

Grŵp Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol

Health and Social Services Group

Directors of Primary care and Mental Health  
Heads of Primary Care



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

28 September 2016

Dear Colleagues,

I am sure you will have heard the statement made last week by the Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport on what is being done in support of the Government's commitment to recruit and train additional GPs. As part of his statement, the Cabinet Secretary provided an outline of work to establish a Single Point of Contact under the once-for-Wales remit of the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP).

In keeping with what was suggested at August's Ministerial Taskforce meeting, the Single Point of Contact will provide a single, easily accessible source of information on general practice in Wales in order to encourage and provide first level support to those who respond to the marketing campaign or otherwise express an interest in returning to practice in Wales. It will also have a role in ensuring enquiries are followed up by health boards or other parties and will lead on monitoring the impact of the marketing campaign for evaluation purposes.

In his statement, the Cabinet Secretary also set out our plans for a national and international recruitment campaign to market Wales and NHS Wales as an attractive place for doctors, including GPs to train, work and live. There is a need for prospective GPs to be able to easily find information and a new national website is being developed to support this. A key component of the site will be the ability for people to quickly find what vacancies exist in Wales and to apply as easily as possible.

Currently a national list is hosted on GP One. Discussions with colleagues in Public Health Wales have led to the conclusion however that the site is not currently best suited to our needs (both in terms of appearance and functionality). NHS Jobs offers a more suitable and long term solution - one that will better maximise the impact of the national marketing campaign.

There are a number of reasons for this. Between August 2015 and August 2016 more than 340,000 adverts were placed on NHS Jobs. These were viewed over 245 million times with almost 5 million applications being made. GP One simply cannot compete with this level of traffic. Moving to NHS Job will therefore dramatically improve the reach of adverts for GP posts in Wales with immediate effect. Use of the NHS Jobs site also allows the advertisement and application processes to be managed effectively. With GP vacancies in England already being on the site, putting all of Wales' on too also brings an equivalence which will be helpful in a situation where UK nations are competing for a limited number of people.

There are some reservations within the General Practice community about the amount of bureaucracy involved in using the site. To address this, and from the launch of the campaign on 20 October, the single point of contact will offer a support service. This will mean that practices do not need to upload jobs themselves but can instead send them to NWSSP who will do so on their behalf. The advert will then run for as long as a practice wants it to. After the closing date details of all applications received will be sent back to practices.

We feel that this offer strikes the right balance between reducing bureaucracy for practices, increasing the reach of adverts and of independent contractors retaining ownership for sifting candidates and making appointments. We do not however want to lose sight of the significant potential for NWSSP to do more to support practices with recruitment, in line with an action in the primary care workforce plan.

We have written to the Royal College of GPs in Wales and General Practice Council Wales seeking their support for this approach and I am hopeful that they will be encouraging their members to take up the offer and to begin to register their vacancies on NHS Jobs.

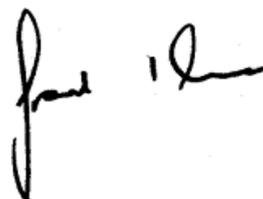
For the campaign to have greatest effect from day one, we are keen for practices to begin sending any vacancy details they have to NWSSP by using the [NWSSP.GPadvert@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:NWSSP.GPadvert@wales.nhs.uk) email address. At the same time, NWSSP will be in contact with GP One so vacancies already registered on that site can be transferred.

Practices that have vacancies uploaded by 20 October will stand a much better chance of benefitting from increased interest in jobs in Wales arising from the campaign. I therefore ask you to encourage practices to upload their jobs using the support offered by NWSSP.

Yours sincerely



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