

## Agenda Item

4.1

### Quality Safety and Outcomes Sub-Committee

#### Welsh Kidney Network

|                                                           |                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Dyddiad y Cyfarfod /<br/>Date of Meeting</b>           | 30/10/2026                                            |
| <b>Statws Cyhoeddi /<br/>Publication Status</b>           | Open/ Public                                          |
|                                                           | Not Applicable                                        |
| <b>Awdur yr Adroddiad /<br/>Report Author</b>             | WKN Quality and Patient Safety Lead<br>WKN Lead Nurse |
| <b>Cyflwynydd yr<br/>Adroddiad / Report<br/>Presenter</b> | WKN Quality and Patient Safety Lead                   |
| <b>Noddwr yr Adroddiad /<br/>Report Sponsor</b>           | Director of Commissioning for Specialised<br>Services |

|                                                 |                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Pwrpas yr Adroddiad /<br/>Report Purpose</b> | For Assurance<br>Choose an item. |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|

| <b>Engagement (internal/external) undertaken to date<br/>(including receipt/consideration at Committee/Group)</b> |             |                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| <b>Committee / Group /<br/>Individuals</b>                                                                        | <b>Date</b> | <b>Outcome</b> |
| Senior Leadership Team                                                                                            | 14/10/2026  | Noted          |

## 1. SITUATION/BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to provide assurance to the Sub-Committee on the current Quality Patient Safety (QPS) issues within the services that are commissioned by the Welsh Kidney Network (WKN) across Wales.

The WKN is a vehicle through which specialised kidney services are planned and developed on an all-Wales basis in an efficient, economical and integrated manner and provides a single decision-making framework with clear remit, responsibility and accountability.

The WKN continues to work with the Regions to develop and monitor key performance indicators (KPI's) using real time Welsh data reporting, this has been enabled by the production of audit dashboards for commissioned areas. The WKN also incorporates the National published reports from the relevant UK audit organisations into this work. Collaboration work also continues with the UK Kidney Association (UKKA) with continued representation on the UKKA Patient Safety Group.

The Sub-Committee is asked to:

- Endorse the Welsh Kidney Network's strategic priorities and commissioning direction.
- Note the approved the proposed programme of commissioning improvements and assurance measures.
- Support further development of a whole-pathway approach to kidney service commissioning.
- Support the implementation of actions to address the key risks and New Incidents for Reporting (NRIs) identified by the WKN.

## 2. SPECIFIC MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

### 2.1 New Incidents for Reporting

There was 1 new incident reported within this reporting period and is being investigated through provider governance structures.

#### **NRI 1: Inappropriate Discontinuation Immunosuppressant Medication**

**Brief description** A patient experienced inappropriate discontinuation of immunosuppressive therapy, leading to transplant rejection and serious clinical complications.

### 2.2 Closed Incidents

There are two proposed NRI closures for this reporting period. The two proposed NRI closures have been investigated through provider governance structures and will have been discussed at the WKN National QPS meeting on 8/10/26, prior to QSOC on 30/10/26. Assurance and shared national learning will be shared at the next QSOC meeting.

## **NRI 1: Nephrology Patient with Multiple Co-morbidities, Clinical Deterioration and Incorrect NEWS Calculation**

**National learning identified:** The investigation highlighted learning regarding the accurate calculation and use of National Early Warning Scores (NEWS2), timely recognition and escalation of clinical deterioration, and the importance of compliance with observation and monitoring requirements. Learning also reinforced the need for effective communication of patient acuity during clinical handovers and multidisciplinary team discussions to support timely escalation and decision-making.

**Implementation and monitoring:** Actions have been implemented to strengthen compliance with NEWS2 assessment and escalation processes, reinforce monitoring requirements, and improve communication of NEWS2 scores during clinical handovers and safety huddles. Progress will continue to be monitored through provider governance arrangements, audit of NEWS2 compliance, and quality and patient safety assurance processes.

## **NRI 2: Delayed Recognition and Follow-up of Abnormal Renal Investigation Results**

**National learning identified:** The investigation identified learning relating to the timely review and follow-up of abnormal diagnostic results (blood results and radiology results), the importance of robust results management processes, and clear accountability for escalation and clinical action. Learning also highlighted the need for standardised safety-netting arrangements, consistent use of tracking systems, and effective processes to support the management of abnormal investigation findings across outpatient pathways.

**Implementation and monitoring:** Improvements have been implemented to strengthen results management processes, safety-netting procedures, escalation pathways, and the use of electronic systems to support results tracking and follow-up. Ongoing monitoring will be undertaken through provider governance structures, audit of results management processes, and quality and safety assurance frameworks.

## **2.3 Welsh Kidney Network Quality Patient Safety Meeting 8<sup>th</sup> October 2026**

WKN QPS continues to maintain oversight of renal-specific patient safety and service continuity issues. During the reporting period, learning and assurance updates were received regarding patients becoming unwell during transport from dialysis units and the Reverse Osmosis (RO) water treatment failure at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd (YGC). In both cases, learning has been shared through governance arrangements, assurance has been provided regarding mitigation and escalation processes, and any wider implications for renal services are being considered at an all-Wales level.

### 3. KEY RISKS

#### 3.1 Risk Register

The risk register for the WKN is reviewed through:

- Meetings between the regional providers and the WKN.
- The Welsh Kidney Network, Quality Patient and Safety performance assurance meeting.
- Welsh Kidney Network Senior Leadership Group.
- Specialised Services Commissioning Team meeting.
- Welsh Kidney Network meeting.

There are in total ten risks on the current Welsh Kidney Network Commissioning risk register, with two risks reducing during this reporting period.

##### 3.1.1 Escalated risks

There are no escalated risks in this reporting period.

##### 3.1.2 Reduced risks

There is one reduced risk in this reporting period.

WKN 18 Renal dialysis capacity across Wales, reduced from risk scoring of 16 to 12. The rational for reducing the risk: opening of additional units within SBUHB regions and additional funding provided through the NWJCC Foundation Plan 2026/27 to increase home dialysis, as part of the Care Closer to Home Programme.

##### 3.1.3 Closed risks

There is one closed risk in this reporting period.

WKN08 – Limited outpatient dialysis capacity in Swansea. Rational for risk closure: opening of the Neath Port Talbot site has ensured there is sufficient dialysis capacity within SBUHB and reduction in the twilight sessions on Morriston Site.

##### 3.1.4 New risks

There are three new risks in this reporting period.

WKN 27 - Risk of Contractual, Financial and Legal Exposure Arising from Inadequate Management of Subcontracted Commissioned Service

Areas of potential **impact** include:

- Adverse impacts on the financial sustainability of commissioned services delivered on behalf of the Wales Kidney Network (WKN) by Health Boards.
- Legal and financial consequences for Health Boards resulting from non-compliance with contractual obligations or breach of contract.
- Disputes between the Commissioner (WKN/JCC) and provider Health Boards regarding contract performance, accountability, and financial liabilities.

- Disruption to service delivery and patient access resulting from unresolved contractual issues.
- Reputational risks for WKN, the Joint Commissioning Committee (JCC), and provider Health Boards.

There are several **mitigations and controls** that have been considered and are being implemented, including:

- Provider organisation to develop an action plan, including demand in Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) population within the region to reduce the level of unallocated dialysis slots.
- As a result of the Deep Dive, a suite of 'products' is in development which will include guidance around procurement and management of commercial contracts.
- Letter outlining NWJCC position supporting Executive to Executive discussions with Swansea Bay University Health Board (SBUHB).

WKN 28 - Lack of buy-in and support of the Deep Dive by Provider organisations

Areas of potential **impact** include:

- Potential adverse impacts on the financial sustainability of commissioned services delivered on behalf of the Wales Kidney Network (WKN) by Health Boards.
- Potential legal and financial consequences for Health Boards resulting from non-compliance with contractual obligations or breach of contract.
- Potential disputes between the Commissioner (WKN/JCC) and provider Health Boards regarding contract performance, accountability, and financial liabilities.
- Potential disruption to service delivery and patient access resulting from unresolved contractual issues.

There are several **mitigations and controls** that have been considered and are being implemented, including:

- Findings and recommendations attributed to funding streams has formed part of the Deep Dive on the Commissioned activity of the Welsh Kidney Network and recommendations endorsed by Joint Committee (September 2026).

WKN 29 - Financial funding for services within the WKN portfolios

Areas of potential **impact** include:

- Potential consequences to service stabilisation on commissioned activity

There are several **mitigations and controls** that have been considered and are being implemented, including:

- Findings of the Deep Dive and the necessary recommendations endorsed by Joint Committee (September 2026).
- NHS Wales Providers have been asked to complete a comprehensive costing exercise with a return date of end of October 2026.

- Funding release requests against the Care Closer to Home (CCtH) projects have been developed for Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (C&VUHB), Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) with regards to SBUHB current business proposals have not been approved, the service has been asked to refine.

### **3.1.3 Risks above 15**

There are no risks above 15. As a result of WKN 18 Renal dialysis capacity across Wales, reduced from risk scoring of 16 to 12. This has now been removed from the NWJCC Corporate risk register.

## **4. ADDITIONAL TEAM HIGHLIGHTS FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **4.1 WKN Deep Dive**

The WKN has undertaken a Deep Dive to gain a greater understanding of the current position and key challenges within the WKN. A report outlining key recommendations was presented to the NWJCC during September 2026.

The Committee were asked to endorse the following Deep Dive findings to improve patient outcomes across commissioned services:

1. Support the delivery of the WKN's strategic priorities:
  - Use commissioning levers to:
    - Increase access to transplantation and delivery of the Transplant First approach.
    - Expand home dialysis services and delivery of agreed home therapy trajectories in support of the 30% home therapies ambition by 2029.
  - Prioritise prevention and early intervention programmes aimed at slowing progression of chronic kidney disease.
  - Continued development of national service specifications, commissioning policies and clinical standards.
  - Improvement of data quality, reporting consistency and commissioning intelligence across Wales.
2. Approve the recommended work programme to strengthen commissioning assurance, financial transparency, standardisation and long-term sustainability:
  - Standard commissioning arrangements.
  - Annual open-book financial reviews.
  - Minimum datasets and reporting standards.
  - Introduction of formal change control.
3. Agree to continue this work to provide a better understanding and develop recommendations for non-commissioned activity and historic funding

arrangements for wider nephrology inpatient, outpatient and day-case activity to enable a full pathway approach to commissioning kidney services.

#### **4.2 Care Closer to Home (CCtH)**

As part of the NWJCC Strategic priorities, the WKN is working with regions to increase home dialysis for patients, this is in accordance with the NWJCC Foundation Plan.

#### **4.3 JCC Consultation on Service Specifications and Commissioning Policies**

The consultation policy CP30 Living Donor Expenses is due for renewal in December 2026. Feedback will be sought from Living Donor coordinators, nurses and clinical transplant leads on the current policy, including its effectiveness, areas requiring clarification, any implementation challenges, and potential gaps to inform the policy review and renewal process.

#### **4.4 WKN Quality Improvement**

##### **PREM Update**

Regional teams continue to develop and plan to implement Patient Reported Experience Measures (PREM) action plans, including reviewing local findings, strengthening patient communication, and progressing improvement work in response to patient feedback.

##### **NPREM Update**

Needling Patient Reported Experience Measures (NPREMs) implementation plans continue and will launch in January 2027 across Wales to support understanding of patient experience of vascular access needling and identify opportunities for quality improvement.

##### **National Kidney Patient Survey (2026) Update**

The National Kidney Patient Survey 2026 is now open and is being promoted across Welsh renal services to maximise participation and support future improvement work informed by patient feedback.

##### **Home Dialysis Peer Review 2026-2027**

Preparatory work for the All Wales Home Dialysis Peer Review continues. Following the launch meeting with renal teams in September, engagement is underway to support completion of the self-assessment and pathway review process.

The peer review will use local data and service reflection to identify variation, highlight good practice, explore opportunities for improvement, and facilitate shared learning across Wales to strengthen home dialysis pathways.

#### 4.5 Annual Conference

The annual WKN meeting is being held 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> October 2026. The conference provides an opportunity for kidney services throughout Wales to spread and share good practice, learn, collaborate to facilitate improvement in patient care.

This year's session themes include:

- Prevention of CKD, national direction (delay progression).
- Cardiovascular, renal, metabolic panel discussion.
- Advanced Kidney Care (AKC) in Wales
  - Care Closer to Home.
  - Value Based Health update.
  - Shared decision making – AKC education.
- Learning from PREMs.
- Transplant First update, transplant listing, higher risk recipients.

#### 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Quality Safety and Outcomes Sub Committee is asked to:

- **Endorse** the Welsh Kidney Network strategic priorities.
- **Note** the commissioning improvement programme.
- **Support** further work towards whole-pathway kidney commissioning.
- **Note** the key risks and NRIs identified and support the actions required to mitigate them.

## Strategic and Regulatory Assessment

| Objectives / Strategy                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <b>Dolen i Amcan (au) Strategol CBC / Link to JCC Strategic Objectives(s)</b>                                                                                                                                                            | Ensure Quality                              |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                             |
| <b>Dolen i Ddeddf Llesiant Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol – Nodau Llesiant / Link to Wellbeing of Future Generations Act – Wellbeing Goals</b><br><a href="#">150623-guide-to-the-fg-act-en.pdf</a><br><a href="#">(futuregenerations.wales)</a> | A Healthier Wales                           |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | If more than one applies please list below: |
| <b>Dolen i Hwyluswyr Ansawdd</b><br><i>(Canllawiau Statudol Dyletswydd Ansawdd (llyw.cymru)) / Link to Enablers of Quality</i><br><a href="#">(Duty of Quality Statutory Guidance (gov.wales))</a>                                       | Whole-systems Perspective                   |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | If more than one applies please list below: |
| <b>Dolen i Feysydd Ansawdd</b><br><i>(Canllawiau Statudol Dyletswydd Ansawdd (llyw.cymru)) / Link to Domains of Quality</i><br><a href="#">(Duty of Quality Statutory Guidance (gov.wales))</a>                                          | Safe                                        |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | If more than one applies please list below: |
| <b>Effaith Amgylcheddol/ Cynaliadwyedd (5R) / Environmental /Sustainability Impact (5Rs)</b>                                                                                                                                             | No - Not Applicable                         |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | If more than one applies please list below: |

| Impact Assessment |                               |                                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>Ansawdd</b>    | Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> | No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                         |                                         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <p><i>Ydych chi wedi ymgymryd â Sgrinio Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Ansawdd? /</i></p> <p><b>Quality</b></p> <p><i>Have you undertaken a Quality Impact Assessment Screening?</i></p>                                    | Outcome:                                                                                                                | If no, please include rationale below:  |
| <p><b>Cydraddoldeb</b></p> <p><i>Ydych chi wedi ymgymryd â Sgrinio Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Gydraddoldeb? /</i></p> <p><b>Equality</b></p> <p><i>Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment Screening?</i></p> | Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                           | No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Outcome:                                                                                                                | If no, please include rationale below:  |
| <b>Cyfreithiol / Legal</b>                                                                                                                                                                                          | There are no specific legal implications related to the activity outlined in this report.                               |                                         |
| <b>Enw da / Reputational</b>                                                                                                                                                                                        | There is no direct impact on the reputation of the Joint Committee as a result of the activity outlined in this report. |                                         |
| <b>Effaith Adnoddau</b><br>(Pobl / Ariannol) /<br><b>Resource Impact</b><br>(People / Financial)                                                                                                                    | There is no direct impact on resources as a result of the activity outlined in this report.                             |                                         |

## Acronyms

| Acronyms / Glossary of Terms |                                               |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| AKC                          | Advanced Kidney Disease                       |
| BCUHB                        | Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board       |
| C&VUHB                       | Cardiff and Vale University Health Board      |
| CCtH                         | Care Closer to Home                           |
| CKD                          | Chronic Kidney Disease                        |
| CP                           | Commissioning Policy                          |
| CPE                          | Carbapenemase-Producing Enterobacterales      |
| CPO                          | Carbapenemase-Producing Organism              |
| CP                           | Consultation Policy                           |
| DKA                          | Diabetic Ketoacidosis                         |
| ITU                          | Intensive Care Unit                           |
| KPI's                        | Key Performance Indicators                    |
| NPREM                        | Needling Patient Reported Experience Measures |

|       |                                         |
|-------|-----------------------------------------|
| NEWS2 | National Early Warning Scores           |
| NEPTS | Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service |
| NRIs  | National Reportable Incidents           |
| NWJCC | NHS Wales Joint Commissioning Committee |
| PREM  | Patient Reported Experience Measure     |
| QPS   | Quality Patient and Safety              |
| RO    | Reverse Osmosis                         |
| SBUHB | Swansea Bay University Health Board     |
| SOP   | Standard Operating Procedure            |
| UKKA  | UK Kidney Association                   |
| WKN   | Welsh Kidney Network                    |
| YGC   | Ysbyty Glan Clwyd                       |