

## **The PRIORITY project: developing an action plan for optimising and realising research capability for Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions in Wales**

### **Project overview and plan**

The Wales Chief Nursing Officer, Chief Allied Health Professions Advisor and Chief Advisor of Research and Development/Director of Health and Care Research Wales in Welsh Government, have committed to publish a strategic action plan for research for [nurses, midwives and allied health professionals](#). This plan will cover both the academic and practice landscape in Wales to harness the collective capacity of the professions for optimal impact to the development or production of research and the delivery or practice of research within health and social care settings in Wales. Delivering an integrated strategy will reflect current policy in Wales that values innovation in all areas of practice. The project supports embedding and normalising research for the professions. The tangible benefits are aligned to those of the UK clinical research strategy<sup>1</sup> and include improvements and better outcomes in health and care treatments and economic benefits which research delivers<sup>1</sup>. Despite the UK strategic context in research, there are still significant barriers to make research accessible to everyone regardless of their profession, grade and or ethnicity.

The realisation of this action plan requires all health and care staff to feel empowered to lead, use, deliver and/or participate in research as part of their role, and that they feel valued in doing so.

The aim of this project is to strengthen our understanding on the gaps, barriers and enablers on research development and utilisation. There is a body of evidence to draw on and this project is integral to the vision for developing research capacity and capability among health and social care professionals described in the NHS R&D Framework in Wales<sup>2</sup>, but also builds on the findings of Making research careers work<sup>3</sup>.

The project will then mobilise co-produced strategies into practice with clear milestones and actions. An integrated approach that reflects the commitment to multi-agency working and empowers and enables nurses, midwives and AHPs in advancing knowledge, driving innovation, and addressing global challenges specific to Wales.

The project will publish a comprehensive, evidence-based, research action plan focussed on the roles, challenges, advancements and opportunities in nursing, midwifery and allied health professions plan will guide the concept of 'research for everyone' and will approach this both from the perspective of research production and research practice. Research production includes the leadership and development of research by AHPs, nurses and midwives and the preparation and growth of research talent and careers. Research practice includes engagement with, and use of research in practice to ensure evidence-based practice and services.

Scope	Vision	Objectives	Deliverables
<p><b>Nurses, midwives and the 13 allied health professions in Wales</b> which are as follows: art therapists, music therapists, drama therapists, dietitians, occupational therapists, orthoptists, orthotists, paramedics, physiotherapists, podiatrists, practitioner psychologists, prosthetists, speech and language therapists</p> <p><b>Health care support worker roles</b> across nursing, midwifery and allied health professions in Wales</p> <p><b>Health care professional staff employed in NHS Wales and working across the range of health and social care settings and services</b>, including primary, secondary, community and social care</p>	<p>Enable nurses, midwives and allied health professionals to:</p> <p><b>Use research:</b> access, embrace and value evidence and normalise the use of research in practice to embed high-quality, evidence-based care</p> <p><b>Participate in research:</b> support, undertake and deliver health and social care research in many environments the NHS and social care to drive change and improvement</p> <p><b>Lead research:</b> develop and deliver nurse, midwife and allied health professional-led research for the continuous improvement of health and social care multi-professional teams and services</p>	<p><b>Investigate and report current context</b> and trends in nurse, midwifery and AHP research utilisation, participation in delivering research and leading and producing research</p> <p><b>Identify and obtain greater perspectives on the gaps, barriers and enablers</b> to research utilisation, participation in delivering research and leading and producing research</p> <p><b>Co-produce strategies</b> to address identified gaps and barriers and plans to embed enablers</p> <p><b>Foster collaboration and develop responsibility for the plan</b> amongst professionals, researchers, education providers and health and social care organisations and secure commitment to supporting the actions</p>	<p><b>A co-produced review</b> of health and social care landscape in relation to nurse, midwife and allied health professional research utilisation, development and practice</p> <p><b>Report multi-stakeholder perspective on gaps, barriers and enablers</b> to nurse, midwife and allied health professional research utilisation, development and practice</p> <p><b>A research action plan with clear, tangible recommendations and clarity on who is responsible</b> for their implementation, and which Welsh Government and Health and Care Research Wales can use to inform their policy position for nursing, midwifery and allied health professional research in Wales, by January 2025</p>

## Outline of work packages

<p><b>Work package I</b> <b>Project initiation</b></p>	<p>Dec 2023 – Jan 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish project board and terms of reference</li> <li>• Establish steering group and terms of reference</li> <li>• Project launch</li> <li>• Horizon scanning of similar strategies and plans and related evidence, both across the UK health and social care and Higher Education Institution (HEI) ecosystem</li> <li>• Identify and contact stakeholders and stakeholder groups</li> </ul>
<p><b>Work package II</b> <b>Discover</b> and understand problems</p>	<p>Jan 2024 – March 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmark beyond the UK to identify best practice and opportunities for collaboration and developing research capacity in relation to the involvement of nurses, midwives and allied health professionals in leading and delivering research</li> <li>• Undertake review of the health and social care and academic landscape in Wales to identify key research themes, research leaders/programmes, areas of strength and potential strength, capacity in Wales including research delivery initiatives</li> <li>• Scope and further explore barriers and enablers to research development and delivery for nurses, midwives and allied health professions. Consider work already completed</li> <li>• Approaches will include world café conversations; empathy mapping workshops; ethical dilemma cafés with the range of stakeholder groups</li> </ul>
<p><b>Work package III</b> <b>Define</b> and plan solutions</p>	<p>March 2024 – August 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan strategies with the community, based on stakeholders' viewpoints</li> <li>• Compare UK evidence from work package I to findings through 'discover' phase</li> </ul>
<p><b>Work package IV</b> <b>Develop</b> and consider solutions</p>	<p>June 2024 – September 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work closely with key stakeholders across the health and social care and HEI eco-system in Wales to understand and dovetail to different policies and initiatives underway</li> <li>• Development of the plan and priorities with stakeholder group/steering group</li> <li>• Citizen juries: used where knowledge is contested and there might be important ethical and social repercussions. Expert nurses, midwives, allied health professionals will argue/defend views to solutions and priorities for action. The juries are allowed to ask the experts questions prior to the anonymous vote after each issue is presented</li> </ul>
<p><b>Work package V</b> <b>Deliver</b></p>	<p>September 2024 – December 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalise the action plan with the steering group and through stakeholder feedback</li> <li>• Scope and describe the leadership and broader infrastructure requirements for sustainability of the plan, through a clear responsibility matrix</li> <li>• Write up</li> <li>• Publication and launch</li> </ul>

## References

1. Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), 2021. *Saving and Improving Lives: The Future of UK Clinical Research Delivery*. [pdf]. DHSC, London. Available at: [Saving and Improving Lives: The Future of UK Clinical Research Delivery - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97422/saving-and-improving-lives-the-future-of-uk-clinical-research-delivery.pdf) [Accessed 28.12.2023].

2. Health and Care Research Wales, 2023. Research Matters, What Excellence looks like in NHS Wales. Available at: [Research matters - What excellence looks like in NHS Wales \(healthandcareresearchwales.org\)](https://healthandcareresearchwales.org/research-matters-what-excellence-looks-like-in-nhs-wales) [Accessed 10.01.24]

3. Health and Care Research Wales, 2022. Making research careers work: a review of career pathways in Health and Social Care in Wales. Available at: [Making research careers work: a review of career pathways in health and social care in Wales \(healthandcareresearchwales.org\)](https://healthandcareresearchwales.org/making-research-careers-work-a-review-of-career-pathways-in-health-and-social-care-in-wales) [Accessed 28.12.2023]

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