

<b>Agenda Item</b>
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<b>Joint Commissioning Committee</b>
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<b>Welsh Kidney Network (WKN)</b>
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<b>Dyddiad y Cyfarfod / Date of Meeting</b>	25/11/2025
<b>Statws Cyhoeddi / Publication Status</b>	Open/ Public
	Not Applicable
<b>Awdur yr Adroddiad / Report Author</b>	Ian Phillips, Chair Welsh Kidney Network (WKN) Sue Browne, WKN Manager
<b>Cyflwynydd yr Adroddiad / Report Presenter</b>	Melanie Wilkey, Director of Commissioning for Specialised Services, NWJCC
<b>Noddwr yr Adroddiad / Report Sponsor</b>	Huw George, Chief Commissioner, NWJCC

<b>Pwrpas yr Adroddiad / Report Purpose</b>	For Noting
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<b>Engagement (internal/external) undertaken to date (including receipt/consideration at Committee/Group)</b>		
<b>Committee / Group / Individuals</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Welsh Kidney Network Board	24.09.2025	Noted

<b>Acronyms / Glossary of Terms</b>	
BCU	Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
CKD	Chronic Kidney Disease
ESKD	End Stage Kidney Disease
HEOR	Health Economic Outcomes Research Ltd
ISP	Independent Service Provider
JCC	Joint Commissioning Committee
KRT	Kidney Replacement Therapy
ONS	Office of National Statistics
WKN	Welsh Kidney Network

## **1. SITUATION/BACKGROUND**

This report to date has provided 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 to attention any significant matters under consideration by the Network. Following the implementation of the Governance Review recommendations to align the governance of the network to fit within the JCC governance structures, this will be the final Chair's report. Board minutes are available on request from the WKN Coordinator: [Jonathan.Matthews@wales.nh.uk](mailto:Jonathan.Matthews@wales.nh.uk).

The Independent Chair of the WKN thanked colleagues he has worked with over the last 5 years. The Chair stated it had been a privilege to play a small part in the development of the network and to have witnessed such great work, which has undoubtedly improved the quality of services and outcomes for kidney patients and their carers across NHS Wales.

The WKN is responsible for production of the Quality Statement for Kidney Disease 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.

## **2. STRATEGIC NETWORK ISSUES**

## **2.1 Governance Review**

The review concluded with a set of recommendations, namely that the WKN should remain within the JCC, under Specialised Services due to its commissioning responsibilities. With the WKN governance structure should closely reflect the structure of other speciality teams. The WKN will no longer have an independent Chair, the Director of Specialist Services will become Chair, and a lay member of the JCC to provide external perspective and influence. The Clinical Director (Clinical Lead) will become an Associate Medical Director, reporting to the Medical Director within the JCC. It was acknowledged that the WKN's pathway-based approach could serve as an exemplar for other commissioning teams across the JCC.

## **2.2 Health Economic and Outcomes Research (HEOR) Demand report**

The WKN commissioned HEOR to evaluate the evolving landscape and challenges of managing chronic kidney disease (CKD) and end-stage kidney disease in Wales. They developed a population-based model projecting trends over the next 20 years, utilising static mortality (life expectancy remaining constant at 2025 levels) and dynamic mortality (life expectancy increases in line with ONS predictions)., The report also references and models how optimising new drug treatments such as SGLT2 inhibitors can slow rates of progression for patients through the CKD stages and slow progression of end stage kidney disease (ESKD). This provides validation that the WKN's strategy for Prevention will have a direct impact on improvements for patient care and outcomes. The report also provides a demand profile to support future commissioning intentions for dialysis capacity up to year 2044. The in-depth findings will be analysed with all three Regions to support the planning and mitigation, wherever possible, against the estimated growth for kidney replacement therapies (KRT) modalities in Wales.

## **2.3 Digital Information and Resources Review**

The final report was submitted following an external professional review of the national renal digital system in Wales (VitalData) and existing workforce, three options were presented:

- Status Quo – maintain current arrangements.  
Lowest cost but perpetuates all existing risks.
- Matrix-Managed Model – formalise a cross-board team with clear governance, a dedicated matrix lead and agreed service levels.  
Builds on current strengths, adds national leadership and accountability, and is achievable without major structural change.
- Centralisation – transfer all staff and budgets to a single host organisation.  
Offers structural clarity but requires disruptive organisational change and carries high technical, political and HR risk.

The recommendation which was endorsed by Board is to adopt option 2, the Matrix-Managed Model, providing clear governance and professional accountability while retaining the collaborative culture and local agility that have enabled Wales to deliver a national renal platform admired across the UK. The WKN will proceed in

developing an implementation plan for implementing the preferred model, with an aim of achieving phase 1 by the end of the financial year.

## 2.4 WKN Risk Register

There are a total of six risks on the Welsh Kidney Network Commissioning risk register, compared to the last reporting period there is 1 reduced risk, 2 closed risks and 1 new risk.

Risk	Descriptor	Movement	Risk score
WKN 08	Limited outpatient dialysis capacity in Swansea	Reduced	12 to 8
WKN 14	Inflationary levels within ISP contracts	Closed	12 to 6
WKN 16	Removal of BCU funding for 6-day transport service	Closed	12 to 4
WKN 24	Provider organisations holding/freezing vacancies within the commissioned services of the Welsh Kidney Network	New	12 (C3 x L4)

## 2.5 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
- Pharmacy/Innovation Highlight and Exceptions Report
- Transplant & Vascular Access Clinical Data Highlight and Exceptions Report
- AKI Highlight and Exceptions Report
- Health and Wellbeing Professionals Highlight and Exceptions Report

### 3. ASSESSMENT

This report is provided for information and does not identify any specific actions required of the JCC.

<b>Objectives / Strategy</b>	
<b>Dolen i Amcan (au) Strategol CBC / Link to JCC Strategic Objectives(s)</b>	Maximise Value
	Ensure Quality Reduce Duplication Improve Equity and Population Health
<b>Dolen i Ddeddf Llesiant Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol – Nodau Llesiant / Link to Wellbeing of Future Generations Act – Wellbeing Goals</b> <a href="#">150623-guide-to-the-fg-act-en.pdf</a> <a href="#">(futuregenerations.wales)</a>	A Healthier Wales
	A More Equal Wales
<b>Dolen i Hwyluswyr Ansawdd</b> <i>(Canllawiau Statudol Dyletswydd Ansawdd (llyw.cymru)) / Link to Enablers of Quality</i> <a href="#">(Duty of Quality Statutory Guidance (gov.wales))</a>	Learning, Improvement & Research
<b>Dolen i Feysydd Ansawdd</b> <i>(Canllawiau Statudol Dyletswydd Ansawdd (llyw.cymru)) / Link to Domains of Quality</i> <a href="#">(Duty of Quality Statutory Guidance (gov.wales))</a>	Effective
	Efficient Equitable Person Centred Timely Safe
<b>Effaith Amgylcheddol/ Cynaliadwyedd (5R) / Environmental /Sustainability Impact (5Rs)</b>	No - Not Applicable

<b>Impact Assessment</b>		
<b>Ansawdd</b> <i>Ydych chi wedi ymgymryd â Sgrinio Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Ansawdd? /</i> <b>Quality</b> <i>Have you undertaken a Quality Impact Assessment Screening?</i>	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Outcome:	Not applicable at this stage
<b>Cydraddoldeb</b> <i>Ydych chi wedi ymgymryd â Sgrinio Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Gydraddoldeb? /</i> <b>Equality</b> <i>Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment Screening?</i>	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Outcome:	Not applicable at this stage
<b>Cyfreithiol / Legal</b>	There are no specific legal implications related to the activity outlined in this report.	
<b>Enw da / Reputational</b>	Yes (Include further detail below)	
	Reputational impact of delivering those activities delegated to the NHS Wales Joint Commissioning Committee.	
<b>Effaith Adnoddau</b> <i>(Pobl / Ariannol) /</i> <b>Resource Impact</b> <i>(People / Financial)</i>	Yes (Include further detail below)	
	Any resource implications associated with current specialised commissioning activities described in the in the paper are described within the body of the text.	

#### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of the Joint Commissioning Committee are asked to:

- **Note** the Welsh Kidney Network update.

#### 5. NEXT STEPS

Further updates will be provided at future meetings.