

**Comisiwn
Bevan
Commission**

Industry Round Table Report

July 2024

FOREWORD

We are living and working more than ever before.

Latest estimates, state that close to 900,000 people in Wales are over 60 years old and this will grow to over 1 million by 2031, representing one third of the population. This affects the labour market in Wales, with more people over the age of 60 choosing to work for longer.

Employers will need to offer flexible policies to facilitate those who want to work for longer. Employers need to prioritise employee health for all ages in order to support an ageing workforce. A tangible and positive outcome of this will be the impact on population health and the health and social care system in Wales.

The economy and health are inextricably linked. Good work and being economically active can help provide and enable people to live a better quality of life in terms of standard of living and health outcomes.

The Bevan Commission upholds the principle that health is everyone's responsibility. Individuals, employers and employees must all take a share of the responsibility to improve health for themselves and for others. Our focus is on three thematic areas: enhancing employee health; utilising corporate social responsibility to enhance people and community resilience across Wales; and learning from industry.

It is evident that sustainable health solutions require collective efforts across the NHS, public, and private sectors, signalling a move towards a new culture of collaboration in Wales.

Dr Helen Howson

Director, Bevan Commission

1 <https://olderpeople.wales/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/221222-Understanding-Wales-ageing-population-24-November.pdf>

Introduction

In May 2024, The Bevan Commission hosted a Round Table discussion, bringing together leading experts from across industry to discuss the importance of employee health, corporate social responsibility, learning from industry and discussing their role in supporting health and wellbeing. In particular it, focused on how industry can have a greater impact on population health in Wales. The principal driver for the Round Table was to discuss how collaboration with industry can help improve the health and wellbeing of people across Wales and how we might also learn from each other.

The event was opened by First Minister Vaughan Gething, with representatives from industry and commerce who were invited to consider how we might enhance the health and wellbeing of their workforce and broader communities across Wales. See appendix 1 for the full list of attendees.

With an ageing population and shrinking health and care workforce, the Bevan Commission is proud to be building bridges between government, health and social care, the public and industry, to pave the way for bold new ideas. This event marks the start of an important conversation with industry leaders about the shared role and responsibilities of business to support sustainable health and care in Wales that is fit for the future.

This report summarises the discussions raised at the Round Table and concludes with recommendations and next steps.

Background: Introduction to the Bevan Commission

Established in 2008, the Bevan Commission is Wales' leading health and care Think Tank.

Working within a complex health and care system, our vision is simple – a prudent and sustainable national health and care service to meet the needs of all citizens that remains true to its original values, as established by NHS founder Aneurin Bevan.

We are committed to ensuring Wales can achieve its ambition of building sustainable, integrated health and care services that meet the needs of people across our villages, towns and cities that is fit for the future, positioning Wales amongst the best systems in the world.

We continue to draw upon the expertise and insights of the Bevan Commissioners, and have evolved to challenge, change and champion thinking and learning, to facilitate and guide health and care transformation in organisations across Wales and internationally.

The Bevan Commission mission is to: **challenge thinking and practice in health and care, creating a growing movement for change with the people in the system and those who use the system.**

The Context - Health and Wellbeing in Wales, a Shared Responsibility: Vaughan Gething, First Minister for Wales

The Bevan Commission is grateful to the First Minister, Vaughan Gething, for setting the context for the round table discussions.

His opening address focused on:

1. The importance of work for a long-term healthier Wales, emphasising the importance of a shared responsibility between employers and employees in their pursuit of better health and health outcomes.
2. The inextricable link between good quality work and health and wellbeing. When people and populations are economically active, there are better health outcomes. Good work attracts and retains staff, and in turn keeps people active and healthy in work.
3. Industry has an important role in supporting the health and wellbeing of people in the labour market. Industry can be an essential enabler for better health in society, as long as industry provides capacity and capability for people to aspire and grow in their roles and their ability to access 'good work'.
4. A shared responsibility in cultivating the cultural societal changes that need to happen to encourage people to work and to be both economically and physically active to maintain good health.
5. Encourage industry leaders to go beyond traditional thinking of workplace culture. We need to avoid tokenistic workplace health solutions that act as 'sticking plasters' over the real issues.

Vaughan Gething, First Minister concluded his address with:

“Events like this are important in allowing us to recognise how we can all work together and learn from each other to support employee health. The Welsh Government uses many of the longer-term levers available to us to boost innovation, collaboration and behaviour change because we are acutely aware of the strong links between health, well-being, and fair work. In Wales, I’m very proud we recognise the importance of workers being fairly rewarded and secure in a healthy, inclusive working environment – which is the foundation of our mission to build a stronger, fairer, greener Welsh economy.”

Vaughan Gething

First Minister

May 2024

The inextricable link between our work and our health: Professor Dame Carole Black GBE FRCP

Dame Carol Black GBE, Chair of the Centre for Ageing Better and Occupational Health Taskforce, Department for Work and Pensions, provided an important and powerful introduction to the round table discussions in her video address.

“To be in work and to be able to go to work, you need a certain level of physical and mental health. Without this, it becomes hard to work.”

“Good work is really good for your health. Work that is fair, secure..... Work that allows you to be flexible. Work that gives you psychological safety.”

Employers need to develop a workplace culture that creates a healthy workforce and is led by empathetic leadership. Health and wellbeing needs to be a priority and a responsibility for everyone in the work environment – from middle managers through to the board of directors. Anything else for example, initiatives and interventions to supply fresh fruit in the workplace, are nothing more than a ‘sticking plaster’. Instead, interventions should be evidence based and baselined, so they address real needs.

Investment in individual employee health goes beyond employee benefits for health initiatives, but also directly relates to upskilling individuals so they enjoy their work and are appreciated for their contribution.

Governments must play their part by ensuring the correct interventions are in place to keep people content in work. And should someone fall out of work, the right processes are in place to allow them to return to work safely and securely.

Social determinants affect how far individuals can participate in and contribute to the labour market. It isn't a level playing field and this needs to be recognized.

[**Watch Dame Carol's Introductory Video Here**](#)

Round table presentations: **Panelists**

A number of industry leaders were invited to provide their organisations' perspective on the role of industry in supporting health and wellbeing in Wales. The Bevan Commission is grateful for their contributions.

Kelechi Nnoaham, Head of Health Programmes, Shell

Newly appointed as a Bevan Commissioner. Kelechi has worked as Executive Director in Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB and led research and development innovation in NHS Wales. Most recently, he was appointed Head of Health Programmes at Shell and has established a Centre of Excellence focusing on health.

Kelechi drew on evidence and experience in placing the greatest importance on measuring impact to ensure evidence-based interventions to support staff and to create a cohesive healthy culture in the workplace. His team have been running a survey for Shell employees over the last 4 months and have had 25k responses. Early results show the biggest predictors of burnout are 1) demands placed on staff and 2) control and the importance of relationships.

Cultivating healthy relationships, not forcing employee engagement, and providing opportunities for staff to use their skills and capabilities are the essentials for a healthy workforce and environment. Simply 'being in work' is not enough. Employees need to be in the 'right work' otherwise this can be as detrimental as not being in work at all. As an employer you need to ensure your interventions are evidence based and targeted to the issues your employees are facing. Ensure you measure the gap between the opportunity given and the actual utilisation of the interventions as well.

Justene Ewing, Vice President, Health & Care, CGI

Prior to establishing the Health and Care Division of CGI, (Canadian founded, global leader in IT and systems consulting and services) Justene was the CEO of the Digital Health and Care Institute in Scotland.

CGI is a family run business and there are many comparisons to NHS Wales as an organisation in terms of size and commitment to core purpose.

The founder of CGI has instilled a culture of 'doing the right thing', 'doing what you say you're going to do' and 'taking accountability, if you don't'. The work environment created at CGI is a safe space where employees can bring their whole self to work. People work to facilitate their lives at home. As an employer, CGI places great importance on ensuring that employees are in the right job, with the right skills, with the right tools. Justene provided an example of the organisations' responsive nature to employee wellbeing and career growth. If employees are fed up with their role, then open and transparent conversations take place.

A key enabler for creating a workplace environment that truly invites employees to buy in to the purpose and mission is enabling employee shareholding. All staff are shareholders in CGI as it is thought that people will invest more in their work and the roles they develop for themselves. CGI pride themselves on high levels of employee satisfaction, currently 9.4/10 globally.

Jenny Rose, Director of Stores for Wales, Boots

Boots opened in 1896 and has 90 stores across Wales, employing 2000 staff. Boots do four key things to support the health and wellbeing of their employees:

General health- Boots has invested in 'mental health in the workplace' training for all managers to improve their capability in supporting team members.

Musculoskeletal Conditions and Women's Wellbeing- Boots provide a free flu jab to all employees as well as free physio appointments for employees with an MSK related absence. Women's wellbeing- 80% of their employees are female. They provide free period products in toilet facilities at all stores and offices. They have recently updated their guide for pregnancy loss which includes paid leave. They are the first health and beauty business to be accredited as a 'menopause friendly employer'. They have increased their training around menopause to reduce the stigma as well as introduce support networks.

Staff Safety- Boots understand the emotional and physical impact of retail crime on employees and as a result have invested in safety measures. Staff can now be seen wearing body-worn cameras and headsets. They are working with local police forces and connect with monitoring centers. This makes a difference to how safe employees feel. They also have onsite support counsellors available.

Cost of living crisis and financial hardship- Boots have created a nonprofit entity called the Boots Benevolent Fund which is funded by charitable donations. They gave out 225k in grants last year as well as interest free loans. It is fully confidential.

Jamie Tucker, ARUP

ARUP are experts in the built and natural environment and have a strong view on how we can use our physical space and places to enable a better environment for work. ARUP have previously worked with the Bevan Commission and developed the joint paper 'People, Place and Health'. It sets out the importance of rethinking the spaces and places that people access health and social care. Good design equals good health and wellbeing benefits. In the past, 'sustainability' was the key term that informed their work, but this has been overtaken by 'social value'. They feel the next priority is likely to be 'health and wellbeing' and procurement will play a part in this

Chris Terry, Society of Occupational Medicine (SOM) and Insight Health

SOM provides guidance to physicians, nurses and employers. They are currently lobbying the government for a change in the approach to 'working health' for SMEs. Chris highlighted the importance of recognising that most organisations in Wales are SMEs and may not have access or resources to embed occupational health principles and practices in the workplace.

Chris runs Insight Workplace Health, the largest Occupational Health service and consultancy provider in Wales. They provide services to a broad range of organisations such as councils, universities, Welsh Government and Welsh Water. The team at Insight Health engage with employers and employees on a daily basis so have an understanding of the issues employees are dealing with on a day-to-day basis. Their work largely focuses on decreasing absence in the workplace and increasing productivity.

Round Table: Framework for Discussion

The round table discussion was shaped by the Bevan Commission's strategy to encourage industry to share responsibility for people's health and wellbeing. The event aims to provide an opportunity to discuss and empower industry to articulate its contribution to better population health in Wales.

Attendees were invited to discuss the following questions. It was held under Chatham House Rule.

1. How can industry promote and support the health and wellbeing of its employees? Share current examples as well as wider innovative opportunities.
2. How might industry play its part in supporting healthy and resilient communities across Wales, taking into account corporate social responsibility and other opportunities?
3. How might industry work collaboratively across Wales to support the health and wellbeing of the population?
4. What are the challenges and the opportunities to build a healthier Wales?
5. What can health and care services learn from industry?
6. How can the Bevan Commission play a role in supporting this agenda?

Round Table: Summary of findings

1. How can industry promote and support the health and wellbeing of its employees? Share current examples as well as wider innovative opportunities.

The round table discussions agreed on the essential role of promoting employee health and wellbeing to maintain a productive, satisfied, and loyal workforce. Attendees shared examples of their organisations implementing accessible initiatives that encourage healthier habits, such as offering private health insurance, gym memberships, and incentives like discounts or free fitness trackers for active employees.

However, recognising the limitations of SMEs in Wales, simpler interventions like adjustable desks were suggested to promote health at work without significant expense. Participants emphasised the importance of avoiding 'gimmicky tactics' in these health initiatives.

Fostering a value-based workplace culture that encourages compassion and appreciation can enhance employee health and create a cohesive environment that motivates collective health-oriented actions. Regular employee surveys were recommended to monitor and improve the organisational health culture. Overall, workplace environments and policies should align with values that support employee health and wellbeing.

2. How might industry play its part in supporting healthy and resilient communities across Wales, taking into account corporate social responsibility (CSR) and other opportunities?

Round table attendees emphasised the significant role industries can play in supporting healthy, resilient communities across Wales through CSR initiatives. They suggested focusing on the unique needs of local Welsh communities and support societal issues represented by local foundations and charities to foster healthier environments.

Encouraging employee volunteering can provide role models in local communities, inspiring positive work attitudes and employment prospects. Additionally, promoting professional role modelling and 'change agents' within organisations can embed health and wellbeing principles in the workplace, creating a positive influence.

Attendees noted hesitancy in public/private collaborations, advocating for cross-sector partnerships to utilise diverse resources and expertise more effectively. This could improve access to health and wellbeing facilities, not only for employees, but also for underrepresented groups.

There was a strong call for collaboration between large organisations and the SME supply chain in Wales to help smaller companies enhance their health support strategies. Bringing SMEs together with larger corporations to share CSR initiatives was recommended to amplify their impact in local communities. This theme of collaboration and community-focused strategies was a central point in the discussions.

3. How might industry work collaboratively across Wales to support the health and wellbeing of the population?

Participants highlighted the potential for industry collaboration to significantly enhance health and wellbeing across Wales, contributing to a more resilient society. They proposed establishing a tripartite Forum to facilitate cross-sectoral engagement and innovation, aimed at addressing health and wellbeing needs more resourcefully. This Forum would empower leaders from various sectors to become strong advocates for sustainable CSR in their communities.

The discussions emphasised that industry collaboration should extend beyond workplace wellness to include sharing best practices with communities, local councils, and particularly with SMEs, which form a significant part of the Welsh business landscape.

Attendees saw Wales as an ideal testbed for global recognition in cross-sectoral collaboration for health and wellbeing education, innovating solutions to enhance public health. The Bevan Commission was noted as vital in enabling leaders from industry and the public sector to convene, exchange ideas, and rapidly evaluate initiatives to develop an effective model for Wales.

4. What are the challenges and the opportunities to building a healthier Wales?

Building a healthier Wales involves addressing several challenges while capitalising on various opportunities. The following provides an overview of both from the round table discussions:

Challenges

Whilst some risk aversion is necessary for regulatory compliance, excessive caution can stifle innovation and the adoption of new practices. They advocated for industry collaborations with the NHS and other stakeholders to focus on critical areas of population and employee health, which could yield benefits like improved patient outcomes, increased efficiency, and better healthcare quality.

Attendees identified a resistance to change as a major barrier to improving health in Wales. They reiterated the value of establishing a tripartite forum involving cross-sector parties—industry, healthcare sector (providers and patients), community leaders and policymakers—to facilitate planning and decision-making, ensuring wider buy-in and overcoming resistance.

The competitive dynamics among industry players can often prioritise profit over health, resulting in silos that hinder coordinated efforts on health initiatives. This lack of collaboration can impede collective efforts essential for effective health improvements.

Opportunities

Round table attendees recognised both challenges and opportunities for enhancing health in Wales. They agreed that education significantly impacts health behaviours, healthcare access, and socioeconomic factors, all crucial health determinants.

There was a consensus on the need for industry partners to foster a culture of cooperation, align business goals with public health objectives, and actively engage with communities to drive

improvements in health and wellbeing. Additionally, attendees emphasised the importance of focusing on preventative health initiatives and targeting areas in Wales known for poor health outcomes.

A recurring theme was the need to depoliticise health, advocating for the removal of political agendas and biases from health policy and decision-making. The aim is to base health decisions on scientific evidence, expert advice, and the best interests of public health, rather than on political factors.

5. What can health and care services learn from industry?

Round table attendees discussed how health and care services could improve by adopting industry best practices in areas such as process optimisation, data analytics, customer-centricity, supply chain management, quality assurance, employee development, risk management, financial management, and innovation. They emphasised that policy development should incorporate cross-sectoral perspectives to enhance planning, process efficiency, accountability, culture change for continuous improvement, and legislative adaptation.

By adopting relevant industry strategies, health and care organisations can improve efficiency, quality, patient satisfaction, and overall performance. For instance, it was suggested that the NHS in Wales should adopt a competitive mindset similar to industry for operational service delivery, streamline processes to eliminate duplication and waste, and standardise practices and systems which might require more resource centralisation and increased accountability.

There was a repeated concern about the slow pace of change within the NHS, often attributed to siloed approaches and underutilisation of resources like data. Attendees recommended that the NHS in Wales reconsider its relationship with patients and industry, viewing patients as customers of health and social care, and exploring collaborations with other sectors to enhance health service delivery. This would recognise a broader shared responsibility for achieving better population health outcomes.

6. How can the Bevan Commission play a role in supporting this agenda?

There was unanimous recognition of the Bevan Commission's role in facilitating a tripartite forum to safely test ideas and foster collaboration across sectors, positioning Wales as a prime environment for health and social care excellence. As an independent body, the Commission is pivotal in assessing health improvement practices and projects in Wales, emphasising the need for practical research and proper measurement of outcomes to gauge success. The Commission can play an important role in breaking down barriers that appear to exist between cross-sectoral stakeholders in health. This will enable industry collaboration to dynamically support a culture of change that is evidence based.

The Commission is ideally positioned to demonstrate why Wales should be a testbed for health innovation and to showcase successful case studies on the international stage. Additionally, it is capable of addressing the challenges faced by the industry in adopting new technologies and innovations, which are crucial for standardising and scaling innovation.

With a commitment to the principles of Aneurin Bevan, the Bevan Commission inspires other stakeholders to pursue optimal health and wellbeing for the people of Wales, guiding their aspirations and efforts.

Recommendations and next steps

In summary, the round table discussions underscored the Bevan Commission's role in rallying industry leaders to support health and wellbeing. It was proposed to expand industry engagement by inviting a broader group of stakeholders to form an Alliance with the Commission, marking the next phase of the initiative.

The Commission is tasked with developing the terms for this Alliance and identifying events and joint initiatives that require collaboration and industry involvement to promote better health and wellbeing in Wales. This could involve showcasing 'industry exemplars' to highlight how industry engagement can positively impact employee health and wellbeing.

There was broad support for fostering innovative developments in CSR at local, regional, and national levels, which will be explored in future discussions.

Sharing best practices, tools, and additional support was recognised as important for future efforts. There was also a call to involve larger organisations in aiding smaller businesses and SMEs in these initiatives.

The Bevan Commission will continue to collaborate with partners to formalise the proposed Alliance. The Alliance has the potential to evaluate the impact of cross-sector projects and make recommendations for scaling up the deployment of practices and programmes of work that achieve aligned objectives and contribute to the health and wellbeing of people and communities across Wales.

Appendix A- Round Table Attendees

Organisation	Attendee Name	Job Title
Admiral	Paul Billington	Wellbeing & Workplace Support Manager
Amgen Pharmaceuticals	Nicholas James	Commercial Planning Senior Manager
Amgen Pharmaceuticals	Richard Price	Director of Value, Access & Policy
Apellis	Paul Hewitt	Head of Market Access and Policy
ARUP	Jamie Tucker	Associate Designer
Boots	Juliette Roche	Head of European & Healthcare Public Affairs
Boots	Jenny Rose	Director of Stores for Wales
BITC	Simon Walters	Connections Manager
CBI Wales	Katie Spackman	Associate Director
CGI	Justene Ewing	Vice President of Health and Care
CGI	Diane Gutiw	Vice President of Analytics, AI & Machine Learning
GE Healthcare	Imran Farid	International Executive Director
Industry Wales	James Davies	Ex- CEO
Patients Know Best	Mohammad Al'Ubaydli	CEO
Principality	Kelly Young	Head of Operational Excellence & Support Value Stream Product Owner
SiSu Health	Jeremy Styles	Head of Business Development
Society of Occupational Medicine	Chris Terry	Director, Insight Workplace Health
Specsavers	Thomas Shilvock	Director of Strategic Development
Welsh Government	Mike Emery	Chief Digital & Innovation Officer

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