**Company: Aneurin Bevan University Health Board**

**Contact: Izabela Spernaes**

**Briefly describe the idea or problem and discuss why this project is relevant and timely.**

As the first port of call for many, access to Primary Care Services is key to ensuring that patients receive timely and effective care. As a result, national ‘Access Standards’ for General Medical Services were established in 2019. These Standards stipulate a clear expectation that capacity is organised to effectively meet demands from patients needing to contact their GP practice.

Despite a relaxation of these Standards during the recent pandemic, the use of telephony systems has never been more important. This is due to changes in the way services have been delivered, with a greater emphasis on telephone triage and virtual consultations in light of social distancing restrictions and infection control protocols.

There are 74 GP practices within Gwent, with data for each practice’s telephony system held by each independent contractor. However, four of these practices are managed directed by the Health Board. Due to significant recent changes in how demand manifests in primary care, a review is required to assess whether demand and capacity are now effectively aligned and how this may change as the pandemic eases.

**What are the specific aims of this project?**

To review demand profiles for telephone demand into the four Managed Practices pre- and post- the COVID-19 pandemic. To develop forecasts for future scenarios including a return to normal and the impact of a further wave of COVID-19 to inform future capacity planning.

1. Report describing the telephony demand profiles of each of the four managed practices and demand forecasts based on a range of scenarios for each practice.

1. Assessment of variation in demand management between practices and inappropriate use of alternative services. Assess whether linked to population demographics / behavior or practice processes, identifying any opportunities to improve access to services.
2. Development of a demand analysis toolkit, allowing all independent contractors to input telephony information and generate visualised demand profile for use in planning capacity.

**What specific methodologies/skills/software are most important for this project?**

Utilise data generated from telephony systems to create a demand profile (day of week, time of day, seasonality) for each individual practice. To include the outcomes of calls (answered, abandoned, and waiting time) and compare variation between practices to assess opportunities to improve call handling response through reconfigured capacity.

Using data on COVID-19 prevalence, assess the impact of the pandemic on call handling (increased or reduced demand, improved or worsening response times). Forecast forward based on potential scenarios including a return to normal and the impact of a further wave of COVID-19.

Where possible, assess any correlation between access to primary care services and inappropriate / overutilization of other alternative services (i.e. Urgent Primary Care Out-of-Hours, Emergency Departments).

Advanced user of Microsoft Excel. Competent in use of SQL or modelling software as deemed necessary (i.e. Simul8, R, Python, SAS).

**Do you envisage any barriers that may impact on the objectives of this project? For example, availability or access to data based on the current pandemic/working from home.**

Project can be undertake from home and with the opportunity to hot desk in Llanarth House, Newbridge, alongside Medical, Managed Practices and Business Intelligence Directorates as required.

This project may require access to a range of datasets:

* Population / demographic data available via ONS, Stats Wales and NWIS
* COVID-19 prevalence data available via Public Health Wales and ONS
* Urgent Primary Care Out-of-Hours (Adastra System) and Emergency Department (Symphony) data available from Business Intelligence Team
* Telephony system data available from practice telephony systems (variable)
* Primary care activity data available from Vision System (if possible to link will provide valuable additional insights)

**Is the project suitable for a part-time student?**

Yes