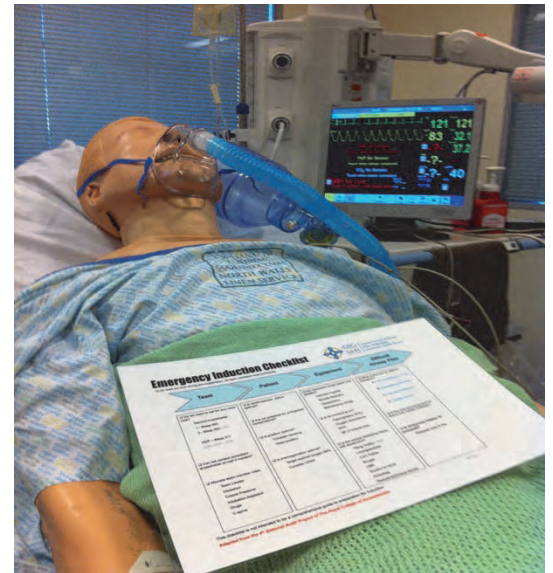




# Training & Living in North Wales



## A guide for anaesthetic doctors rotating to North Wales

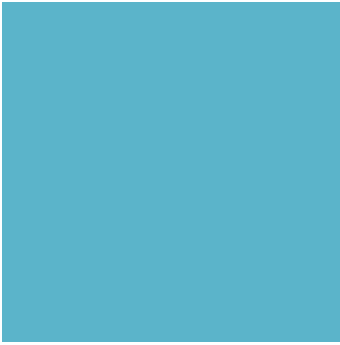
Helping you and your family prepare for moving to North Wales:

- Life in North Wales
- Where to live
- Where to go out
- Training opportunities
- Contact details
- Helpful tips



# WELSH SCHOOL OF ANAESTHESIA

PROVIDING EDUCATION, TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT



# Congratulations!

## Llongyfarchiadau!

**Da iawn!** If you are reading this you have succeeded in gaining a post that will bring you to one of the most beautiful parts of the world. If you have never been to North Wales before you are in for a very pleasant surprise!

You will be living and working in a popular holiday region with a unique history and culture. On the doorstep of Snowdonia National Park; perfect for adventures in the outdoors or losing yourself amongst the scenery that inspired Tolkien. You will also be a stones throw from the breathtaking coastline of Anglesey and the Llyn Peninsula with stunning beaches for watersports, strolling or just relaxing to get away from it all. North Wales is also home of many Castles, World Heritage Sites, Iron Age Forts, National Trust Houses and Areas of

Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is no wonder that so many people come back every year for their holidays.

For some of you, North Wales may not have been your first choice of a place to work. That's OK; we understand it is a long way to travel from South Wales. It's even worse if you are separated from partners or family.

We will do our best to help you get the most out of your time in North Wales; and we are confident that when your rotation here has ended you will leave with very happy memories. Many of you will be pleasantly surprised and will want to come back here for consultant jobs! We value our doctors in training. We want them to have the best training experience possible and we value the importance of a work-life balance.



# Working in North Wales

## You **can** have a career and a life...

We asked all our current trainees what they liked most about living and working in North Wales. Surprisingly, the most popular response was nothing to do with the mountains or coastline. What doctors like most about working in North Wales are the friendly departments and hospitals that offer the perfect balance of good training experience and a friendly atmosphere. Large University teaching hospitals can feel cold and impersonal. You need to work there for months before you know even people in your own department. Often there are so many junior doctors that your training experience is diluted. When you start work in North Wales you will be made to feel welcome. You will be a valued member of the department – not just a trainee. You will probably be given more independence than you would in a big teaching hospital, but always well supported.

Our trainees have a voice in the department. We listen to their opinions, and welcome suggestions for improvement. Are our hospitals really more friendly? Only you can be the judge of that but we have great feedback from our previous trainees. Each hospital has a great positive team spirit and a culture of mutual support. We are not immune to the problems facing the NHS, but you will find staff who are loyal and passionate about their hospital and committed to providing the best care they can. What's our secret? It's obvious really. We believe if people are happy in their life, they will be happier in their work and vice-versa. Most of our staff love working in North Wales because they can have the perfect work-life balance. Happy consultants, nurses (and even managers) make for a happy workplace and the perfect environment for learning.



## + Welcome to Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board is the largest health organisation in Wales, providing a full range of primary, community, mental health and acute hospital services for a population of around 678,000 people across the six counties of North Wales (Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, and Wrexham).

The Health Board has a budget of £1.3 billion and a workforce of approximately 16,500.

We have three main hospitals (Ysbyty Gwynedd in Bangor, Ysbyty Glan Clwyd in Bodelwyddan and Wrexham Maelor Hospital) along with a network of community hospitals, health centres, clinics, mental health units and community team bases. The Health Board also coordinates the work of 114 GP practices and NHS services provided by dentists, opticians and pharmacists in North Wales.

All 3 hospitals have an Emergency Department, acute surgical admissions, consultant led obstetric units, paediatrics, intensive care unit and all offer general surgery, orthopaedics, trauma, urology, gynaecology, ENT – typical DGH procedures. Unlike many DGH's in England and South Wales, major trauma and paediatric emergencies are rarely diverted directly to the major centres – mainly because of the long transport times. That's excellent news for your training.

Some sub-specialties are shared across the three sites. For example major upper GI surgery is done exclusively at Wrexham Maelor. Major head and neck surgery is done only at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd. Major Gynaecological surgery is located in Ysbyty Gwynedd. Vascular surgery is currently done at Ysbyty Gwynedd and Wrexham Maelor.

There are no Cardiothoracic or Neurosurgical units in North Wales. Some trainees will rotate to The Walton Centre in Liverpool to do their Neuroanaesthesia module and the Liverpool Womens' hospital for extra Obstetric experience. Trainees can also opt to spend some time at Alder Hey hospital in Liverpool for supplementary paediatric experience if they wish. We believe these opportunities strengthen the breadth and depth of the training experience in North Wales and are a boost to the excellent training our trainees get from the Welsh Deanery. Further information on these rotations is available from your college tutor.

During your time in North Wales it is possible for you to complete all of your essential modules with the exception of Cardiothoracics and higher level Paediatrics. For ST6-7s you can also complete the advanced modules for general duties or pain.

## + North Wales Anaesthetic Teaching & Study leave.

Each of the hospitals in North Wales are committed to providing you with excellent training, teaching, support for exams and coaching your professional development. Whatever stage you are at in your training we will help you reach your goals, whether it is to pass the exams, develop your CV, or prepare for being a consultant.

Formal teaching occurs weekly at each site. To get the most out of this teaching you will be encouraged (and expected) to contribute to some of the teaching sessions. Each department also holds 6 CPD days a year. In addition there is a North Wales regional teaching programme with a separate curriculum for CTs and STs. We are developing and investing in a North Wales simulation programme. You should be automatically released from clinical duties (unless on-call) to attend these. Further information will be available on from your college tutor. You can also follow @gas\_NWales on twitter for updates. The regional teaching days are a great opportunity to get together with colleagues from the other hospitals in North Wales and plan social events!

The current trainees have asked whether we can arrange video links to teaching days in South Wales. This is something we are currently looking to set up.

Study leave is normally 30 days per year and is applied for through the online intrepid

system. Unfortunately the deanery budget is quite limited. If you feel that there is a course or conference that would be really good for your professional development and have already spent all of your allowance we may be able to assist with funding on a case-by-case basis. Discuss any requests in advance with Deputy Regional adviser Dr Declan Maloney or Deputy Programme Director Dr Mark Knights (see contacts page). Please note exam courses will not normally be considered. When considering applications we will take in to account your attendance at regional teaching and contribution to departmental teaching.

ARCPs are held in North Wales for most trainees based in the North, but some will have to travel to South Wales. You should apply for **professional** leave for ARCPs through the intrepid system (not study leave). Travel expenses should always be claimed and will be paid for ARCPs. *(If claiming mileage for driving you should have business mileage included on your car insurance. This is normally easy to arrange with little additional cost.)*

Finally, we hold a regional North Wales anaesthetic forum every December, which includes prizes for the best trainee presentation and poster on audits, quality improvement projects or interesting cases, so start planning one now!

# + Ysbyty Wrexham Maelor

## Wrexham.

Wrexham is a town on the Welsh border with a population of approximately 65,000. It has an industrial past and has been redeveloped as a modern marketing centre and home to Glyndwr University.

The town hosts multiple shopping and recreation complexes as well as a cinema within walking distance of the hospital.

It is strategically located within commuting distance of Chester and Liverpool and less than an hour from Manchester and Liverpool airports.

## The Hospital.

The Maelor Hospital is a 580 bed DGH serving a rural catchment area of over half a million. There are about 580 beds and an acute surgical and medical take and a very busy ED. It is widely regarded as a friendly place to work with generally approachable consultants, plenty of opportunity and good training feedback.

It has a large active Doctors mess, which remains one of the few serving hot food and an endless supply of good coffee, drinks and snacks (on subscription).

As an anaesthetic trainee you benefit from an active & social department with its own mess room where most trainees and many consultants/specialty doctors gather for lunch daily.

## Top Tips:

1. Join the Doctors Mess
2. Be nice to the anaesthetic secretaries... if you are nice to them they will mother you lovingly!
3. There are free cash machines outside the canteen and at the main entrance.
4. The League of friends run three shops and a cafe at the main entrance with extended hours
5. The library is in the medical institute 3 minutes across the car park from the main entrance. It hosts another cafe and is the location of the weekly Grand Round and other teaching events.

## + Ysbyty Glan Clwyd, Bodelwyddan

### Rhyl

Rhyl has long been a popular tourist destination for people from all over Britain; sitting in the rain shadow of the mountains of Snowdonia it (theoretically at least) has better weather. In it's prime, Rhyl was an elegant Victorian seaside resort. However, due to a combination of economic and social factors it has sadly been in decline since the 1990's and it is not often argued that Rhyl is a terrific destination now. What is less often mentioned is that the hospital is actually 5 miles out of Rhyl in Bodelwyddan, a small green suburb just off the A55.

There are three cinemas (arguably four) within half an hours drive. Also close by are multiple pubs, restaurants and two hotels a short walk from the hospital have gyms if you sign up as a member. Just down the road in St Asaph is an award-winning Spa.

### The Hospital.

Glan Clwyd Hospital (Ysbyty Glan Clwyd) is the district general hospital for the central area of North Wales. It was built in 1980 and it is situated in rural surroundings at Bodelwyddan, a small community that lies 4 miles south of Rhyl. The hospital serves a population of approximately 195,000. The acute hospital service has a total of 684 beds; with a full range of specialties including Acute Cardiology and Oncology. It is also the regional centre of head and neck surgery.

It has a large Doctors mess, which is just for juniors. For a few pounds a month the mess is stocked with cereal, soup and toast and drinks as well as Sky TV.

There is also a computer room for those looking to work or study and male and female quiet rooms to rest in. Attached to the Doctors mess is an anaesthetic rest room (one of two), which is a mere step from the ITU.

The library is above the post grad centre and accessible by card 24/7 so you can get by without splashing out on unnecessary textbooks.

There are free cash machines outside the canteen and at the main entrance.

A lot of doctors arrive and feel like they have arrived in the middle of nowhere, yet by the time they leave they love the place. Because of its seclusion it's actually really social.

### Top Tips:

1. Join the Doctors Mess.
2. Join the Whatsapp group.
3. If no-one else has organised the Saturday BBQ at the residences, send a few texts round and make it happen.
4. As ever the anaesthetic secretaries are good to have on side.
5. If you are preparing for exams speak to Dr Hugo. He is a wiz for all things FRCA related and he will bend over backwards to teach and help you.
6. The League of friends runs a shop and café at the main entrance but the one in oncology is nicer.





## Working in North Wales

## + Ysbyty Gwynedd, Bangor.

### Bangor.

Bangor is a small but lively cathedral city with a population of 19,000, half of which attend or work at the traditional red brick university that dominates the city. It is situated at the North end of the Menai Straits, overlooking Anglesey and the North Wales coastline, with the spectacular backdrop of Snowdonia national park. The sea and the mountains are very easy to access. Bangor has a lovely Pier, a thriving high street with the usual range of shops and some great independent cafés. As you might expect from the large student population there is also a wealth of clubs and societies and a lively nightlife for such a small city. Most doctors however do not live in Bangor but choose to live closer to the sea or more rural.

There are direct trains to Manchester, Chester (1 hour), Cardiff (4 hours) and London (3 hours). Dublin is also easy to get to from Holyhead.

### The Hospital.

Ysbyty Gwynedd (or YG for short) serves the largest geographical area that extends all the way to Barmouth and includes the whole of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Snowdonia, and as far East as Colwyn Bay. There are approx. 540 beds, an acute surgical and medical take and a very busy ED. It is widely regarded as a friendly place to work with approachable consultants, plenty of opportunity and good feedback from trainees.

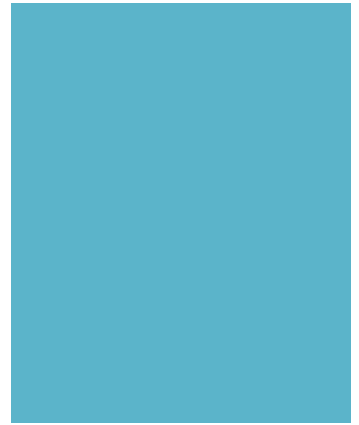
It also probably has the best view of any hospital in the country.

YG has an enviable anaesthetic department complete with library, seminar room and a trainees rest room. There is ITU teaching Wednesday lunchtimes followed by anaesthetic teaching in the afternoon. On Thursday evenings there is a departmental educational / M&M meeting with food. Friday lunchtime is the hospital grand round with free lunch in the postgraduate centre. The hospital library is very popular for those studying for exams.

### Top Tips:

1. Don't live in the hospital accommodation.
2. Look to rent / buy in: Y Felinheli, Menai Bridge, Beaumaris, Penrhosgarnedd, Upper Bangor, Llanberis, Llanfairfechan.
3. Get involved in teaching, departmental M&M, audit.
4. Don't try and drive to South Wales every weekend – You will exhaust yourself and your car.
5. Be proactive about organising social events: walks, outdoor activities, BBQ's by the lakes as well as meals out.
6. Do a course at Plas Menai or Plas-y-Brenin and learn a new skill!
7. Karen Capon is the rota co-ordinator. She likes chocolate and a good sense of humour.
8. The Postgrad centre does a reasonable cappuccino / latte for only £1. The WRVS run a nice café as well as a shop on the ground floor.
9. Jean Williams (pictured left) in the Postgraduate Centre is very friendly and helpful with study leave, etc.





# Living in North Wales

Whether you are an adrenaline junkie, a culture vulture, a history buff, or a foodie you will find plenty to whet your appetite. Whether you are single or have family with children, there is something in North Wales for every age. For each site we have included in this guide some suggested activities, places to eat out and things to do. This list is far from exhaustive however, and you will have the most fun exploring new places by yourself.

## Leisure Time

Just a few of the more adventurous activities our trainees and consultants get up to:

- Mountain walking, scrambling & climbing
- Mountain biking & Road biking
- Ice climbing and Ski touring in winter
- Geocaching & orienteering

- Kayaking & Canoeing
- Sea kayaking
- Sailing – dinghies or yachts
- Kite Surfing and wind surfing
- Paddle boarding
- Horse Riding
- Paragliding
- Coasteering
- Scuba Diving

For those who need a regular dose of bright lights, swanky restaurants, retail therapy and traffic jams: Chester, Liverpool and Manchester are all close enough for a day trip, and London is only 3 hours away by train!

## Living in North Wales



## Making the most of your time off.

### Recommended days out for adventure seekers:



1. Climb Snowdon, Tryfan, Glyders, Cadair Idris or one of the many other mountains.
2. Mountain biking: Betws-y-coed, Penmachno, Coed Llandegla, Antur Stiniog or Coed-y-Brenin.
3. Learn to kayak, canoe, sail or drive a power boat at the national outdoor centre for Wales, Plas Menai or Colwyn Bay Watersports.
4. Charter a yacht.
5. Learn to Kite surf or Windsurf at Rhosneigr, Anglesey.
6. 4 x 4 driving experience near Betws-y-coed or Llangollen.
7. Gorge Walking.
8. Zip World – Velocity, Titan, Safari or Caverns. See [www.zipworld.co.uk](http://www.zipworld.co.uk)
5. Walk the RSPB nature reserve at Conwy or Llanfairfechan.
6. Explore the many castles: Conwy, Beaumaris, Caernarfon, Harlech.
7. Walk the town walls of Conwy.
8. Go to the Zoo – Chester or Welsh mountain zoo, Anglesey sea zoo, Pila Palas.
9. Llanberis national slate museum (free entry) and electric mountain.
10. Walk / cycle through Newborough Forest and visit Llandwyn island.
11. Go to the beach: Anglesey (eg Rhosneigr, Newborough, Benllech) and the Llyn Peninsula (eg Abersoch, Nefyn) have the best.
12. Visit South Stack Lighthouse near Holyhead.
13. Climbing at the Beacon climbing Centre - Crazyclimb for kids is fab.
14. Greenwood Forest Park (eco friendly theme park)
15. Zip World – Bounce Below.
16. Welsh Highland Railway.
17. Climb Moel Famau (Mold)
18. Visit Portmeirion & lunch at Castell Deudraeth
19. Visit Llangollen, Beddgelert, Betws-y-Coed,
20. Walk to the waterfalls at Abergwyngregyn, Swallow falls or Conwy Falls.
21. Ski at Chillfactore, Manchester.

### Family days out:

1. Get the train to the summit of Snowdon - (May to Nov)
2. Explore the many national trust sites: Don't miss Plas Newydd, Penrhyn Castle, Bodnant gardens, Aberglaslyn. Definitely worth joining the national trust while you're here!
3. Walk the promenade and Victorian Pier at Llandudno or walk around the Great Orme, hop on the tram and cable car.
4. Walk along the Promenade at Colwyn Bay.

# + Dining out or just a quiet drink with friends...

**These are some of the Restaurants, cafes and pubs recommended by our current trainees – Search online for more info:**

## **West**

Dylans Restaurant, Menai Bridge.

Signatures Restaurant, Conwy.

Ye Olde Bulls Head Inn, Beaumaris.

Blas, Caernarfon.

Caban café, Brynrefail.

Castell Deudraeth, Portmeirion.

The Straits Restaurant, Menai Bridge.

Nikki Ips Restaurant, Deganwy.

Blue Sky Café, Bangor.

1815 Café, Bangor.

Café Siabod, Capel Curig.

The Garddfon pub, Y Felinheli.

The White Eagle, Rhoscolyn.

The Oyster Catcher, Rhosneigr.

The Ship Inn, Red Wharf Bay.

The Bank, Conwy.

The Albion pub, Conwy.

The Castlevue pub, Deganwy.

## **Central**

The Plough, St Asaph.

The Faenol Fawr, next to the hospital.

Hickories BBQ Smokehouse, Rhos on Sea.

The Kinmel Hotel and Spa, Abergele.

Pen-y-Bryn, Colwyn Bay.

On the Hill restaurant, Ruthin.

The Toad, Colwyn Bay.

The Sugar Plum Tea Room, Rhewl.

The White House, Rhualt.

Blue Bell Inn, Halkyn.

## **East**

Pant-yr-Ochain, Wrexham.

Cross Foxes, Erbistock.

Plas Coch, Wrexham (Quiz Thursday night & 20% discount!)

Try Thai noodle bar, Wrexham.

Anise Indian, Wrexham.

Lemon Tree, Wrexham.

Cock O'Barton, Barton Village, nr Chester.

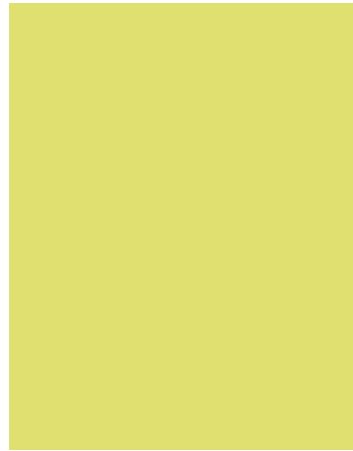
Upstairs at the Grill, Chester (Best Steaks).

Sticky Walnut, Chester.

Living in  
North Wales







# Accommodation

## Be it ever so humble...

Obviously to get the best experience of North Wales you need to live and spend your free time here. That is why we recommend you consider moving your family with you if you can. This is never an easy decision, but in our experience the doctors who travel to South Wales for every weekend do not enjoy their time in North Wales as much. It is a long and tiring drive, which you will come to resent and your car will not thank you either! Obviously everyone's personal circumstances are different and only you know what is best for your situation.

Hospital accommodation is available at all 3 sites, however the facilities are a bit dated and of typical hospital accommodation quality. It is also not that much cheaper than some privately rented accommodation. If you are staying for longer than 6

months we recommend looking for privately rented accommodation. Contact Derek Blythin on [bcu.accomodationenquiries@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:bcu.accomodationenquiries@wales.nhs.uk) for further information and advice.

We have included in this guide some suggestions for places to look for accommodation at each site but we recommend you visit North Wales in advance to do your own research and speak to current trainees. Quite a few rotating doctors buy a property in North Wales and if you are here for two years or if you think you might return as a consultant this is worth consideration. You are entitled to leave for finding accommodation and of course removal expenses. We strongly encourage you to claim for all expenses that you are entitled to. Details of this are available from [bcu.medicalworkforcequeries@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:bcu.medicalworkforcequeries@wales.nhs.uk)





# Living in North Wales

## Places to look for your home in North Wales



For enquiries on hospital accommodation or general advice on localities at any of the three sites contact Derek Blythin on: [bcu.accommodationenquiries@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:bcu.accommodationenquiries@wales.nhs.uk)

### West

Look in Penrhosgarnedd, Upper Bangor, Y Felinheli, Menai Bridge, Beaumaris, Llanberis, Glasinfryn, Pentraeth, Llanfairfechan, Conwy or Deganwy.

#### Estate Agents:

Dafydd Hardy 01248 371212

Beresford Adams 01248 489218

North Wales Property 01248 371345

Carter Jonas 01248 880921

Accent 01248 680222

Fletcher & Poole 01492 583100

Parc yr Odyn Cottages (Long and Short term rentals) 01248 450566

### Central

Look in Bodelwyddan, St Asaph, Rhuddlan, Trefnant, Colwyn Bay, Rhos on Sea, Llandudno, Deganwy, Conwy, Glan Conwy, Chester.

#### Estate Agents:

LL Estates 01492 535222

Jones Peckover 01745 832240

Williams Estates 01745 592616

REB letting 01745 590919

Accent Properties 01492 512705

### East

Look in Ruabon, Wrexham, Chester, Erbistock, Summerhill, Tilston.

#### Estate Agents:

Belvoir Lettings 01978 340030

Prescott Hall Lettings 01244 349012

Wingetts 01978 353553

Temples Lettings 01244 347320



# Contact Details

Check the Welsh School of Anaesthesia website for regular updates and news: [www.welshschool.co.uk](http://www.welshschool.co.uk)

If you are on twitter follow **@gas\_NWales** for information on teaching, courses, events. Feel free to use it as a forum for organizing social events and to share lifts to teaching, ARCP's, South Wales, etc.



## Welsh School of Anaesthesia / BCUHB

Specialist Training Programme Director	Dr Sarah Harries: <a href="mailto:sarah.harries2@wales.nhs.uk">sarah.harries2@wales.nhs.uk</a>
Core Training Programme Director	Dr Caroline Evans: <a href="mailto:caroline.evans5@wales.nhs.uk">caroline.evans5@wales.nhs.uk</a>
Deputy Programme Director	Dr Mark Knights: <a href="mailto:mark.knights@wales.nhs.uk">mark.knights@wales.nhs.uk</a>
Deputy Regional Adviser	Dr D Maloney: <a href="mailto:Declan.maloney@wales.nhs.uk">Declan.maloney@wales.nhs.uk</a>
Specialty Training Manager	Lisa Bassett: <a href="mailto:BassettL@cardiff.ac.uk">BassettL@cardiff.ac.uk</a>
BCUHB Human Resources	<a href="mailto:bcu.medicalworkforcequeries@wales.nhs.uk">bcu.medicalworkforcequeries@wales.nhs.uk</a>



## Wrexham Maelor

### Anaesthetic Dept: 01978 725956

College Tutor	Dr Harsha Reddy: <a href="mailto:harsha.reddy@wales.nhs.uk">harsha.reddy@wales.nhs.uk</a>
Clinical Lead	Dr Chris Littler: <a href="mailto:Christopher.littler@wales.nhs.uk">Christopher.littler@wales.nhs.uk</a>
Admin / Rota	Dr James Kenningham: <a href="mailto:james.kenningham@wales.nhs.uk">james.kenningham@wales.nhs.uk</a>



## Ysbyty Glan Clwyd

### Anaesthetic Dept: 01745 448788 (Ext 6338)

College Tutor	Dr James Dougherty: <a href="mailto:james.dougherty@wales.nhs.uk">james.dougherty@wales.nhs.uk</a>
Clinical Director	Dr Dilesh Thaker: <a href="mailto:dilesh.thaker@wales.nhs.uk">dilesh.thaker@wales.nhs.uk</a>
Admin / Rota	Esther Davordjie: <a href="mailto:esther.davordjie@wales.nhs.uk">esther.davordjie@wales.nhs.uk</a>
Rota Consultant	Dr Gardner-Thorpe: <a href="mailto:Catherine.gardner-thorpe@wales.nhs.uk">Catherine.gardner-thorpe@wales.nhs.uk</a>



## Ysbyty Gwynedd

### Anaesthetic Dept: 01248 384177

College Tutor	Dr Simon Burnell: <a href="mailto:simon.burnell@wales.nhs.uk">simon.burnell@wales.nhs.uk</a>
Clinical Director	Dr Ian Johnson: <a href="mailto:ian.johnson@wales.nhs.uk">ian.johnson@wales.nhs.uk</a>
Admin / Rota	Karen Capon: <a href="mailto:Karen.capon@wales.nhs.uk">Karen.capon@wales.nhs.uk</a>



+ Gweld  
chi cyn  
bo hir!



This booklet was designed and produced by Dr Mark Knights, with assistance from Dr Craig Beaton and junior doctors in North Wales who responded to an online survey. Its purpose is to assist doctors who are rotating to North Wales to find a new home and settle in. Last updated 7 July 2016

Estate agents, accommodation, and all other businesses that are mentioned in this guide have been recommended by doctors in good faith on an online survey. You should conduct your own research and evaluation before deciding on accommodation, etc. We cannot accept any liability for any loss sustained because of any business recommended in our guide booklet.

Please forward any corrections, feedback and suggestions to:

Dr Mark Knights, Ysbyty Gwynedd, Bangor.

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[@gas\\_Nwales](https://twitter.com/gas_Nwales)