

Public Accounts Committee

Implementation of the NHS Finance (Wales) Act 2014

Additional information from Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

On behalf of Ms Judith Paget, Ms Martine Price & Mr Glyn Jones we are pleased to respond as follows:

- **You spent £16.2 million last year hiring agency staff to cover for vacancies. This is 77% of your total agency spend. Do you know how many vacant medical and nursing posts were covered by agency staff last year, and the grades or specialities of these posts?**

In 2018/19, each week an average of 65 vacant nursing posts were covered by agency staff, these were covered at a band 5 level. In addition, on average 31 vacant medical posts were covered by agency staff each week, 17 of these posts were training grades and 14 of these posts were senior medical grades, including consultants.

- **Could you describe any particular barriers that your Health Board faces when recruiting new doctors and nurses? Do you understand how your rates of recruitment and retention compare with other Health Boards in Wales?**

The most significant barrier to recruiting new doctors and nurses to the Health Board is the national skills shortages across a number of professions and specialities. Most notably there [is a](#) recognised national shortage of registered nurses across the NHS. In addition, there are difficulties in recruiting junior doctors particularly in obstetrics and gynaecology, paediatrics and trauma and orthopaedics due to skills shortages. The Health Board has particular difficulty in attracting substantive and temporary workforce to Nevill Hall Hospital largely as a result of its rural location and a recent increase in the number of

retirements has also contributed to increasing vacancies. These barriers are mitigated by a range of positive actions including national and overseas recruitment campaigns and designing new multi-disciplinary roles to support medical and nursing gaps, such as the appointment of Physician Associates.

Our recruitment and retention rate is measured through staff turnover.

The most recent all Wales workforce information shows that for the period of June 2018–June 2019, our turnover rates for medical and nursing staff compared favourably with NHS Wales. Our medical staff turnover for this period was 6.3% which was the lowest in Wales compared to other Health Boards. Nursing turnover for the same period was 8.9%, the second lowest rate in Wales compared to other Health Boards.

29 August 2019