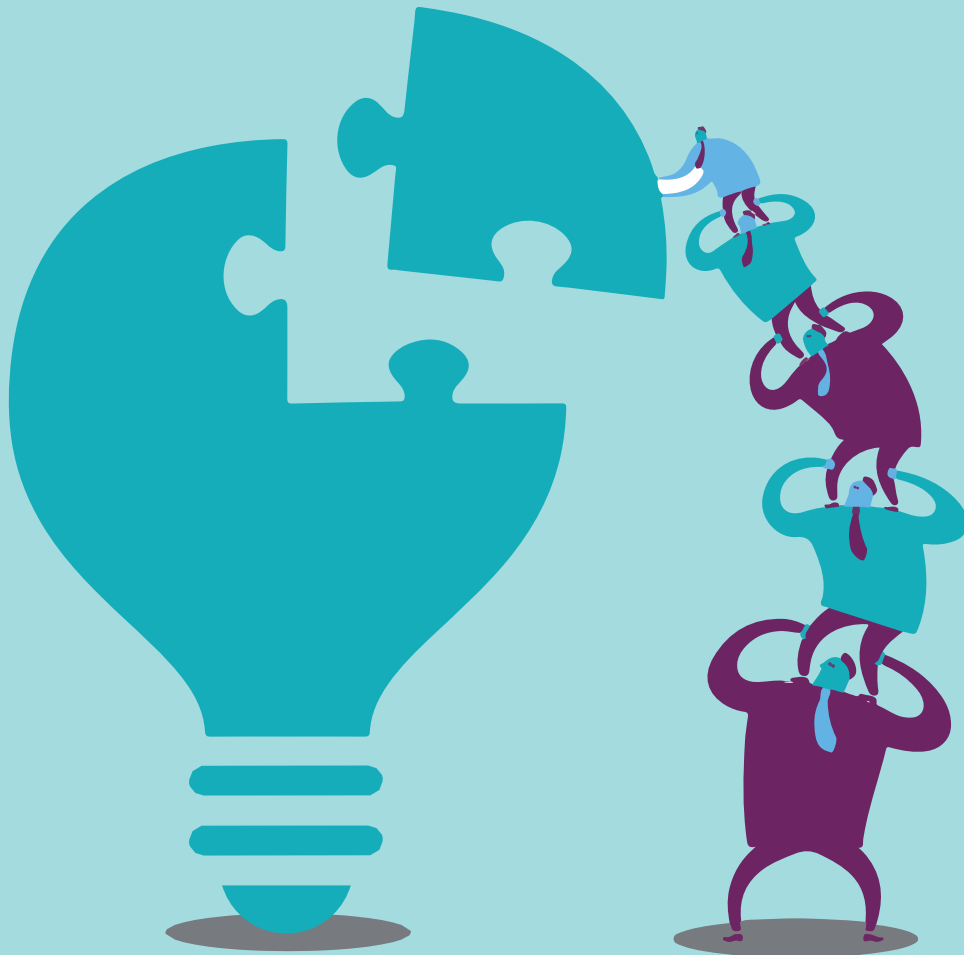


Workforce Resources



Workforce Planning in Primary Care

Guidance and Resource



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Contents

Introduction.....	3
What are the benefits of planning the workforce?.....	3
When to plan?.....	4
What is the NHS Wales Workforce Planning approach and how can it be used in Primary Care?.....	5
Stage 1: Understand your population and healthcare environment.....	6
Stage 2: Talk to your stakeholders.....	7
Stage 3: Create a vision and define outcomes.....	7
Stage 4: Forecast future service and workforce configuration.....	8
Stage 5: Key actions or changes required.....	9
Stage 6: Governance and delivery mechanisms.....	10
Transformation of the Primary Care Workforce.....	10
Additional resources.....	10
Feedback.....	10

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Introduction

The aim of workforce planning is to ensure that you have a workforce of the right size, with the right skills and diversity, organised in the right way, within an affordable budget, who can deliver the services needed to provide patient care to required quality standards.

There are many layers of planning from practice, locality, GP cluster, regional and all Wales plans. This booklet focuses planning at a locality/cluster level and refers to [A Planned Primary Care Workforce for Wales](#) which sets out the strategic workforce plan for primary care, whilst your local practice development plans and cluster network plans will also support you plan for your workforce.

Within secondary care the [NHS Wales Planning Framework](#) sets out a requirement for Health Boards and Trusts to create a 3 year Integrated Medium Term Plan (IMTP) which includes their workforce plan. The planning framework contains a number of mandatory workforce templates, including one for education commissions for nursing, allied health professions and other staff groups. This is explored in more detail in Stage 5.

Planning is a critically important activity within NHS Wales and is a dynamic process, within which workforce plans need to be robust enough to manage the business in the short term, while flexible enough to cope with a range of future scenarios.

Planning across the whole workforce covers the following related activities:

- **Designing the future workforce**

This is not just about redesigning a service and staffing it, but understanding the impact that the change will have on the current or future workforce and ensuring that these workforce implications are considered across the whole NHS system.

- **Developing the future workforce**

Understanding what skills and competences will be needed to deliver planned services, where these skills and competences will come from and making provision to develop them if they are not already available within the current workforce.

- **Delivering the future workforce**

This includes the management actions which are needed to ensure that all staff are engaged, that new ways of working are achieved, workforce development plans are delivered and that best practice is shared and adopted.

Due to the strong interdependency between the skills needed to deliver services across both primary and secondary care, this booklet describes the workforce planning approach followed by NHS Wales (as laid out within the NHS Wales Planning Framework) as it highlights how planners need to think more widely and means that the basics of workforce planning are carried out in the same way. There are a number of other workforce planning methodologies, including the [Skills for Health Six Steps Methodology](#) and WEDS has also produced guidance on [Competence Based Workforce Planning](#).

This guide signposts other tools, resources and information which will be of help and it also contains some useful links for more experienced planners. Additional resources and links can be found on the Workforce Education and Development Service (WEDS) [Workforce Transformation, Planning and Information web pages](#).

What are the benefits of planning the workforce?

Whether planning is taking place at a simple or complex level, preparing a workforce plan helps you to prepare for future changes, identify and plan for any gaps and manage risk. Effective workforce planning will:

- Contribute to ensuring patient quality and safety by having the right staff skills in place to deliver effective care
- Help to prevent staffing crises and shortfalls in service delivery
- Encourage team working between service providers, often across multi professional and multi-organisation boundaries.
- Make best use of the skills of existing and future staff
- Plan the education and training needs across the whole workforce
- Develop new and more flexible career pathways
- Modernise education and training

Should you want to read further on this subject, the following might be of interest:

Kings Fund paper; [Workforce Planning in the NHS \(2015\)](#).

Welsh Government; [A Planned Primary Care Workforce for Wales](#)

Kings Fund; [Understanding pressures in general practice](#)

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development paper; [Workforce Planning: A Force for Good, People Management, June 2010](#)

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development guide: [Workforce planning. Right people, right time, right skills 2010](#)

For CIPD members, [Workforce Planning: Fact Sheet](#)

When to plan?

Workforce planning is an ongoing and iterative process and can be undertaken over varying timescales – at one level, staffing rotas are prepared on a weekly or monthly basis whereas you may want to plan to change your workforce over a 1-3 year period.

Where redesign of the workforce is taking place or education needs to be put in place longer timescales may be necessary.

Any plan needs to be constantly reviewed and should be flexible enough to respond to changing requirements and changing environments.



What is the NHS Wales workforce planning approach and how could the model be used in primary care?

The NHS Wales Planning Framework describes a useful approach to planning the workforce as shown in the model below, namely:

Stage 1: Understand your population/healthcare environment

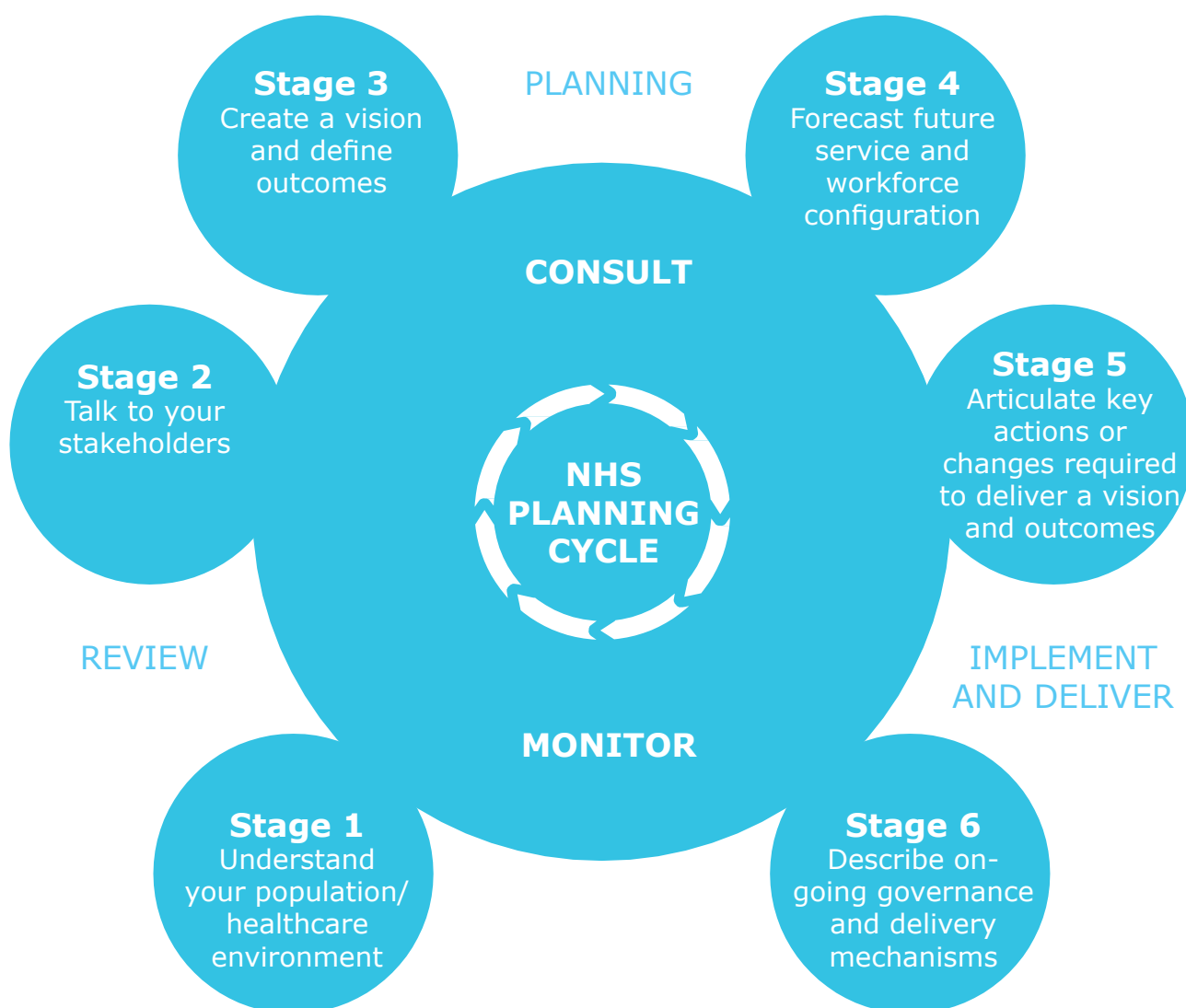
Stage 2: Talk to your stakeholders

Stage 3: Create a vision and define outcomes

Stage 4: Forecast future service and workforce configuration

Stage 5: Articulate key actions or changes required to deliver a vision and outcomes

Stage 6: Describe ongoing governance and delivery mechanisms.



The key workforce elements of the 6 stages within the approach are described more fully in the following sections.

Stage 1: Understand your population and healthcare environment

Stage 1 is about defining the need for the workforce to meet your service demand. There will be a number of drivers for change, some of which you will find in [relevant policies and strategies](#). You may find it useful to analyse your [population health needs](#) or think about what is happening within the [wider workforce environment](#). This will help you to scan the horizon and think about what you know or think might change in the future.

Horizon scanning attempts to identify potential changes to how we might provide services in the future due to changes to technology, science and medicine that could impact on the workforce we need. There are some resources that you can look at and more information on how to horizon scan can be found [via this link](#). There are also people within the Health Boards' Primary Care Teams who you could talk to about this.

Having considered the wider workforce environment and scanned the horizon, it may now be useful to undertake some [scenario planning](#) to help you to identify some possible futures, based on the information you have found from your analysis. The Centre for Workforce Intelligence (CfWI) produced some information on scenario planning which can now be found on the [HEE website](#). Again, there are people within the Primary Care and/or workforce teams of your local Health Boards who could advise you on this if you wanted to do this approach.

You will now need to describe and understand the profile of your current workforce and relate this to the environment in which it operates. Whilst there is currently no single dedicated workforce database that captures the whole primary care workforce across Wales, you will have access to your own workforce information within your Cluster and the [GP and Practice Staff Workforce Information report](#) contains a recent analysis of primary care workforce information.

As part of the work currently being undertaken as part of the Primary Care Workforce Plan, a standardised workforce reporting mechanism is due to be introduced which will enable wider consideration of workforce information.

Your workforce analysis should include consideration of the following elements:

- An understanding of the current workforce profile for all staff groups to include:
- Band/grade, full time/part time usually described as FTE
- Age profiles, retirement patterns, turnover
- Full time / part time working (participation rate)
- Overtime, locum agency usage
- Impact of study leave, annual leave, sickness etc.
- Equality / diversity profile including Welsh Language
- Workforce funded establishment and costs.
- Levels of education, qualifications, competencies

Other resources that you might find useful include:

- Information on shortage professions can be found from the [Shortage Occupations List](#) and information on workforce supply projections produced by the CfWI can now be found on the [HEE website](#).
- Local demographics relating to the make-up of the population for example, age, gender and socio economic breakdown. By understanding and using demographic information and intelligence, organisations are able to see how changes to population will affect their services and the workforce they are drawing on to provide them. Helpful statistics can be found on the [Public Health Wales Observatory](#) web site and the [Stats Wales](#) web site.

Stage 2: Talk to your stakeholders

The NHS Planning Framework states that the “process of engagement with staff, patients, the public and stakeholders is an ongoing one rather than an event to inform a plan”.

Working in partnership with stakeholders, both internally and externally, is vital to the development of effective plans and ongoing stakeholder engagement is vital to the successful implementation of any workforce plan.

Engagement should happen with many stakeholders and at a number of levels:

- Staff engagement is critically important to successful change management. A resource to help managers to engage staff and involve them in decision making can be found by on the [WEDS web site](#).
- Providers of other services that your practice, service or cluster interfaces with.
- Partnership with trade unions and professional staff organisations; support and advice will be provided by your Health Board Primary Care teams.
- Engagement with other stakeholders for example [social care](#) and the [third sector](#) is essential when considering how best to collect and share workforce information.

In order to identify your key and relevant stakeholders, you may want to undertake a Stakeholder Analysis. A [useful guide](#) on stakeholder analysis has been produced by Manchester Metropolitan University.

Stage 3: Create vision and define outcomes

In the previous two stages you have thought about and considered the impact of issues within the environment, your local demography and epidemiology, scanned the horizon, identified drivers for change from strategies and considered the profile of your current workforce and this has enabled you to create an assessment of need.

You should now be in a position to describe the vision, outcomes and priorities for the workforce and identify key workforce themes, goals and outcomes.

The development of the vision for your workforce should be consistent with any service change plans and based on the substantial analysis you have undertaken as part of Stage 1.

You may also want to consider any requirements from the [Welsh Language Strategy](#), the [Wellbeing of Future Generations Act](#), and the [Social Services and Wellbeing \(Wales\) Act](#).

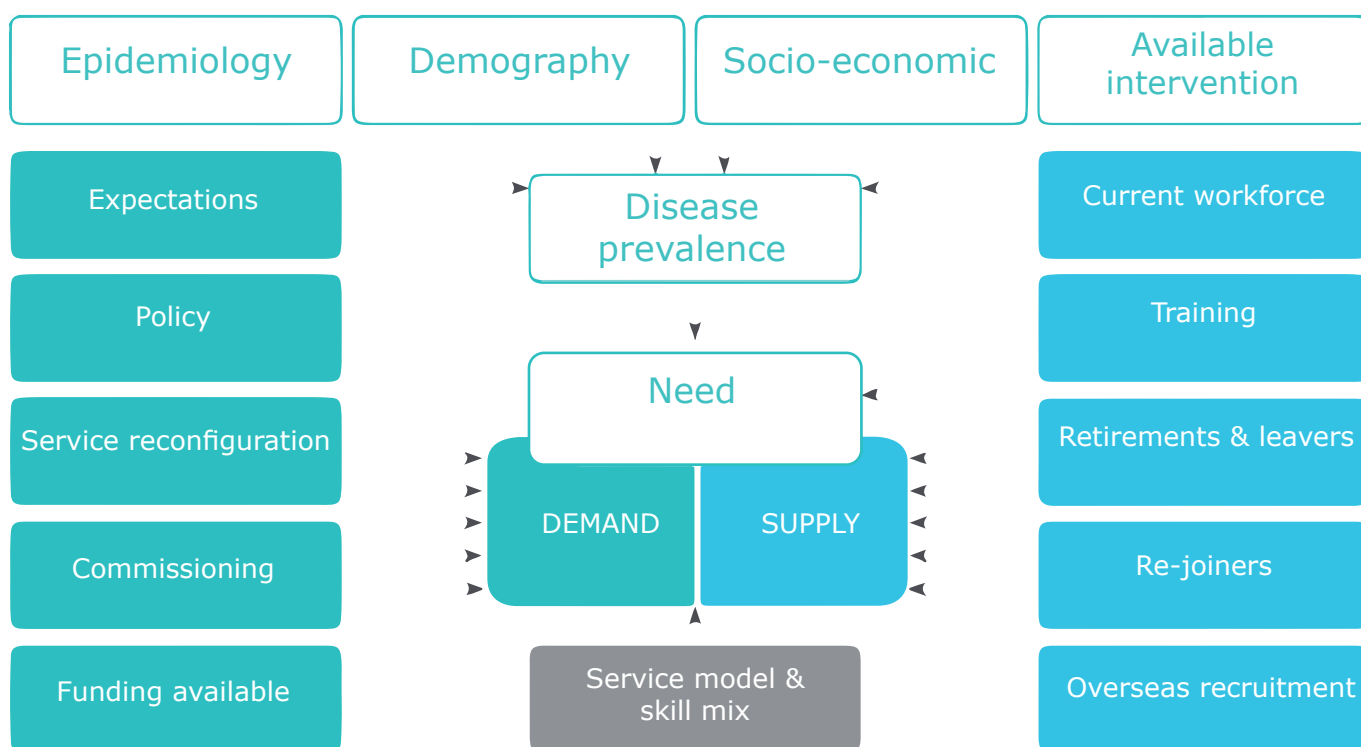
Stage 4: Forecast future service and workforce configuration

Once the vision and outcomes for the service and workforce have been identified, options for delivery need to be developed. This stage is where the analysis of workforce demand and supply should be undertaken to identify any gaps that could impact on service delivery. Elements of this stage include:

- **Gap analysis** between the current and future workforce
 - Understanding your current workforce configuration, including skill mix, age profile, turnover, what is the data telling you?
 - Identifying any potential skills gaps and if there is any demand for different types of worker
 - Identifying any supply issues e.g. recruitment issues, need for different types of worker or where there will be a time lag to train
 - Will you need to re-skill your existing workforce or change how they are deployed e.g. extend roles, change roles or develop new skills?

- Is the total cost of your workforce within your anticipated budget or do you need to release any efficiency savings?
- If the cost of your workforce is higher than your funded budget how do you plan to reconcile the difference?
- Supply analysis should include consideration of areas where there may be difficulties in recruiting certain staff, for example, General Practitioners and at particular grades. Account should be taken of the plans of the Wales Deanery along with the workforce actions as laid out within the Primary Care Workforce Plan which may be of particular importance in terms of planning for alternative workforce delivery models and other types of staff. The Wales Deanery website includes an interactive map of current medical training grades. Primary Care One also includes details of the Pacesetter work and an interactive tool of new roles and services within Primary Care.

The following illustration is useful to help you consider what components make up Need, Demand and Supply in relation to the workforce.¹



¹ A Knapton, Workforce Review Team

Stage 5: Key actions and changes required to deliver vision and outcomes

This part of your plan identifies the key workforce actions which you will need to undertake to move towards your identified vision. This is what you might actually recognise as your written workforce plan.

These key actions will identify the workforce changes required, outcomes and benefits you will have identified in Stage 3, over the period of your plan. Key milestones can be identified and linked to the benefits you identified.

Key elements could include:

- Recruitment plans
- Retention plans e.g. how will you keep the staff you need and manage an [aging workforce](#)
- Succession planning e.g. are there people who could be developed so they are ready to undertake new roles or replace people when they retire?
- Deployment and redeployment of skills and people across the Cluster
- Workforce re-profiling and/or re-skilling plans
- How changes to work processes and use of technologies will impact on the workforce e.g. skills and roles required
- Development of new skills, training and re-training.

Resources are available for developing the workforce which could be adapted for use in Primary Care, for example, [Advanced Practice Guidelines](#), [Role Redesign Guidelines](#), [Delegation Guidelines](#).

When creating your workforce action plan consideration needs to be given to the following:

Education commissions for the medical and non medical workforce. This is something undertaken by the Health Boards and Trusts as part of their IMTP planning requirements. The commissioning process determines the numbers of graduate staff produced per annum, across a number of the staff groups.

Due to the interdependencies of the whole NHS Wales workforce, the supply of clinical staff employed within Primary Care should be considered as part of the education commissioning process and changes to the future workforce in Primary Care will impact on the numbers of staff that need to be trained.

It would be useful for you to link with the Primary Care lead for your Health Board to have a discussion about your future workforce need to ensure that these are captured within their education commissioning requests.

Further information on the education commissioning process can be found [here](#). It should be noted that education commissioning takes place over a long planning cycle of between 5 to 15 years dependent on the type of staff required.

Identification of future skills and training requirements for the whole workforce. This includes consideration of the need for new, extended and changed roles, for example, Physician Associates, advanced practitioners, assistant practitioners etc.

- What education and training provision will support the development of your workforce?
- How will the education and training be provided and is any currently available?
- What national (NHS Wales wide) education and training provision is required to support the development of the future workforce?

Stage 6: Governance and delivery mechanisms

Governance arrangements are in place within the secondary care plans that include how the workforce elements of plans will be monitored and reported (linked to the milestones identified in Stage 5). Within Primary Care it could be useful to consider some of the governance elements such as:

- Risk management – Can you identify workforce risks and mitigation i.e. actions that can be taken to manage and reduce the risk.
- Workforce measures – Are there any measures that can help you to monitor progress on implementing your workforce plan? Do you have any workforce measures that could be considered alongside other measures undertaken within the cluster that might help you to understand the impact of workforce changes? For example, new roles or skills sets having an impact on patient flows or satisfaction.

Transformation of the Primary Care Workforce

Workforce planning can help you to transform your workforce; planning how you might change the skills, competences and roles within your current workforce to meet the demands of your service, now and into the future.

There are a number of emerging models within Primary Care that you may want consider and a number of resources have been developed to start to share examples and to support managers to redesign their workforce. A number of these additional resources are listed below.

Additional resources

Further information, tools and resources in addition to those embedded within this document are available. A number can be found on the WEDS web site www.nwssp.wales.nhs.uk/weds or on the Primary Care One web pages www.primarycareone.wales.nhs.uk

- The NHS Wales Pacesetter work, undertaken as part of the development of the Primary Care Workforce Plan, has identified and trialed a number of redesigned primary care services across Wales. An overview of this work and the transformational opportunities can be found here.
- The Emerging Roles and Models in Primary Care resource contains examples of new roles currently deployed within Primary Care in Wales. There are descriptions of the roles, their benefits and examples of job descriptions.
- The Repository of Useful Things is an interactive resource that guides you through the steps you need to undertake to redesign a role. Whilst primarily focused at use within secondary care, the principles are the same across all sectors.
- The NHS Wales Career Framework for Health Care Support Workers has been developed for those HCSW employed in Health Boards but provides a useful description of the development needs of each level. The associated education requirements (including for those HCSW employed within Primary Care) can be found on the Developing Excellence in Healthcare web pages.
- Practice Nurse Development for Wales describes a career framework for the development of Practice Nurses.
- A number of governance tools have also been developed to support the transformation of the workforce. These include governance for the Physician Associate and HCSW working across health & social care

Feedback

Feedback on this booklet and the resources linked to it are welcomed and can be provided to the Workforce Planning Manager in WEDS, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP).



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