
Welsh Language Scheme Annual Monitoring Report

1 April 2021
— 31 March 2022

About us

Our vision is safe, effective and kind nursing and midwifery that improves everyone's health and wellbeing. As the independent regulator of more than 758,000 nursing and midwifery professionals, we have an important role to play in making this a reality.

Our core role is to **regulate**. First, we promote high education and professional standards for nurses and midwives across the UK, and nursing associates in England. Second, we maintain the register of professionals eligible to practise. Third, we investigate concerns about nurses, midwives and nursing associates – something that affects a tiny minority of professionals each year. We believe in giving professionals the chance to address concerns, but we'll always take action when needed.

To regulate well, we **support** our professions and the public. We create resources and guidance that are useful throughout people's careers, helping them to deliver our standards in practice and address new challenges. We also support people involved in our investigations, and we're working hard to increase our visibility so people feel engaged and empowered to shape our work.

Regulating and supporting our professions allows us to **influence** health and social care. We share intelligence from our regulatory activities and work with our partners to support workforce planning and sector-wide decision making. We use our voice to speak up for a healthy and inclusive working environment for our professions.

Governance of our Welsh language work

Members of the Council, the Executive team and all employees play a part in delivering our Welsh language scheme. Key responsibilities are set out below:

- The Council is responsible for setting and overseeing our overall strategy.
- The Executive team is responsible for implementing our strategy and for setting internal policies and business plans that support the delivery of the Welsh language scheme.
- The Executive Director of People and Organisational Effectiveness has overall responsibility for the delivery of the Welsh language scheme, while our Executive Director of Professional Practice is the executive lead for Wales. The Executive Director of Professional Practice has undertaken this role since October 2021, prior to which, this role was held by our Chief Executive and Registrar.
- The Policy team (UK and International) is responsible for monitoring legislative change and the impact on our business planning in relation to compliance with the Welsh Language Act 1993. This includes initiating the work needed to ensure that we will be compliant with the Welsh language standards, with the correct governance framework in place for ongoing assurance of this compliance.
- We have teams who take responsibility for Welsh language awareness, and they support our employees to feel confident and competent complying with our Welsh language scheme, including our Communications and Engagement directorate, and our Learning and Organisational Development team.

Our commitment to Welsh language

In accordance with Section 21 of the Welsh Language Act 1993, we are clear about the need to treat Welsh and English equally in the conduct of public business and the administration of justice in Wales, as far as is appropriate in the circumstances and reasonably practicable. Our Welsh language scheme was approved by the Welsh Language Board in January 2011.

The aim of this annual monitoring report is to summarise our progress in implementing our Welsh language scheme during the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, in compliance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Commissioner. A summary report (based on questions from the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office) is set out in Annexe 1.

We're committed to consistent compliance with our Welsh language scheme, and engaging with the Welsh Language Commissioner and others to be responsive and informed in our approach to meeting the needs of Welsh speakers. This report sets out our work in this area, and will be accessible to customers through public discussion at a Council session as well as being published on our website, in line with previous years.

Recent activity

In October 2021, the role of Lead Director for Wales transitioned from our Chief Executive and Registrar, Andrea Sutcliffe, to our Executive Director for Professional Practice, Professor Geraldine Walters.

Every six weeks, our internal Wales working group meets to discuss key updates related to our regulatory role in Wales, and to consider the perspective of people working and living in Wales on proposed NMC policy development and announcements. This group is made up of colleagues from across the NMC.

During the reporting period 2021 – 2022, the NMC held a number of meetings and events with key stakeholders in Wales, including:

- Every six weeks Andrea Sutcliffe or Geraldine Walters met with Sue Tranka (Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) for Wales) to discuss key work for the NMC, including, but not limited to the Covid-19 temporary register, our regulatory reform programme of work, and our post-registration standards.
- Andrea Sutcliffe, Geraldine Walters and Sam Donohue (Assistant Director, Outreach at the NMC) attended the monthly four nations CNO and Chief Midwifery Officer (CMidO) meetings to gather and share updates with CNOs and CMidOs. Sue Tranka, Gill Knight (Nursing Officer) and Karen Jewel (Chief Midwifery Officer for Wales) attend these meetings.
- In April 2021, we **published** an update welcoming Sue Tranka to her role as CNO for Wales, and expressed our thanks for Professor Jean White CBE as the outgoing CNO for Wales.
- In May 2021, Geraldine Walters and Anne Trotter (Assistant Director, Education and Standards at the NMC) met with Gareth Howells (interim CNO for Wales) to discuss the post-registration standards consultation.

- In June 2021, we ran a stakeholder workshop in Wales, led by Andrea Sutcliffe, to hear from our stakeholders on the NMC's Covid-19 response, the future implications of this for Wales and opportunities for collaborative working.
- In October 2021, we held a roundtable event for CNOs to discuss our regulatory reform programme of work. This was attended by Sue Tranka, Gillian Knight, and Lisa Llewelyn (Director of Nurse and Health Professional Education, Health Education and Improvement Wales).
- In November 2021, as part of his induction, Sir David Warren (Chair of the NMC) met with Chris Jones (Chair of Health Education and Improvement Wales), and separately met with Mick Giannasi (Chair of Social Care Wales).
- In November 2021, Jasmine Bailey (Public Affairs Officer at the NMC) met the Welsh Health and Social Care Committee Clerk and the Health Specialist in the Senedd research unit to discuss our shared upcoming priorities and ways of working.
- In December 2021, as part of his induction, Sir David Warren met with Sue Tranka.
- In December 2021, Sir David Warren, Andrea Sutcliffe and Geraldine Walters met Baroness Morgan, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care as an introductory meeting. They discussed our Fitness to Practise caseload, Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) centres, international recruitment, and capturing Welsh language data.
- In January 2021, Geraldine Walters met with Gill Knight to discuss OSCE centre opportunities in Wales.
- In March 2022, Geraldine Walters began meeting with Lisa Llewelyn as part of a series of regular catch ups.
- In March 2022, Geraldine Walters attended the 'Regulatory developments and the Welsh Context' seminar which was organised by the Professional Standards Authority.

During the reporting period, Kristian Garsed, our Regulation Advisor for Wales in our Employer Link Service, has engaged with employers and stakeholders in the following ways:

- Sharing written updates to Executive Nurse Directors in NHS Wales, informing them of key developments, policy changes and announcements from the NMC.
- Offering virtual regulatory updates and workshops for employers about how we regulate and the Fitness to Practise process.
- Providing routine support to all employers of our nursing and midwifery professionals in Wales across health and care and the independent sector, in the form of ad hoc regulatory advice, information and learning opportunities.
- Maintaining the regular forum for the NMC, General Medical Council (GMC), General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) and General Dental Council (GDC) in Wales and Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) to share information, intelligence, policy considerations and shared stakeholder engagement priorities.

Also during the reporting period, we continued to carefully consider Welsh language and the needs of Welsh speakers as part of our ongoing response to the Covid-19 pandemic. We reflected on this in our **Covid-19 Regulatory Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)** which was published on our website in February 2022. We had an ongoing action within our EQIA action plan to ensure that all relevant documents we produced to support healthcare workers and people using services in relation to our pandemic response, were also published in Welsh. Our Welsh language assessment can be seen in section 5 of the EQIA.

In July 2021, we **responded** to the Welsh government's consultation on their 'Race Equality Action Plan: An Anti-racist Wales', and in October 2021, we **responded** to the Welsh government's consultation on the 'LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales'.

In March 2022, our Regulatory Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager promoted our Welsh language scheme internally to colleagues via Workplace (our internal communications platform) in a post marking St David's Day.

A strategic priority

In our 2020 – 2025 Strategy, published in April 2020, we made it clear that ‘we need strong links across the four countries of the UK and an appreciation of the diverse political, service delivery and workforce planning contexts’, and we committed to ‘review and develop our presence’ in Wales and other parts of the UK.

Our accompanying values and behaviours underpin our approach to Welsh language compliance, as set out below:

Fair

We will ensure people interacting with our services will have fair opportunities to access information in Welsh, and will be able to trust our commitment to our Welsh language scheme.

Kind

We value people who use the Welsh language, and we will be respectful when dealing with Welsh language requests. We will strive to ensure Welsh language speakers feel included and confident to engage with us in Welsh.

Collaborative

We will invest in our existing relationships, including with the Welsh Language Commissioner, and engage with wider Welsh communities, recognising we’re at our best when we work well with others.

Ambitious

We will be open to new ways of meeting our Welsh language requirements, and will always aim to do our best for Welsh language speakers.

Progress on our previous actions

In our previous annual monitoring report, published in October 2021, we committed to actions we would take to continue to ensure our compliance with our Welsh language scheme. The actions we committed to, and the progress we have made against these actions, are outlined below:

1. Setting out our commitment and approach to Welsh language parity in our updated EDI plan by the end of 2021

We developed our EDI plan for 2022 – 2025, to take us up to the end of our current strategic period, between September 2021 and March 2022, and this plan was approved by our Council in May 2022. One of the high-level actions we publicly committed to relates to our Welsh language scheme:

‘Establish clear governance processes for monitoring local issues across all four UK countries, including compliance with our Welsh language scheme and Northern Irish equalities legislation.’

We also have actions within our detailed delivery plan which relate to our Welsh language scheme, or our engagement with the four nations of the UK. These actions should ensure that we are a health and care regulator which is well equipped to support Welsh speakers to have equal access, and that we are informed about the impact of our work on people in Wales.

Relevant actions within our detailed delivery plan focus on preparing for our compliance with the Welsh language standards; ensuring we have links with Welsh stakeholders working on equality or who experience particular inequalities; and that we are properly analysing and reporting our data, intelligence and insights in a way that allows us to understand issues as they are experienced across the four countries of the UK.

Our full EDI plan will be published in autumn 2022.

2. Broadening our engagement with, and understanding of, the needs of professionals and people who use services in Wales

Our commitment to ensuring that the voice of people from Wales informs and shapes our work, is a key part of our public engagement activity. Some of the steps we take to bring that commitment to life include:

- Public consultation surveys are always available in Welsh and shared among Welsh stakeholder groups.
- Our Public Voice Forum is the key group for public engagement at the NMC and there is Welsh representation on the membership.
- We invited a Welsh public representative organisation to take part in the interviews for our English language consultation.
- We continue to work to build close relationships with organisations in Wales so that our engagement is meaningful to them and the people they support and/or work with.

3. Embedding a systematic approach to Welsh language compliance across the organisation using our established governance processes.

Our preparations for the introduction of the Welsh language standards, as described above, will ensure that we continue to be in a good position to embed and demonstrate our commitment to parity for Welsh speakers in our processes.

Welsh language standards

We have, with the other professional regulators, worked closely with the Welsh government on its new Welsh language standards and welcomed the opportunity to respond to their consultation in 2020, building on our 2016 response to the Welsh government's Welsh language proposals.

In preparation for our compliance with the Welsh Language Standards Regulations (WLSR), we are reviewing the measures we already have in place to ensure that we treat Welsh language no less favourably than English, principally in line with our Welsh language scheme.

We are working with the Welsh Language Commissioner to ensure that we properly understand which of the new Standards will apply to us. In June 2022, we attended the Welsh government's meeting at which the results and response to the 2020 WLSR consultation were shared with us, and we are liaising with the other healthcare regulators to ensure consistency in approach across regulators.

We have established an internal working group which is tasked with ensuring that we have the correct governance framework in place to be able to proactively work towards compliance once the Standards come into force on 31 October 2022. We have also kept our internal Welsh working group updated so that they can consider the implications of the new Standards in their stakeholder engagement, intelligence and policy development work.

Key actions for the next year

Our activity for 2022 – 2023 will be focused on ensuring that we're in a position to effectively embed and demonstrate our compliance with the Welsh language standards once these are introduced by the Welsh Language Commissioner.

Annexe 1

Summary report of the implementation of the Welsh language scheme from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022

Policy impact assessment

Requested information

Number and percentage of policies (including those that were reviewed or revised) where consideration was given to the effects the policy would have on the use of the Welsh language.

Our work

We continue to undertake an equality impact assessment (EQIA) as part of the development of new policies and processes, and any review of our existing policies or Standards. Our EQIA framework specifically requires colleagues to consider the effects of any changes to our policies, processes or Standards, on Welsh speakers and the use of the Welsh language.

During the reporting period, we have undertaken reviews of our **Standards of proficiency for community nursing specialist practice qualifications (SPQ)** and **Standards of proficiency for specialist community public health nurses (SCPHN)** and the equivalent **Standards for post-registration programmes**, all of which involved the completion of an EQIA and consideration of potential impacts of changes to our Standards on Welsh speakers. Through our EQIAs we did not find any potential unintended impacts or consequences for Welsh speakers, but we will continue to liaise with stakeholders from across the UK, including Wales, as we consider the implementation of these new Standards.

We have developed and continued to update EQIAs for the separate workstreams of our regulatory reform programme of work. We also developed an EQIA for our review of our English language requirements, and a summary of this EQIA was published in both **English** and **Welsh** as part of our consultation on this review.

In November 2021 we published version six of our **Covid-19 Regulatory EQIA** which included our assessment of the impact of the changes we made in response to Covid-19 on Welsh speakers and the use of the Welsh language.

Requested information

Example of an assessment deemed to have an impact on the use of the Welsh language and details of how the policy was amended as a result.

Our work

We have not undertaken any EQIA which resulted in an amendment to a proposed or existing policy during this reporting period.

Publications

Requested information

Number of publications available to the public.

Our work

There are 2,806 documents currently published on our website.

Requested information

Number of publications available to the public in Welsh.

Our work

There are 40 documents on our website which are available in Welsh, including annual reports, standards documents, revalidation documents and education standards documents.

This is in line with our Welsh language scheme that says information aimed at patients and members of the public will be available in English and Welsh. Standards, guidance and other technical or specialised material aimed at professionals and not directly at the public is published in English.

However, we offer a translation into Welsh on request. In addition to our scheme requirements we translate materials when we engage with the Welsh-speaking public, for example our consultation materials and documents for engagement events in Wales.

Complaints

Requested information

Number of all complaints received about the conduct of practitioners in Wales.

Our work

We had 207 referrals in relation to a registered nurse, midwife or nursing associate with a registered address in Wales from April 2021 to March 2022.

Requested information

Number of complaints received in Welsh about the conduct of practitioners in Wales.

Our work

We did not receive any referrals in Welsh which related to a registered nurse, midwife or nursing associate with a registered address in Wales from April 2021 to March 2022.

Requested information

Number of complaints received related to the Council's compliance with its Welsh language scheme.

Our work

The Customer Enquiries and Complaints team received no corporate complaints in relation to the NMC's compliance with the Welsh language scheme in the reporting period 2021 - 2022.

Requested information

Explain the nature of any complaints relating to the Council's compliance with its Welsh language scheme.

Our work

Not applicable - no complaints in respect of compliance with the Welsh language scheme have been received during the reporting period 2021 - 2022.

Website

Requested information

Percentage of the organisation's website that is available in Welsh.

Our work

Less than one percent of our website is available in Welsh.

We have one main **introduction page** in Welsh on the website, accessed through a 'Cymraeg' button in the navigation bar. We periodically update this page. We also have **one page** which outlines our Welsh language scheme.

In addition to this we have over 40 publications available in Welsh on our website, including annual reports, standards documents and revalidation guidance. This increases the presence of the Welsh language on our website.

We also offer a translation into Welsh on request.

Requested information

Evidence relating to improvements or increase in Welsh Language provision on the website.

Our work

One of our **corporate priorities** for 2022 - 2025 is to 'create a modern and accessible website that effectively portrays our values, delivers our core services, and enhances our communications and engagement.'

Our programme to review our website has so far included discovery research undertaken during 2021 - 2022 which included insights from Welsh language speakers.

We have also undertaken an EQIA on our approach to undertaking this research, and further research in the future, which included consideration of the impact of our research approaches on Welsh language speakers.

Requested information

Evidence relating to the process used to ensure that existing content, updates and new content, complies with the requirements of the Welsh language scheme.

Our work

Whenever a publication is produced, an assessment is made by the Corporate Communications team as to whether a Welsh version also needs to be produced for that particular publication.

Promotion of Welsh language services

Requested information

Information about methods used to promote the organisation's Welsh language services and evidence of any subsequent increase in the public's use of the services.

Our work

We publish 'packages' of materials on our website, which for important public-facing documents, will usually include an English version of a publication, a Welsh version and an easy-read version. We sign-post to these packages of materials through our newsletters and email communications, meaning that people are directed to landing pages which have all of the available versions presented together for ease of access. Welsh language versions of documents are always presented clearly alongside the English language versions.

There is a [page on our website](#) dedicated to giving details of our Welsh language scheme and the services that we offer. This is accessed through a 'Cymraeg' button at the top of our navigation bar, and is presented in Welsh as the default.

We have not received any requests to our contact centre for information or services in Welsh, or any complaints relating to our failure to provide items translated into Welsh.

Requested information

Information about methods used to assess the quality of the organisation's Welsh language services (e.g. by assessing the experience of existing/potential service users).

Our work

While we haven't had any customer feedback mentioning Welsh language, we assess the experience of existing users by invitation to our customer feedback surveys. Customers rate their satisfaction and have the opportunity to leave additional comments on any topic they wish, such as feedback on Welsh language communications. Quantitative and qualitative analysis of responses are captured in customer satisfaction reviews, which form the bedrock to improving our customer's experience.

Fitness to practise cases

Requested information

Number of hearings held in Wales.

Our work

During 2021 – 2022, we held nine Fitness to Practise (FtP) Committee events in Wales (12 cases were considered at these events). We also held one Investigating Committee event with two cases listed (one of these cases was considered virtually from our venue in Cardiff and the other case did not get heard on that occasion).

Requested information

Number of hearings where a witness wished to speak Welsh.

Our work

We did not hold any hearings during the reporting period where a witness expressed a wish to speak Welsh.

Requested information

Number of hearings in which evidence was presented in Welsh.

Our work

We did not hold any hearings during the reporting period where evidence was presented in Welsh.

Requested information

Number of hearings held in Welsh.

Our work

We did not hold any hearings during the reporting period which took place in Welsh.

Language awareness training

Requested information

Number and percentage of the organisation's staff that has received Welsh language awareness training.

Our work

Our colleagues have access to an optional online training course on building awareness of our Welsh language scheme and its importance. This is part of a suite of online courses designed to support colleagues to develop in their knowledge about our work and our role as a regulator.

There were 21 completions during the reporting period, which accounts for 2 per cent of our workforce. This is broadly the same as the reporting period 2020 - 2021, where there were 25 completions, accounting for 2 per cent of our workforce at the time.

Self-regulation

Requested information

Details of the arrangements and procedures the organisation has adopted to enable it to self-regulate effectively.

Our work

We have continued to operate in accordance with Section 21 of the Welsh Language Act 1993, and with our own Welsh language scheme which was approved by the Welsh Language Board in January 2011.

Separately, we have continued to make preparations ahead of the introduction of the Welsh Language Standards Regulations by the Welsh Language Commissioner. We **responded** to the Welsh government's consultation in October 2020 and have monitored the progress made and its likely impacts on us since then.

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