

[National Assembly for Wales](#)  
[Finance Committee](#)  
FIN(4)-WG15-02

[Inquiry into Welsh Government Draft](#)  
[Budget Proposals 2014-2015](#)  
Evidence from the Royal College of Nursing Wales

The Clerk  
Finance Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
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Re: Welsh Government draft budget proposals for 2014 – 2015.

The Royal College of Nursing welcomes the opportunity to respond to the National Assembly for Wales Finance Committee's Consultation on the expectations of the 2014 – 2015 Welsh Government draft budget proposals.

The Royal College of Nursing acknowledges that we face a challenging time financially for the Health Boards in Wales with no budget increases and the need to address inflationary rises through efficiency savings.

The impact on the NHS workforce is beginning to show, the recently published statistics on the NHS Workforce in Wales (Stats Wales 2012) showed a decline in nursing staffing levels from the 2010 high. We have also seen a freeze on replacing staff that have left posts, increasing numbers of nursing posts being downgraded in skill level and a decline in continual professional development opportunities for nurses as well as a reduction in pre registration and post registration training places. The recent announcement from Cardiff and the Vale Health Board that it is looking to restructure services to save £56.7 million this financial year which may put some 385 jobs is also deeply concerning.

Having the right workforce is vital if we are to ensure safe and high quality patient care. There is extensive evidence on the links between low staffing levels in nursing and a range of negative care outcomes for patients including increased hospital related mortality, hospital acquired pneumonia, unplanned extubation, failure to rescue, nosocomial bloodstream infections and length of stay. Effective workforce planning is not only about getting the numbers of staff and skill mix right but also about matching the staff available to the workflow and about ensuring that the future supply of nurses is maintained.

The Royal College of Nursing in Wales welcomed the announcement made by Health and Social Services Minister Mark Drakeford AM in July that the seven Local Health Boards in NHS Wales will receive a total of £10 million funding in order to recruit additional nurses in hospitals and await with interest the outcome of the joint

review that the Minister for Health is undertaking with the Finance Minister over the summer recess to ensure that the budget reflects the lessons learnt from Francis.

As world's largest professional union of nurses, representing over 400,000 nurses, midwives, health visitors and nursing students, including over 23,000 members in Wales, the Royal College of Nursing is keen to work proactively with the Welsh Government to ensure that the safety and quality of our health services remains paramount.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

**MARTIN SEMPLE**  
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