I speak to...' • State simple requests and follow up 	<p style="text-align: center;">I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand simple key words and sentences on familiar / predictable matters relating to my own job area, e.g. on signs, in letters. 	<p style="text-align: center;">I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill in simple forms, note down simple information, e.g. date and venue of a meeting, Welsh address, etc.

	with extra questions / requests in a limited way		
LEVEL 2 FOUNDATION	<p>I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the gist of Welsh conversations in work • Respond to simple job-related requests and requests for factual information • Ask simple questions and understand simple responses • Express opinions in a limited way as long as the topic is familiar • Understand instructions when simple language is used 	<p>I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand factual, routine information and the gist of non-routine information on familiar matters related to my own job area, e.g. in standard letters, leaflets, etc. 	<p>I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write short simple notes / letters / messages on a limited range of predictable topics related to my personal experiences or my own job area
LEVEL 3 INTERMEDIATE	<p>I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand much of what is said in an office, meeting, etc. • Keep up a simple conversation on a work related topic, but may need to 	<p>I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scan texts for relevant information • Understand a fair range of job-related routine and 	<p>I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a detailed / descriptive letter relating to my own job area, but will need to have it checked by a

	<p>revert to English to discuss / report on complex or technical information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answer predictable or factual questions • Take and pass on most messages that are likely to require attention • Offer advice on simple job-related matters 	<p>non-routine correspondence, factual literature, etc. when standard language is used.</p>	<p>Welsh speaker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make reasonably accurate notes while someone is talking
<p>LEVEL 4 HIGHER</p>	<p>I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep up an extended casual work related conversation or give a presentation with a good degree of fluency and range of expression but may need to revert to English to answer unpredictable questions or explain complex points or technical information • Contribute effectively to meetings and seminars within own area of work • Argue for/against a case 	<p>I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and understand information fairly quickly as long as no unusual vocabulary is used and no particularly complex or technical information is involved 	<p>I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare formal letters of many familiar types such as enquiry, complaint, request and application • Take reasonably accurate notes in meetings or straightforward dictation

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a report / document relating to my own job area, but will need to have it checked by a Welsh speaker
<p>LEVEL 5 PROFICIENCY</p>	<p>I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise on / talk about routine, non-routine, complex, contentious or sensitive issues related to own experiences • Give a presentation/demonstration • Deal confidently with hostile or unpredictable questions • Carry out negotiations using complex / technical terms • Give media interviews 	<p>I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand complex ideas and information expressed in complex or specialist language in documents, reports correspondence and articles, etc. 	<p>I Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write letters on any subject • Write full / accurate notes of meetings while continuing to follow discussions and participate in them • Write reports / documents with confidence but they may need to be checked for minor errors in terms of spelling and grammar

