Overview
Cardiff University continues to support government and health services to tackle the coronavirus pandemic as part of our wider civic mission to improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Wales. This briefing sets out some of the actions we have taken since previous editions\(^1\) to innovate and work with partners at this moment of national importance.

We continue to welcome the opportunity to engage with policy-makers at this difficult time, both to support their knowledge and understanding of these issues and to take up suggestions for what more we could be doing. We are also keen to explain the role we see the university sector playing in the revival and renewal of the Welsh economy and society post-coronavirus.

Recent Cardiff University activities
- **Increasing NHS capacity**: Over 1,000 healthcare students are supporting the NHS workforce across allied health professions, nursing and midwifery. This includes 465 Nursing students, working under the new emergency guidelines and 33 Midwifery students. Our School of Healthcare Sciences has also provided training to over 700 NHS staff from the Cardiff & Vale and Aneurin Bevan University Health Boards.
- **PPE and other equipment**: Cardiff University has joined forces with manufacturer Hard Shell to produce up to one million fluid-resistant masks a day in the fight against COVID-19. With assistance from the Welsh Government, specialist machinery has been brought from overseas to assist in the development and production of masks at a Cardiff factory. The masks are being produced for health, social care and other key workers across the UK. Separately, the School of Healthcare Sciences has donated PPE, pulse oximeters and simulation mannequins to UHW and the Royal Gwent Hospital, as well as making their Tŷ Dewi Sant building available to Cardiff & Vale UHB as a space for further training.
- **Free Continuous Professional Development courses**: Our CPD team will be providing a number of free Virtual CPD Summer Schools between 22 and 26 June, consisting of webinars, Q&As and other content from academics across the university. Almost 30 sessions will run during the week, with colleagues from a wide range of Academic Schools giving their time to provide this free resource for an external audience.
- **Developing e-voucher scheme for vulnerable groups**: Our academics have been collaborating with Asda, Tesco and M&S to provide food and essential items through a unique e-voucher scheme for vulnerable social groups including women, BAME communities, and refugees in Cardiff. This is vital during lockdown but can be scaled up in any post-COVID recession where unemployment and job loss is likely to be higher in those groups.
- **Providing expert advice to government**: Analysts in the Wales Centre for Public Policy have supported the First Minister’s Expert Advisory Group with briefing papers on matters such as economic and social recovery, and how to support groups hardest-hit by recession.
- **Supporting continuation of learning for post-16 learners**: We have provided over 60 bilingual digital resources for post-16 learners who suddenly find themselves unable complete their

\(^1\) Briefings setting out previous activities were circulated in March and May 2020.
studies and sit their exams. These are available via the Welsh Government’s digital educational platform Hwb.

- **Ongoing support for Welsh language events:** We have continued to engage with young people at Welsh language events as part of the first ever digital Maes T at the Urdd, providing opportunities to young people and parents to access our Welsh language outreach provision, providing opportunities to speak with our staff and hear from our students.

- **Research:** Our research experts are supporting the efforts of the UK authorities in a number of ways, including:
  - A Cardiff University-led review has called for urgent research into whether readily-available mouthwash could be effective in reducing COVID-19 transmission.
  - Children’s experiences of life during the COVID-19 pandemic are being investigated by researchers. The study, by Dr Justin Spinney and Dr Matluba Khan of Cardiff University and Muntazar Monsur of Texas Tech University, aims to find out what kinds of activities children and young people have been doing during the pandemic and how they have adjusted to the huge changes brought on by the lockdown.
  - Cardiff University research has given insights into the situation for horticultural businesses within Wales, which demonstrated that most growers experienced sudden and dramatic increases in demand for their produce, which has continued beyond an initial phase of panic buying. There is also a clear willingness and potential to increase fruit and vegetable production in Wales, but most growers lack the resources to achieve this, particularly at short notice.
  - Working with Voices from Care Cymru to undertake research on care leavers. There are concerns that care leavers are not receiving sufficient support and are struggling both practically and emotionally. Our research will aim to inform support provision in the event of a second wave.
  - Undertaking research into how schools can balance risk against a children’s right to play; this will become more acute when schools must enforce social distancing protocols.
  - Developing a project to survey all nurses in the UK, via the Royal College of Nursing Research Society. This includes Registered Nurses, Students and Health Care Support Workers. It asks about working conditions, wellbeing, safety equipment availability and other issues.
  - A Cardiff University-led review is being used globally to inform pioneering use of lung ultrasound to help in the management of patients with COVID-19. The academics were the first to summarise early evidence on ultrasound imaging – more commonly used in pregnancy or for muscle injury – and how to use it to assess and monitor lung damage.

**Enquiries**

Please do not hesitate to contact PublicAffairs@cardiff.ac.uk with any queries arising from this briefing.