

Wales and Africa Health Links Network Report 2019-22



Reflection on the last three years

by **Kathrin Thomas**

In July 2022 after three years as Chair and nine years as a trustee for WAHLN, Kathrin Thomas stepped down. We asked Kathrin to reflect on her time as Chair and as a key figure in the network and would like to thank her for all her hard work.



What do you think has been the greatest achievement over the last three years?

For the network it has been about survival, which in itself is quite an achievement because of the pandemic. This has had a major impact on international partnerships, at many levels. Then there's the Black Lives Matter movement which has really challenged us to reconsider why we do what we do.

What has been the biggest learning for you?

Some of the innovation that was happening in Sub-Saharan Africa in response to the pandemic was a real learning opportunity for me. Across Africa I was watching the local leadership fill the gap when the NGOs disappeared because of Covid-19. The WHO Regional Office, and some of the health ministers in Uganda and South Africa, have shown amazing leadership.

I've thought about the history of neocolonialism and the way we do aid. I attended events Hub Cymru Africa did around this and I've done a lot of other reading and listening. It's really made me think about what we were doing and why, and should we be doing it at all?

This experience has taught me that we in Wales do have a contribution to make to improving global health, however, we could be more humble and understand power inequities much better.

Would you change anything about your Chairship?

One of my personal aims was to increase the diversity of the board, tackling gender, ethnicity but also professional backgrounds – we were very dominated by doctors. I wanted more Trustees who were not clinicians, and more who came from diaspora backgrounds. I have done some of this, and I am proud of that.

I have facilitated several new partnerships. Engaging those people in Wales and in Africa who are the activists in partnerships has been a challenge throughout the pandemic and sharing between us pre pandemic was much easier.

What's next?

I really enjoy being involved with Wales and Africa, since helping to set up the network in 2006. I've been involved with a link with Lesotho for over ten years and that is my focus. Volunteers were in Lesotho for the first time since the pandemic for our current mental health project.

I am optimistic that the momentum is building in the movement for global solidarity among health workers and that there are opportunities to really move forward with our common passion for solidarity with our health worker colleagues in and from Africa.

Vision

A world where people live a happier, healthier and fairer life.

Mission

The promotion and protection of good health in Africa and Wales in particular but not exclusively by establishing partnerships between health workers in Wales and Africa.

Values

1. Partnership
2. Co-leadership
3. Humility
4. Needs-based

Objectives

1. Excellent governance
2. Financial stability
3. High-quality sustainable partnerships
4. Undertaking best practice
5. Demonstrating impact

Trustees

Dr Julia Terry – Vice Chair

Julia is an Associate Professor in the School of Health and Social Care, which is in the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Science at Swansea University.

She is a mental health nurse, has a PhD in Health Science, along with extensive experience in public and patient involvement. Julia works with Deaf communities to improve healthcare policy and practice to reduce health inequalities that Deaf people experience. Julia stepped in as Interim Chair of WAHLN after Prof Kelechi Nnoaham stepped down in November 2022 due to a new Global health role.

Dr Bernadette Fuge

Dr Fuge worked as a community paediatrician and partner in a Cardiff GP practice before joining the Welsh Office in 1990. Following devolution, she held the positions of Principal Medical Officer, Head of NHS Quality and was the first Medical Director of NHS Wales in the National Assembly.

Dr Fuge retired in 2005 and was appointed as Chair of Age Cymru. She is also Chair of the Dementia Supportive Communities expert group within the Ageing Well in Wales programme, a member of the Prime Minister's Dementia Challenge Group, and a member of the advisory group for Action on Hearing Loss Cymru.

Dr Paul Myres

Paul is a retired GP who has also worked in primary care development at a national level and has worked in Namibia, Somaliland and Lesotho. He was lead for health matters in Dolen Cymru for three years before becoming Chair of Trustees at Dolen Cymru Lesotho.

He has an interest in person centred care and mental health and was clinical lead for the Wales health programme in Shared Decision Making and Choosing Wisely called Making Choices Together.

Prof Kelechi Nnoaham

Kelechi was Executive Director of Public Health for Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board as well as Executive Lead for Research & Development, Value-Based Health and Innovation in the Health Board. He was appointed Chair to Wales and Africa Health Links Network in July 2022. Due to a key new role in global health, he stepped back from the Chair role in November 2022.

His background is in Infectious Diseases Medicine and he has broad interests in the discipline of Public Health – including academic research & teaching, health protection, health services public health and health improvement. Kelechi has held senior Public Health positions in the NHS and Local Government since 2005.

Zainab Nur

Zainab Nur set up Hidden Voices UK with like-minded people which is a campaign to challenge the misleading FGM narrative. She worked in the Public Sector as a Professional Social Worker for over a 25 year period, mainly in Mental Health Services and Child Protection.

In the last five years, she has given her time freely in advocating for people's rights to their entitlement to public services. She is passionate about women and girls' rights, and has a long history of being a community activist; especially addressing inequality issues.

Dr Gordon H Lewis

Gordon was a GP in Carmarthen for 35 years until his retirement in 2017. He has kept up his interest in Medical Education and remains an Associate Dean employed by Health Education and Improvement Wales.

He runs the Global Health Fellowship Programme for HEIW, helping trainee doctors in Wales spend a year in rural hospitals in South Africa. He is the Medical Director of Care for Uganda, having set up the health division in 2012. The project supports the training of Village Health Teams in a very poor area of central Uganda, and also provides an ambulance service for the district.

Towera Luhanga

Towera has worked in international development for over two decades focusing on grants management and capacity building programmes for governments and non-state actors in the eastern and southern Africa region. She moved to Wales in 2018.

She is currently director for Umoyo a charity working with partners to contribute to the health and development of the people especially those in southern Africa including Malawi.

Karen Robson

Karen's expertise is in disability provision and much of her career to date has been in the Higher Education sector, establishing and managing disability provision for students and creating organisational strategies to improve access and equality of opportunity.

She was Wales Director for RNID, supporting those who are Deaf or have hearing loss. She is keen to support the collaboration of healthcare professionals between Wales and Africa and to develop opportunities for healthcare equality and disability provision.

Dr Zed Sibanda

Dr Sibanda is Consultant Paediatrician & Assistant Clinical Director Paediatrics with Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board based at Royal Glamorgan Hospital. He is involved with the Zimbabwe Health Training Support which has its main link with the University of Zimbabwe Medical School.

He is a Founding Member of Doctors of Black & African Descent in Wales - this Group recently presented to the Welsh Government Group looking at BAME Covid-19 related deaths.

Allison Williams

Allison was the Director Primary Care Community & Mental Health Services at NHS. She was former Chief Executive of Cwm Taf Health Board. Her early clinical career in women's health led her to take up a lecturing post in Southampton University from where she returned to Wales in the early 1990s as a Genetic Counsellor.

Allison has led a number of clinical change programmes at an organisational, Regional and National level. She is passionate about high quality patient care, clinical leadership and empowering staff to deliver.

Alison Fiander, Secretary (stood down 2022)

Professor Alison Fiander is a Fellow of the Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists and previously held the position of Consultant Gynaecologist with Special Interest in Gynaecological Oncology for Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust. In addition to her clinical work, she has contributed to research in the areas of Human Papillomavirus Infection, psychological issues in cancer, and global women's health, with a particular focus on the prevention of cervical cancer and appropriate postgraduate training in Obstetrics and Gynaecology in resource-poor countries.

She has also worked in Tanzania to improve Women's Health and Obstetric Fistula. Her work has been recognized with over 30 pieces of work published in medical journals.

Dr Mac Walapu – stood down in 2021

Mac is a retired Consultant in Public Health Medicine in Wales and has been involved in a partnership with colleagues in Malawi for many years. He was a trustee with WAHLN from July 2018 until March 2022.

Volunteers

Six Hub Cymru Africa volunteers supported communications, website development and media campaigns.

Quote from volunteer:

“I can't emphasise how grateful I am to be able to learn so many new skills while making an impact. These experiences have really helped boost my confidence and have made my transition to Wales so much smoother. I'm also learning a lot about the health system which I think will really come in handy one day”.

Events and Training

Wales and Africa Health Links Network convenes experts and groups to ensure the links in Wales deliver researched and evidenced interventions. We hold ourselves and the sector to professional standards.

As a board we have wide ranging expertise and networks and we run events and training on that basis; ensuring multiple disciplines benefit from their participation. We listen to and deliver work that meets the needs of the sector. It's why feedback from groups in Wales is important; it keeps us relevant.

In the past four years 2019 - 2022 we held:



6 Shared Learning Events (SLE)



SLE was held in North Wales and facilitated the sharing of learning between five health links working on disability issues, sexual and reproductive health and capacity development.

It included speakers from Gulu Mission, Basotho teachers with Dolen, BOTAWA and Gift of Grace Education Project. Global citizenship was discussed with the Welsh Centre for International Affairs and Curriculum Enrichment in Tanzania by Dr Mlewa.

100% of attendees rated the event as Good or Excellent use of their time. Comments included –

“Very interesting & informative, well worth attending”.

“This event is great for sharing skills for a common objective with development”.

The final SLE focused on sharing learning between Welsh links based in southern Wales working across Africa and beyond and some UK wide partnerships.



- Embedding the Charter Principles in International Health Partnerships
- How can we continue to be effective during and after Covid-19



Covid-19 Vaccine Equity – Lessons learned so far.



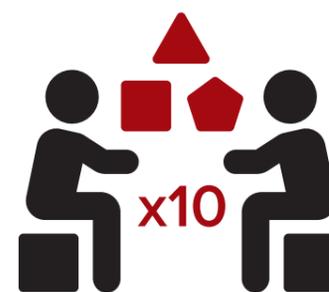
Recognising the Contribution NHS Diaspora Staff Make to Global Health.



4 Annual Conferences



“The challenge of climate change: Sharing solutions for a carbon free future”.



10 Workshops

Topics included:

- Respectful maternity care
- Health Worker mobility
- First aid in fragile contexts
- Being a good global citizen in Wales and the World
- Disability Inclusion
- Global mental health



First online conference with a programme covering five afternoons and evenings of debate, webinars, panel discussions, learning and networking in international health development.



319 Total attendees

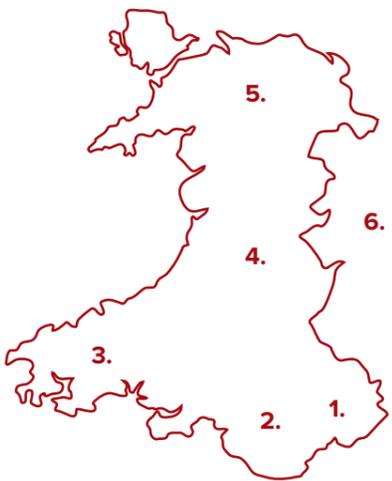
Important things people learned from the conference.

“Sharing of learning and experience from different partnerships”.

“Making connections”.

“Insight into theories, policies and ways of working”.

Total attendees by location:



1. South East

9.2%

2. South Central

29.7%

3. South West

5.6%

4. Mid & West

12.2%

5. North

8.3%

6. Outside Wales

5.6%

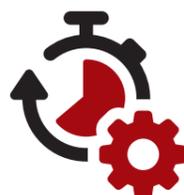


“Creating a Globally Responsible Wales”.

#GlobalCitizenship2021 #DinasyddiaethBydEang2021



148 Total attendees



12 Sessions



“Empathy; from interpersonal to global”.

#WAHLN2022



99 Total attendees



8 Sessions



3 Keynotes:

Dr Frank Atherton Chief Medical Officer & Global Health Partnerships Review
Jane Hutt MS Minister for Social Justice
Sue Tranka Chief Nursing Officer



4 Tony Jewell Lectures



Professor Sir Michael G. Marmot spoke on ‘Just societies: health equity and dignified lives’. Sharing the learning of the recent PAHO Equity Commission report.



Professor David Pencheon spoke on “Global health: the best of times, the worst of times: how do we address the paradox of progress in global health and equality?”



Prof. Anthony Costello of International Child Health and Director of the UCL Institute for Global Health and Senior Advisor to CAP2030 spoke on “A future for our children?” with a response by former Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, Sophie Howe.



Dr Pierre Somse, Minister of Health and Population in the Central African Republic, and Prof Samer Jabbour, from Global Alliance on War, Conflict, and Health spoke on “War, Peace and Health: Africa’s Challenges, Global Action”.

Programmes and Projects

Wales and Africa Health Links network is as strong as the programmes and projects in action across Wales and partner countries. The work is extensive and constantly informs practice for future work. Not only does it deliver outcomes in health; it supports wellbeing through building professional relationships and friendships between Wales and Africa.

The domestic pressures of the professionals in Wales and Africa working at the coalface means that work can ebb and flow or when global health crises emerge it can change the way we work in its entirety. The following case studies are not the extent of the work, but are a snapshot of the partnerships and the outcomes that they deliver.

Dolen Cymru Lesotho

A charity that brings people together from Wales and Lesotho who want to make lasting positive change in their communities.

Work during Covid-19

Dolen Cymru continued to remain active throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, with a rapid transition to online communication with and remote support of colleagues across the Health System in Lesotho.



Dolen's PPE fund was used to purchase and supply PPE to health workers across Lesotho. This was achieved through their partnership with the Leribe Family Medicine Programme. They also provided PPE to the Lesotho Red Cross so that their community health and first aid trainers could safely deliver training across remote communities when restrictions eased.

Well-Being Conference

Dolen's well being conference, led by the Education Group was focused on bringing together education professionals from Lesotho and Wales who shared their experiences of how an emphasis on well being has informed their practice.

The Betsi-Quthing Health Partnership

The Betsi-Quthing Health Partnership between the University Health Board in North Wales and the Quthing District Health Team in Lesotho has remained highly active; providing support with a supply of PPE to the hospital in Quthing.



Work during Covid-19

Also, linking with Dolen, the Lesotho-Boston Health Alliance and BCUHB's Staff Well Being Service facilitated the remote support of family medicine speciality trainees in Leribe district Lesotho, working in incredibly demanding and uncertain circumstances during the pandemic. This programme demonstrated the immense value of shared learning and expertise and of global solidarity during times of considerable pressure on health systems internationally.

The Betsi-Quthing Partnership has further developed its work in mental health in partnership with the Lesotho Red Cross Society, to roll out 'train the trainer' mental health first aid in Quthing. This project involved the local prison and continues to support those most vulnerable. The project has evidenced the partnership's ability to draw on expertise between both countries and to work adaptably in the context of Covid-19.

Maternal Health Grant Project

Wales Lead, Mary Longworth needed to adapt the maternal health project to meet Covid-19 challenges. A training package was developed for rollout to the remote clinics in Quthing for updates and upskilling the midwives following a needs analysis with Quthing colleagues.

Mental Health Project

Isabel Hargreaves and Helene Belmans travelled to Lesotho October 2022 to support the project. It aims to equip community leaders and health workers with the understanding and skills to identify people with mental health problems and mental illness to help them better support affected individuals and their families.

Shine Cymru / Festus Fajemilo Foundation

Shine Cymru Life Skills Services offer a friendly and versatile service to Young Adults with ASD, Learning Difficulties and or Disabilities in a fun, family feel environment.



The Festus Fajemilo Foundation is a pioneer non-profit organisation established to provide succour for people affected by spina bifida and hydrocephalus in Nigeria.

Saving Lives! Improving Futures project

Project aims

Support 250 babies, children and young people with spina bifida and hydrocephalus in three regions of Nigeria.

Activities in 2022

- Advocacy visits
- Virtual continence management training
- Virtual training on Covid-19 knowledge and preventive skills
- Continence management clinic
- Quarterly continence working group meetings
- Supply of continence equipment

The project supported Miss Gbemisola Awodipe, a 19 year old with Spina Bifida.

Gbemisola grew up having poor bladder and bowel control. She was referred to the Festus Fajemilo Foundation (FFF) and started continence management at the FFF Continence clinic. Since starting, Gbemisola has not only been able to keep herself clean and dry but also slowly gained sensation and now recognises when she needs to go to the toilet.

FFF encouraged the school she attends to participate in a continence management education day, the lasting effect of school engagement is that teachers better understood Gbemisola's condition and needs.

Gbemisola says, "My experience since joining FFFF has made me believe that there is no problem without solution in this life. I am ready to share this anytime, anywhere and I am so happy for what the Foundation is doing".

Life for African Mothers (LFAM)

LFAM contributes to a reduction in maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity in Sub Saharan Africa. Since 2005, the focus of their support has been to provide new, top quality medications to women, free of charge, to treat or prevent common pregnancy related complications. UK midwives travel to partner countries to share basic, lifesaving skills, which save and change mothers' and babies' lives.



1. Medications. The pandemic had an impact on the provision of the medication and flights in and out of Africa were severely affected and the costs increased. LFAM obtained sponsorship for two of the shipments, Cameroon and Somaliland.

2. Midwives. Visits to Liberia and Sierra Leone stopped and skill sharing sessions were done via Zoom and midwives were given extra resources and held training sessions in a number of hospitals. The Zoom sessions allowed extensive questions, discussions and sharing techniques. Midwives requested to join the sessions from Ghana and South Sudan.

3. Covid-19 Awareness Community Projects. In 2020, LFAM was contacted by the British Embassy in Liberia to deliver Covid-19 Awareness projects in West Point, a slum area housing around 75,000 people. This led to a grant from the WCVA to extend the awareness in West Point and also a grant to be delivered in Sierra Leone.

2022 onwards: A team of midwives will travel to Sierra Leone for the first post Covid-19 visit, in order to deliver skills sharing workshops in two regions of the country. A shipment of medications arrived to allow around 25,000 women to access it for free.

Zanzibar Mental Health Shamba (ZAMHS)

Zanzibar Mental Health Shamba (ZAMHS), is an organisation set up by Mental Health Nurses in the UK to support Mental Health services in Zanzibar.



Education Project 2019

ZAMHS ran an Education project from 1st February 2019 to 1st February 2020.

This project would:

- Organise events in Wales to raise awareness of mental health problems and learn from experiences of people in other cultures
- Organise a visit to Zanzibar and Pemba
- Raise money for and work with ZPA
- Work with partner Mr Suleiman and the department of health to improve awareness of mental health issues and reduce stigma through health education sessions

Some Outcomes:

- Events took place Wales and funds were raised for the ZPA
- Mr Suleiman ran 25 training sessions in schools and PCHU staff. Over 3000 people took part in events aimed at reducing the stigma of mental health problems.

2021

This project was a collaboration between Hazina, ZAMHS and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare Zanzibar to provide training and PPE to lessen the worst effects of epidemic diseases in vulnerable groups.

This helped to strengthen the capacity of the Primary Health Care Providers to be able to deliver essential mental health care services. The project gave equal access to health services for people with health problems.

Care for Uganda – FLOW (Friends of LOWero)

Care for Uganda is a development organisation founded in 2001. It operates in Uganda under the title Abaagala Uganda and has a particular emphasis on working with children and young people and part of its work is an ever-growing child sponsorship programme.



FLOW is the Health Care sub-committee of Care for Uganda.

FLOW (Friends of LOWero) is 10 years old and their activities cover the training of Village Health Teams and also the provision of an ambulance service.

The training has continued over the last three years (Covid-19 restrictions in Uganda allowing) and has been provided by a team of trainers. Their involvement has been to support those teams, both financially and through digital communication channels.

Over the years they have bought a fleet of eight motorbike ambulances which are stationed at various Health Centres throughout the district. Day to day management of the service has been handed over to local health officials, but FLOW continues to fund the service by paying the drivers' allowances, fuel, maintenance and repairs.

This costs around £9000 a year which is raised from direct donations and local fundraising activities.

Teams4U

Teams4U is a charity set up by Dave Cooke to support vulnerable children and their families. Teams4U has since expanded in several different countries, supporting various different projects through partnerships with local individuals and organisations.

In 2020-2021 of the 91 government-funded primary schools in Kumi, Uganda, donor support and grant-funding has provided 77 schools with 1000ltr handwashing facilities and provided 20 with increased hand washing equipment.



Partners have supported nearly 6,500 schoolgirls in Uganda and Sierra Leone with washable sanitary pads and basic menstrual health education. A 45% decrease in menstrual-related school absence and a 27% decrease in diarrhoeal-related school absence has been recorded. Since installing the first washing platform tanks there has been a 24% drop in school absence caused by diarrhoea due to the funding of Hub Cymru Africa.

As a part of Hub Cymru Africa and Sub-Sahara Advisory Panel 'Reframing the Narrative', our partners in Africa were trained on how to tell their own story through media journalism.

Hayaat Women Trust

Hayaat Women Trust (HWT) offers a range of services to help disadvantaged individuals and families in the community out of poverty. In particular, Black and ethnic minority men and women who find it difficult to access mainstream services in their areas.

HWT has developed services to fill in the gaps in service provisions. These projects include:

- Advocacy and Advice
- Covid-19 Response
- Education
- BME learning disability and autism
- Leisure Activities
- Empowering Young Women Programme, Mentoring and Befriending

Community Need

The lack of language and culturally sensitive support provisions for the African community has meant that the service uptake is increasing. There is a disparity in gendered service needs. For example, higher levels of advancement, integration, and employment achieved by African men, not women. There is a chronic lack of equality in the way people in our community are able to fully access services.

Himilo Project (3yr project completed)

The Himilo Project provided advocacy support and addressed the complexity of participants' identities, multiple support needs and experiences of social exclusion.

In particular the project was aimed at people from the African Diaspora who were asylum seekers, refugees, migrants, family reunion members, homeless, ex-offenders, those with drug or alcohol problems, mental health issues or domestic violence who felt alienated and outside statutory support services.

What it offered:

- One-to-one advocacy support providing tailored and joined up intervention support.
- The advocacy service operated an open access service from its offices during normal working hours, offering telephone advice, one to one appointments and advice drop-in services.



Interburns

Interburns is an international volunteer network of expert health professionals working to transform burn care and prevention in low-and middle-income countries (LMICs) through education, training, research and capacity-building. They train doctors, nurses, surgeons and therapists to provide safe and effective burn treatment and care and equip staff with skills to drive sustainable improvements.



Between 2019 and 2022, Welsh Government funded quality improvement initiatives focussing on developing skills and leadership among burn nurses in Malawi, as well as building online modules from Interburns Advanced Burn Care (Nursing) course.

2019

Welsh Government funded the assessment of the two dedicated burn units in Malawi which provide 68 beds. These two units see a high number of paediatric burn injuries primarily from hot water scalds.

Despite challenges such as a lack of resources and training, effective burn care in LMIC's is achievable. A nurse from Malawi led quality improvement initiatives based on the assessments and has achieved national prominence as an influential leader and in 2022 she received the Award of Excellence from the National Organisation of Nurses and Midwives of Malawi and will be Course Director at Advanced Burn Care (Nursing) Tanzania in 2023.

2020 onwards

Welsh Government supported the development of three online modules from Advanced Burn Care (ABC) Nursing. These have been widely accessed by nursing staff around the world and are a blueprint for the development of further online resources. The relationship will continue in 2023 with funding for Advanced Burn Care (Nursing) Tanzania.

South Wales Sierra Leone Cancer Care Link

Since 2016 the paediatric oncology team at Cardiff and Vale University Health Board has partnered with the senior management team at Ola During Children's Hospital, aiming to develop a sustainable unit for treating Children with Cancer in Sierra Leone.



The C&V Team visited the unit regularly (approximately every six months) prior to the pandemic and has recently re-visited (November 2022), aiming to:

- Support training of the nursing and medical teams in treating children with cancer
- Support the development of links with paediatric surgery, ophthalmology and pathology services
- Develop safety/ governance framework for chemotherapy prescription and delivery
- Advocate for service development across Sierra Leone

The C&V team has also developed a strong partnership with local (and UK based) charities including World Child Cancer and Welbodi to develop the service. This has included the funding of a senior local paediatrician to undertake specialist training in paediatric oncology in Ghana over the past two and a half years. She has now returned and we are working closely with her to further develop the treatment that can be offered. WCC also provides social care support.

The Cardiff and Vale charity provides funding for chemotherapy and for some limited diagnostic support whilst the Service matures. At present there are only a limited number of cancers that can be treated but it is hoped this will expand as there is an aim to deliver radiotherapy services within the country.

Active Links

Dolen Cymru
Interburns
PONT Mbale
Betsi Quthing Int Health Partnership
Care for Uganda
Mothers of Africa
Betsi Busia Link
Jamie's Fund
Life for African Mothers
Love Zimbabwe
Somaliland Mental Health
Teams4U
Bigger Heart Zanzibar

Swansea Gambia Student Link
Vale for Africa
Commonwealth Partnerships for Antimicrobial Stewardship
South Wales Sierra Leone Cancer Care Link
Zimbabwe Health Training Support
Phoenix Project
Brecon Molo
Glan Clwyd Hossana Link
Midwives@ethiopia
Swansea Bay UHB maternity link with Zimbabwe
Saddle Aid
Saltpeter Trust
medics4timbuktu
Nurse Leadership partnerships via Nursing Now Wales group

The Future

by Dr Julia Terry,
current interim Chair of WAHLN



"I am delighted to have the opportunity to serve as interim Chair of the Wales and Africa Health Links Network (WAHLN).

We continue to enter new phases together, and whilst people's struggles may be different, mostly we are seeking the same things. Wanting to see real change and long term improvements in people's health globally are of key importance...

...My own background is in nursing, and one aspect I value most is people's stories and what has brought them to where they are. We at WAHLN value our Partners and the great work they have achieved, and we also acknowledge the challenges they have faced especially during the last few years.

Ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being at all ages is essential for sustainable development. The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on human suffering, and we know has infected more than 500 million people worldwide. The long term aspects of all elements of the pandemic may not be fully known for several years, resulting in a greater demand on health services globally.

The resulting demand on health services means increasing pressure for our diaspora health workers working in all areas of health and social care. Increasingly we need to connect, support and communicate well with our colleagues and stand strong together. At WAHLN we will need to make key strategic adjustments to play our role successfully – we will do this by looking for alliances and collaborations such as with Tropical Health Education Trust.

Busy times ahead for sure, but lots of opportunities for growth, new partnerships, and while the road may be up-hill, do know that we are journeying together."

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 www.wfahln.org

