

# WELSH HEALTH CIRCULAR



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

**Issue Date:** 14 December 2020

**STATUS: ACTION**

**CATEGORY: PLANNING**

**Title:** NHS WALES ANNUAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK 2021-22

**Date of Expiry:** October 2022

**For Action by:**

Health Boards  
NHS Trusts  
NHS Support Organisations  
NHS Special Health Authorities

**Action required by:**

Planning period 2021-22

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**Enclosure(s):**

- Letter from Andrew Goodall
- NHS WALES ANNUAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK 2021-22

## Please find attached to this Welsh Health Circular the NHS Wales Annual Planning Framework 2021-22

Dear colleagues,

At this time of year NHS organisations would be developing their three year integrated medium term plans, IMTPs. The statutory duty to produce the IMTPs emanates from the NHS (Wales) Act 2006, further enhanced by the NHS Finance (Wales) Act 2014, for health boards to 'break even' over a three year accounting period. But times are far from usual.

The Annual Planning Framework approach is a natural evolution from the quarterly planning arrangements supported in 2020-21. It would be challenging to move back to three year IMTPs immediately from what has been, and continues to be, a very fluid and changeable planning environment.

This Framework sets the Ministerial directions for the year ahead and confirms that the Ministerial priorities have not changed. It seeks to blend operational focus with cognisance of the longer term objectives set out in *A Healthier Wales*, and other legislative requirements i.e. Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act. In addition, since the beginning of the pandemic, there has also been a strong focus on the four harms that have been the key quality context within which services and care must be provided.

Developing and issuing an Annual Planning Framework for 2021-22 is an important step in recognising how to achieve balance between managing the immediate operational pressures facing us all and a focus on stabilisation and recovery. This publication comes a critical time but it is intended to be helpful to allow planning to start when it is appropriate. I expect your plans to be proportionate as I know colleagues will be supporting the immense operational effort this winter.

By adopting this approach it does not negate the statutory duties of health boards to set out their strategic objectives nor their financial responsibilities. **The expectation is for organisations to submit a board approved annual plan by 31 March 2021.**

While we need to plan, we have to be ready and able to flex plans as conditions within which we work change, often very rapidly. Officials will continue to engage with you and provide support, including the issuing of supplementary guidance, where appropriate.

Yours sincerely



Dr Andrew Goodall CBE