

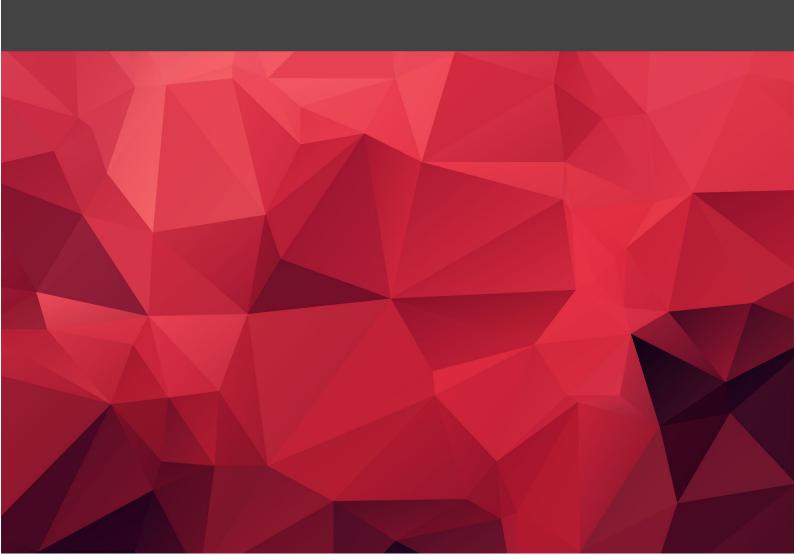
## Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru Auditor General for Wales

# Annual Audit Report 2018 – Velindre University NHS Trust

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Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is also available in Welsh.

This report was prepared for the Auditor General by Ann-Marie Harkin, David Thomas, Gillian Gillett and Katrina Febry.

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## Summary report

## About this report

- This report summarises the findings from the audit work I have undertaken at Velindre University NHS Trust (the Trust) during 2018. I did that work to carry out my responsibilities under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004. That Act requires me to:
  - examine and certify the accounts submitted to me by the Trust and to lay them before the National Assembly;
  - satisfy myself that the expenditure and income to which the accounts relate have been applied to the purposes intended and in accordance with the authorities which govern it; and
  - c) satisfy myself that the Trust has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.
- 2 I have reported my findings under the following headings:
  - Key messages
  - Audit of accounts
  - Arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources
- I have issued several reports to the Trust this year. This annual audit report is a summary of the issues presented in these more detailed reports, a list of which is included in Appendix 1.
- 4 Appendix 2 presents the latest estimate on the audit fee that I will need to charge to cover the actual costs of undertaking my work at the Trust alongside the original fee that was set out in the 2018 Audit Plan.
- Appendix 3 sets out the significant financial audit risks highlighted in my 2018 Audit Plan and how they were addressed through the audit.
- The Chief Executive and the Director of Finance have agreed this report is factually accurate. We presented it to the Board on 23 January 2019, and every member will receive a copy. We strongly encourage the Trust to arrange wider publication of this report. We will make the report available to the public on the <a href="Wales Audit">Wales Audit</a>
  Office website after the Board have considered it.
- I would like to thank the Trust's staff and members for their help and co-operation during the audit work my team has undertaken over the last 12 months.

## Key messages

### Audit of accounts

- I have concluded that the Trust's accounts were properly prepared and materially accurate, and my work did not identify any material weaknesses in the Trust's internal controls relevant to my audit of the accounts. I have therefore issued an unqualified opinion on their preparation.
- 9 My audit did not highlight any material financial transactions within the Trust's 2017-18 accounts that were not in accordance with authorities, and so I have issued an unqualified opinion on the regularity of the financial transactions within its 2017-18 accounts.
- The Trust achieved financial balance for the three-year period ending 31 March 2018. It has an approved three-year plan in place. As there were no issues which warranted highlighting, no substantive report was placed on the Trust's accounts.

# Arrangements for securing efficiency, effectiveness and economy in the use of resources

- 11 My 2018 structured assessment work at the Trust has found that:
  - the Trust continues to strengthen its governance arrangements and while systems of internal control are generally effective, progress to finalise the board assurance framework is still ongoing;
  - the Trust is strengthening its strategic planning approach in line with its longterm vision but capacity to deliver and manage strategic change is limited, and a greater understanding of the cost of services is required; and
  - the Trust manages its workforce, finance and physical assets well day to day and is taking steps to strengthen arrangements to deliver financial savings, but progress to standardise the corporate management of information management and technology (IM&T) has been slow.
- My wider programme of work has found some aspects of good practice as well as opportunities to strengthen some arrangements for securing efficiency, economy and effectiveness:
  - the Trust could strengthen its strategic approach to clinical equipment and operational arrangements and improve its management of risks with a dedicated software system; and
  - the Trust has made progress in addressing recommendations from my previous work, but there is more to do to fully address recommendations from my 2017 Structured Assessment.
- The Trust is participating in the National Fraud Initiative but has not made effective use of the data matches released to detect fraud and overpayments.
- 14 These findings are considered further in the following sections.

## **Detailed report**

### Audit of accounts

- This section of the report summarises the findings from my audit of the Trust's financial statements for 2017-18. These statements are how the organisation shows its financial performance and sets out its net operating costs, recognised gains and losses, and cash flows. Preparing the statements is an essential element in demonstrating appropriate stewardship of public money.
- 16 In examining the Trust's financial statements, I must give an opinion on:
  - whether they give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Trust and of its income and expenditure for the period in question;
  - whether they are prepared in accordance with statutory and other requirements, and meet the relevant requirements for accounting presentation and disclosure;
  - whether that part of the remuneration report to be audited is properly prepared;
  - whether the other information provided with the financial statements (usually the annual report) is consistent with them; and
  - the regularity of the expenditure and income in the financial statements.
- In giving this opinion, I have complied with my Code of Audit Practice and the International Standards on Auditing (ISAs).

I have issued an unqualified opinion on the accuracy and proper preparation of the 2017-18 financial statements of the Trust, although in doing so, I brought some issues to the attention of officers and the Audit Committee

I have concluded that the Trust's accounts were properly prepared and materially accurate, and my work did not identify any material weaknesses in the Trust's internal controls relevant to my audit of the accounts

- 18 I received the draft accounts in line with the prescribed deadlines and the supporting working papers were of good quality.
- I reviewed those internal controls that I considered to be relevant to the audit to help me identify, assess and respond to the risks of material misstatement in the accounts. I did not consider them for the purposes of expressing an opinion on the operating effectiveness of internal control. My review did not identify any significant deficiencies in the Trust's internal controls.
- I must report issues arising from my work to those charged with governance before I issue my audit opinion on the accounts. My Financial Audit Engagement Lead

reported these issues to the Trust's Audit Committee on 29 May 2018. Exhibit 1 summarises the key issues set out in that report.

#### Exhibit 1: issues identified in the Audit of Financial Statements Report

The following table summarises and provides comments on the key issues identified.

Issue	Auditors' comments
Uncorrected misstatements	There were no uncorrected misstatements.
Corrected misstatements	There were several adjustments made to the draft accounts. These were minor in nature and had no impact on the Trust's reported surplus.
Other significant issues	I did not identify any other significant issues either qualitative or quantitative relating to the accounts.

- As part of my financial audit, I also undertook a review of the Whole of Government Accounts return. I concluded that the counterparty consolidation information was consistent with the financial position of the Trust at 31 March 2018 and the return was prepared in accordance with the Treasury's instructions.
- 22 My separate audit of the charitable funds financial statements has been completed and I issued an unqualified opinion on the accounts on 3 December 2018.

I have issued an unqualified audit opinion on the regularity of the financial transactions within the financial statements of the Trust and did not need to place a substantive report alongside my opinion as the Trust met its statutory financial duties

My audit did not highlight any material financial transactions within the Trust's 2017-18 accounts that were not in accordance with authorities, and so I have issued an unqualified opinion on the regularity of the financial transactions within its 2017-18 accounts

The Trust's financial transactions must be in accordance with the authorities that govern them. It must have the powers to receive the income and incur the expenditure that it has. Our work reviews these powers and tests that there are no material elements of income or expenditure which the Trust does not have the powers to receive or incur.

The Trust achieved financial balance for the three-year period ending 31 March 2018 and has an approved three-year plan in place. As there were no issues which warranted highlighting, no substantive report was placed on the Trust's accounts

- I have the power to place a substantive report on the Trust's accounts alongside my opinions where I want to highlight issues. I did not issue a substantive report on the accounts because the Trust met both of its financial duties and there were no other issues warranting report.
- The Trust maintained its track record in achieving financial balance in 2017-18 and reported a small surplus totalling £49,000 (this includes £28,000 which relates to NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership, a body hosted by the Trust). It also broke even for the three-year period 2015-2018.

# Arrangements for securing efficiency, effectiveness and economy in the use of resources

- I have a statutory requirement to satisfy myself that NHS bodies have proper arrangements in place to secure efficiency, effectiveness and economy in the use of their resources. I have undertaken a range of performance audit work at the Trust over the last 12 months to help me discharge that responsibility. This work has involved:
  - assessing the effectiveness of the Trust's governance and assurance arrangements;
  - reviewing the Trust's approach to strategic planning;
  - examining the arrangements in place for managing the Trust's finances, workforce, assets and procurement;
  - reviewing the Trust's arrangements for tracking progress against external audit recommendations; and
  - assessing the application of data-matching as part of the National Fraud Initiative (NFI).
- 27 My conclusions based on this work are set out below.

The Trust continues to strengthen its governance arrangements and while systems of internal control are generally effective, progress to finalise the board assurance framework is still ongoing

28 My structured assessment work examined the Trust's governance arrangements, the way in which the Board and its sub-committees conduct their business, and the extent to which organisational structures are supporting good governance and

- clear accountabilities. I also looked at the information that the Board and its committees receive to help them oversee and challenge performance and monitor the achievement of organisational objectives. I found the following.
- The Trust has good arrangements to support board and committee effectiveness but there is scope to improve transparency in relation to public access to documents. My work found that the conduct of the Board is generally effective and there is a constructive relationship between executive officers and independent members. In 2018, the Trust created a new committee to support the Board in its scrutiny of the programme to build a new cancer hospital, and in 2019 will establish an Academic Partnership Committee as a requirement of the Trust's recently acquired University status. I found there were clear flows of assurances and information between the committees and the Board. However, I found that several key documents that are required to be publicly available were missing from the Trust's website.
- Work to develop a board assurance framework and risk management processes is still ongoing. Work to develop a Board Assurance Framework commenced in July 2017; whilst positive progress is being made, it is behind schedule. I found the Trust has made several improvements to the corporate risk register during 2018, including providing more clarity on the actions taken/needed to mitigate risk and the escalation arrangements for each risk. Last year, I highlighted the complexity and a lack of clarity in relation to the governance arrangements for the NHS Wales Informatics Service<sup>1</sup>. This year I have found that the Trust has taken positive steps to clarify and enhance the current governance arrangements for NWIS.
- 31 The Trust's internal controls are generally effective, and improvements have been made to information governance arrangements, but there are gaps in information flows relating to clinical audit. The Trust's Standing Orders, Scheme of Reservation and Delegation and Standing Financial Instructions are current. I found that the Trust has taken a proactive approach to prepare for and respond to the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation and is finalising a Cyber Security Improvement Strategy for identifying and implementing actions to mitigate the risks posed by cyber security threats. However, I also found weaknesses in the scrutiny of clinical audit planning and reporting. Whilst performance reports broadly contain the right performance indicators, there is scope to improve the narrative and presentation of information to aid interpretation of data.
- 32 The Trust has an embedded process for tracking Internal Audit and External Audit recommendations to the Audit Committee. My work found that the Audit

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Trust hosts three bodies; Health Technology Wales, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership and NHS Wales Informatics Service. There are different hosting arrangements for each of the three hosted bodies, and the Trust's governance responsibilities for HTW and NWSSP are more straightforward than those for NWIS.

Committee has a well-established approach to track progress to implement actions in response to recommendations made by both external (Wales Audit Office only) and internal auditors. The monitoring system allows the Committee to identify where progress is behind schedule. However, I have identified that there is scope to provide further assurance to the Audit Committee that action taken to address recommendations is appropriate. My structured assessment this year indicates several areas where the Health Board is making progress against my previous recommendations but there remains more to do before these actions are completed in full. I discuss this further in paragraph 41.

The Trust is strengthening its strategic planning approach in line with its long-term vision but capacity to deliver and manage strategic change is limited, and a greater understanding of the cost of services is required

- 33 My work examined how the Board engages partners and sets the strategic direction for the organisation. I also assessed how well the Trust plans the delivery of its objectives and how it monitors progress in delivering the plans. My findings are set out below.
- 34 The Board is making good progress in reviewing its long-term vision and strategic direction. I found that the Trust's current strategic objectives are clearly defined and aligned to the vision and goals. Board members generally feel engaged in the process for setting the Trust's strategic direction. During 2018, the Board has started to review its long-term vision and strategic direction. Focus has been given to the Welsh Government's long-term vision for an integrated health and social care system (set out in A Healthier Wales), the Trust's future role in relation to hosted bodies and the financial and workforce constraints that may impact on the strategic direction.
- 35 The Trust is improving its approach to strategic planning supported by demand and capacity modelling, but a greater understanding of the cost of services is required. The Trust's Integrated Medium Term Plan (IMTP) 2018-2021 was developed and approved within the required timeframe during 2018. The IMTP provides the specific divisional strategic priorities identified, five for VCC and eight for WBS. Underpinning each strategic priority are key aims/deliverables with descriptions of the actions that will be undertaken in each year of the IMTP to support their delivery and funding constraints are identified. I have previously highlighted that the Trust finds it difficult to persuade Velindre Cancer Centre's (VCC) commissioners that the funding VCC receives is inadequate to support service development, and that the Trust struggles to describe definitively the demand and true cost of the cancer services delivered at VCC. The Trust is developing a new financial costing model which, whilst behind schedule, once completed, will be beneficial in future funding discussions between the Trust and VCC's commissioners.

The Trust's capacity to deliver and manage strategic change is limited and poses a risk to delivering strategic plans. In 2018, the Trust undertook a review of the capacity of senior leadership to manage change which identified that the capacity at the senior leadership level was limited. At the time of writing, the Trust told us it was developing plans to increase the capacity of the senior leadership team to ensure sufficient strategic oversight for delivering operational plans and progressing the transformational programmes. In addition, the Trust has identified gaps in capacity and/or capability in some core support functions, and the Trust's limited change management capacity poses a risk to achieving transformation. I also found that there was scope for the Trust to improve reporting of progress against delivering IMTP targets and milestones by distinguishing between intended and achieved impacts.

The Trust manages its workforce, finance and physical assets well day to day and is taking steps to strengthen arrangements to deliver financial savings, but progress to standardise the corporate management of IM&T has been slow

- 37 My structured assessment work examined the Trust's arrangements for managing its workforce, its finances and other physical assets to support the efficient, effective and economical use of resources. I also considered the arrangements for procuring goods and services, and the action being taken to maximise efficiency and productivity. My findings are set out below.
- The Trust is taking positive steps to address sickness absence, staff wellbeing and improve staff recruitment and retention. I found that the Trust is taking action to ensure compliance with the Trust's sickness absence procedures and is undertaking enhanced monitoring of the reasons for sickness absence. The Trust has introduced several initiatives to improve mental wellbeing in the workplace. Recruitment and retention remain a significant challenge and the Trust is taking steps to improve recruitment processes and to attract high calibre candidates.
- 39 The Trust has effective accounting arrangements and is taking steps to strengthen arrangements to deliver financial savings. The Trust achieved financial balance in 2017-18. I found that the Trust is reducing its reliance on non-recurring savings, but as at month 6 of 2018-19 still needed to identify £203,000 of savings and was forecasting that it would not deliver all required savings. At month 6 of 2018-19, the Trust reported a small overspend against budget of £67,000, but is forecasting to break even by the year-end through corrective actions, including an increased management focus on savings delivery (including new financial recovery governance arrangements) and using unallocated Trust reserves. The Trust has well-established monthly financial monitoring arrangements and has responded to our 2017 structured assessment recommendation and made improvements to financial reporting.

The Trust's day-to-day administration and maintenance of the estate and assets are well managed, but the Trust's progress to standardise corporate management of M&T has been slow. The Trust has good arrangements to manage estates and assets and respond to new priorities. An Internal Audit report gave a 'reasonable assurance' to the Trust's strategic approach to IM&T in August 2017. However, the report also identified that the strategic oversight and governance of IM&T had allowed for divisions to develop their own processes, which has led to a lack of consistency and integration across the Trust. I found that the Trust's review of informatics, to identify which parts of the divisional IM&T functions could be integrated, has not yet been completed.

My wider programme of work has found some aspects of good practice as well as opportunities to strengthen some arrangements for securing efficiency, economy and effectiveness

The Trust could strengthen its strategic approach to clinical equipment and operational arrangements and improve its management of risks with a dedicated software system

41 The Trust does not currently have a Trust-wide dedicated software system for clinical equipment but is procuring one. The Welsh Blood Service (WBS) has dedicated clinical equipment software. However, the absence of an equivalent system in the VCC means that establishing the current maintenance status of equipment, locating equipment and auditing compliance with the clinical equipment policy, in VCC and across the Trust, is not easy due to the fragmentation of information. I found that the Trust has arrangements in place to issue safety alerts and share learning from incidents, however, I identified a specific scenario where the Trust may have missed an opportunity to use learning to improve its response to a medical safety issue. Whilst the Trust has a medical devices policy, I found that not all associated policies were up to date. My work identified that clarifying the role of executive leads, managers and a key working group would strengthen strategic oversight for clinical equipment. Procurement skills vary between divisions and some staff would benefit from further training drafting business cases, and there is scope to improve the governance and monitoring of procurement of medical equipment.

The Trust has made progress in addressing recommendations from my previous work, but there is more to do to fully address recommendations from my 2017 Structured Assessment

42 My work has found that the Trust is making progress in addressing recommendations from my 2017 Structured Assessment, although at times progress can be slow. We identified 11 recommendations in our 2017 Structured

- Assessment, progress has been made in addressing all recommendations, but there is more to do to fully address six recommendations.
- The Trust has made good progress with addressing audit recommendation arising from my report on discharge planning (reported January 2018) and is taking action to address my report on clinical equipment (reported July 2018).

# The Trust has not made effective use of the National Fraud Initiative to detect fraud and overpayments

- The National Fraud Initiative (NFI) is a biennial data-matching exercise that helps detect fraud and overpayments by matching data across organisations and systems to help public bodies identify potentially fraudulent or erroneous claims and transactions. It is a highly effective tool in detecting and preventing fraud and overpayments, and helping organisations to strengthen their anti-fraud and corruption arrangements.
- The Trust is a mandatory participant. The Trust received the outcomes from the 2016 data matching exercise in January 2017 but, as reported in the Annual Audit Report 2017, was slow to review the data matches. Whilst some progress has been made since then, the Trust is still not making effective use of the NFI and there is no evidence that some high-risk matches have been reviewed. Furthermore, in many cases where data matches are recorded as having been reviewed, there is insufficient information recorded on the web application to indicate how matches were reviewed. There are also instances where the NFI web application records that the Trust received queries from other NHS bodies regarding data-matches but there is no record of responses being provided.
- In October 2018, participating bodies submitted data for the next data matching exercise. The outcomes of this exercise will be available early in 2019. In my structured assessment 2018, I have recommended that the Trust put in place an action plan to ensure that the matches it receives from that exercise are reviewed and where necessary investigated in a timely manner.

# Appendix 1

## Reports issued since my last annual audit report

### Exhibit 3: reports issued since my last annual audit report

The following table lists the reports issued to the Trust in 2018.

Report	Date
Financial audit reports	
Audit of Financial Statements Report	May 2018
Opinion on the Financial Statements	June 2018
Management Letter	July 2018
Charitable Funds Audit of Financial Statements Report	November 2018
Opinion on the FHOT Financial Statements	November 2018
Performance audit reports	
Structured Assessment 2018	December 2018
Management of Clinical Equipment	June 2018
Other reports	
2018 Audit Plan	March 2018

### Exhibit 4: performance audit work still underway

There is one performance audit that is still underway at the Trust. This is shown in the following table, with the estimated date for completion of the work.

Report	Estimated completion date	
Clinical coding	March 2019	

# Appendix 2

## Audit fee

The 2018 Audit Plan set out the proposed audit fee of £208,996 (excluding VAT). My latest estimate of the actual fee, (on the basis that some work remains in progress), is in keeping with the fee set out in the outline.

# Appendix 3

## Significant financial audit risks

### Exhibit 5: significant audit risks

My 2018 Audit Plan set out the significant financial audit risks for 2018. The table below lists these risks and sets out how they were addressed as part of the audit.

Significant audit risk	Proposed audit response	Work done and outcome
The risk of management override of controls is present in all entities. Due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur, it is viewed as a significant risk.	My audit team proposed to:  test the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments made in preparing the financial statements;  review accounting estimates for biases; and  evaluate the rationale for any significant transactions outside the normal course of business.	My audit team considered the risk factors set out in ISA240 and completion of our proposed audit work did not identify any evidence of management override of controls.
Although forecasting a breakeven financial position for the year-end, the Trust's outturn to 31 January 2018 shows a small deficit of £22,000. Failure to break even at 31 March 2018 would result in the Trust failing to meet its first financial duty and there is therefore an increased risk that management judgements and estimates included in the financial statements could be biased in an effort to achieve the financial duty. Where the Trust fails this financial duty, I will place a substantive report on the financial statements highlighting the failure.	My audit team will focus its testing on areas of the financial statements which could contain reporting bias.	My audit team considered the areas of the accounts more likely to contain reporting bias and reviewed:      accounting estimates, judgments and decisions made by management for bias;      creditors for unrecorded liabilities; and      debtors for overstatement of income due.  No matters arose from the work carried out.

Significant audit risk	Proposed audit response	Work done and outcome
In 2017-18 the Trust is required to revalue its land and buildings as part of the five-year revaluation programme. Given the value of these assets held by the Trust is some £106 million they are material to the financial statements. In addition, the District Valuer will be using a revised valuation approach. There is a risk that the revaluation is not correctly reflected in the financial statements and the financial statements could be materially misstated.	My audit team will audit the revaluation of land and buildings and ensure the correct accounting treatment.	My audit team reviewed the revaluation of the Trust's assets, which did not identify any evidence that the revaluation had not been correctly accounted for and disclosed in the accounts.

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