

<b>Reporting Committee</b>	<b>Welsh Kidney Network (WKN)</b>
<b>Chaired by</b>	<b>Chair, Welsh Kidney Network (WKN)</b>
<b>Lead Executive Director</b>	<b>Melanie Wilkey, Director of Specialised Commissioning Services</b>
<b>Date of last meeting</b>	<b>17<sup>th</sup> June 2025</b>

**Summary of key matters considered by the Committee and any related decisions made.**

This report provides assurance to the Joint Commissioning Committee (JCC) in accordance with the Welsh Kidney Network (WKN) Terms of Reference (ToR), which states that the Chair of the WKN will provide reports to the Committee following WKN meetings outlining the activities of the Network and bringing attention to any significant matters under consideration by the Network. Board minutes are available on request from the WKN Coordinator: [Jonathan.Matthews@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Jonathan.Matthews@wales.nhs.uk).

**1 STRATEGIC NETWORK ISSUES**

The WKN is responsible for production of the Quality Statement for Kidney Disease in addition to the commissioning of Transplantation, Dialysis and Vascular Access. This strategic approach addresses the whole patient pathway and provides the WKN with the opportunity to develop a holistic and prudent approach to National strategy, planning, procurement, and also prevention. The WKN is a collaborative Network which is clinically led and includes widespread stakeholder involvement. This ensures our strategic approach is based on best practice, is patient focused and therefore targeted to deliver the best outcomes. Thus, the WKN is able to look at upstream measures in order to improve early diagnosis and treatment that will reduce or delay the rate of chronic kidney disease and reduce the rising need for dialysis. The WKN Strategic areas are Prevention, Chronic Kidney Disease Care, Acquired Kidney Injury, Kidney Transplant, Home Dialysis, Unit Dialysis, and Conservative Management / Palliative Care.

**1.1 Governance Review**

An initial paper outlining findings and recommendations had been presented to NWJCC Senior Management Team (SLT) for review. There were some factual corrections required with regards to the outlined governance structure and a revised version of the draft has since been re-submitted to NWJCC SLT. A meeting is being scheduled between the WKN Chair and the Chief Commissioner to run through the report. Vacancies remain on hold during this time.

## 1.2 Welsh Kidney Network Governance Framework

The WKN Governance Framework has been developed and been ratified by the WKN Board to provide an overarching structured approach on how decisions are made, and how the responsibilities assigned within the Network are discharged through the Clinical aspect of the Network and Commissioning responsibility for Kidney Replacement Therapy for Adults in Wales. The framework is essential for guiding interactions with stakeholders and regulators, helping to define roles and ensures adherence to the policies and processes of the wider NHS Wales National Joint Commissioning Committee. A copy of the WKN Governance Framework has been included in **Appendix 1**.

## 1.3 Digital Services Review

The WKN has commissioned a specific piece of work through DHCW, for an independent expert to review the current national kidney integrated electronic clinical records system within Wales, including a review of the current supporting workforce. There are a number of options for the WKN to consider ensuring that the system, services and workforce is sustainable for the future. The Board received a high-level presentation outlining three delivery options:

- Option 1 – Maintain current model (Status Quo)
- Option 2 – Matrix-Managed Model (Pragmatic option)
- Option 3 – Centralised model (Disruptive option)

The following next steps will be completed by November 2025:

- Fully expand each of the three options with costs and benefits analysis
- Share with key stakeholders
- Agree a recommendation
- Establish an implementation plan

## 1.4 Service Level Agreements and Financial Review During Quarter 2 2025/2026

Work is continuing with providers to review expenditure that flows outside the Long-Term Agreements (LTA) with a view of transferring existing budget lines into the LTAs reducing the level of unnecessary long-term transactional activity. The following areas are being transferred.

<b>Provider</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Action</b>
Betsi Cadwaladr UHB	Temporary posts	Agree cost and transfer into permanent funding
	Immunosuppressant budget	Agree out-turn 24/25 and transfer budget into LTA

Cardiff & Vale UHB	Temporary posts	Agree cost and transfer into permanent funding
Swansea Bay UHB	Pharmacy Drugs cost from Hywel Dda UHB	Agree out-turn 24/25 and transfer budget into LTA
	Pathology tests from Hywel Dda UHB	Agree out-turn 24/25 and transfer budget into LTA

A meeting was held with the Welsh Blood Service (WBS) on the aspects of service they provide to support transplant activity within Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (C&VUHB).

Improvements have been made to the process of test referrals into the WBS by the transplant team in C&VUHB, reducing the risk of unnecessary testing and associated costs following an unexpected increase in tests. Work will continue with the WKN and WBS on developing a robust Service Level Agreement.

### 1.5 Published Policies and Service Specifications

The Commissioning Policy and Service Specification for Vascular Access (297) has proceeded through the stakeholder consultation process, with comments received and where necessary the documentation updated. These will be presented to the NWJCC Policy Group in June 2025 and it is anticipated that the finalised versions will be formally published July 2025.

The new Policy Position Proposal (PPP) for the use of Imlifidase (256), a desensitisation treatment option for adults who are awaiting a kidney transplant from a deceased donor is ready to go through the 6-week consultation process.

As per the Foundation Plan the following Commissioning Policies and Service Specifications are being updated with an aim to issue for consultation during Quarter 2:

- Home Therapies (covering all modalities)
- Temporary Dialysis Away from Base

### 1.6 WKN Risk Register

There are a total of seven risks on the Welsh Kidney Network Commissioning risk register, an increase of one additional risk compared to the last reporting period. There are no escalated risks, reduced risks or closed risks. The new risk is WKN 23 - Service sustainability for Kidney Services in North Wales:

**If** Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) does not agree to the cost and volume proposal presented by NWJCC.

**Then** the financial deficit due to overactivity on the current block contract will continue into the financial year 2025/2026.

**This could result in**, unsustainable services for the population of North Wales.

Impacting on the ability to retain existing staff in the temporary posts.

Lack of ability to proactively plan service developments and innovation, currently working reactively on service demands.

Continuous requests for ad-hoc funding from the WKN/NWJCC to fulfil financial gap.

Services will not demonstrate Value for Money for the WKN's commissioned services.

Controlling measures are a continuation of monitoring through the WKN Regional meetings and escalation within BCUHB.

**Actions:**

- Escalation to the Director of Finance NWJCC (Complete).
- A further financial review will be undertaken with BCUHB finance in order to agree a workforce baseline.

**1.7 Value in Health**

The last quarter's report was completed and submitted in April 2025. Quarterly meetings with Welsh Government have now been extended to 6 monthly as the projects are now shaped and ready for scaling across Wales. The WKN has been asked to share the success and outcomes of the ViHC projects with other Networks, as they are considered best practice by the ViHC team.

The National Director of Digital, Data, Technology, Innovation and Value and Deputy Director Value Based Health confirmed the ViHC funding for the WKN is recurrent, as long as the Value in Health care (ViHC) scheme is in existence.

**1.8 Highlights from Strategic Areas:**

**Prevention**

Early identification of Chronic Kidney Disease has now been incorporated as a mandatory component of the General Medical Services Contracts. Work has commenced with Digital Health Care Wales to update Primary Care portals, enabling the identification of target populations and improvement metric by Practice/Cluster/Health Boards. This is supported by the publication of the all Wales CKD Community Health Pathways, which will be

adopted by each Health Board in Wales. It is anticipated that this will help in the long-term to reduce the number of patients with end stage kidney disease, who will require a form of Kidney Replacement Therapy.

### **Highlights from Regions**

Following significant delays in the local planning processes, the South West Wales Regional team confirmed that planning permission has now been provided by Neath Port Talbot County Council for a new Dialysis Unit. The additional capacity is 27 stations within the Region. Construction work has commenced on site, it is anticipated that the construction will take 44 weeks to complete and the assumption is the site will be operational in May 2026. In the meantime, the impact on additional demand is being managed flexibly within existing capacity.

### **1.9 WKN Website**

The WKN Website is currently being refreshed and updated. The Website will provide a one-stop shop for best practice and advice for patients and healthcare professionals. Numerous sub-group meetings of the WKN are engaged in the development of the various subject areas, which include Healthcare Professionals, About Us, About Kidneys, Living Well with Kidney Disease, and Explore My Treatment Options.

### **1.10 Highlight and Exceptions Reports:**

The following highlight reports and/or updates were received at the Network Board meeting:

- Quality and Patient Safety Report
- All Wales Clinical Lead including Home Dialysis Highlight and Exceptions Report
- Performance and Finance Report
- South West Wales (SBUHB) Highlight and Exceptions Report
- North Wales (BCUHB) Highlight and Exceptions Report
- Procurement update Report
- New Cross Party Kidney Group
- Popham Support and Exceptions
- Kidney Wales Highlight and Exceptions Report
- Kidney Care UK Highlight and Exceptions
- WKN Team Highlight and Exceptions Report
- WKN Lead Nurse Highlight and Exceptions Report
- Clinical Information Highlight and Exceptions Report
- Prevention Highlight and Exceptions Report
- Medicines Management Highlight and Exceptions Report

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pharmacy/Innovation Highlight and Exceptions Report</li> <li>• Transplant and Vascular Access Clinical Data Highlight and Exceptions Report</li> <li>• AKI Highlight and Exceptions Report</li> <li>• Health and Wellbeing Professionals Highlight and Exceptions Report</li> </ul>	
<b>Matters requiring Committee level consideration and/or approval</b>	
<b>None</b>	
<b>Matters referred to other Committees</b>	
<b>None</b>	
<b>Date of next meeting</b>	<b>September 2025</b>

The Joint Committee is asked to:

- **Note** the contents of the report.