

# Developing a joint Podiatry and Vascular, limb salvage clinic in the middle of a pandemic.

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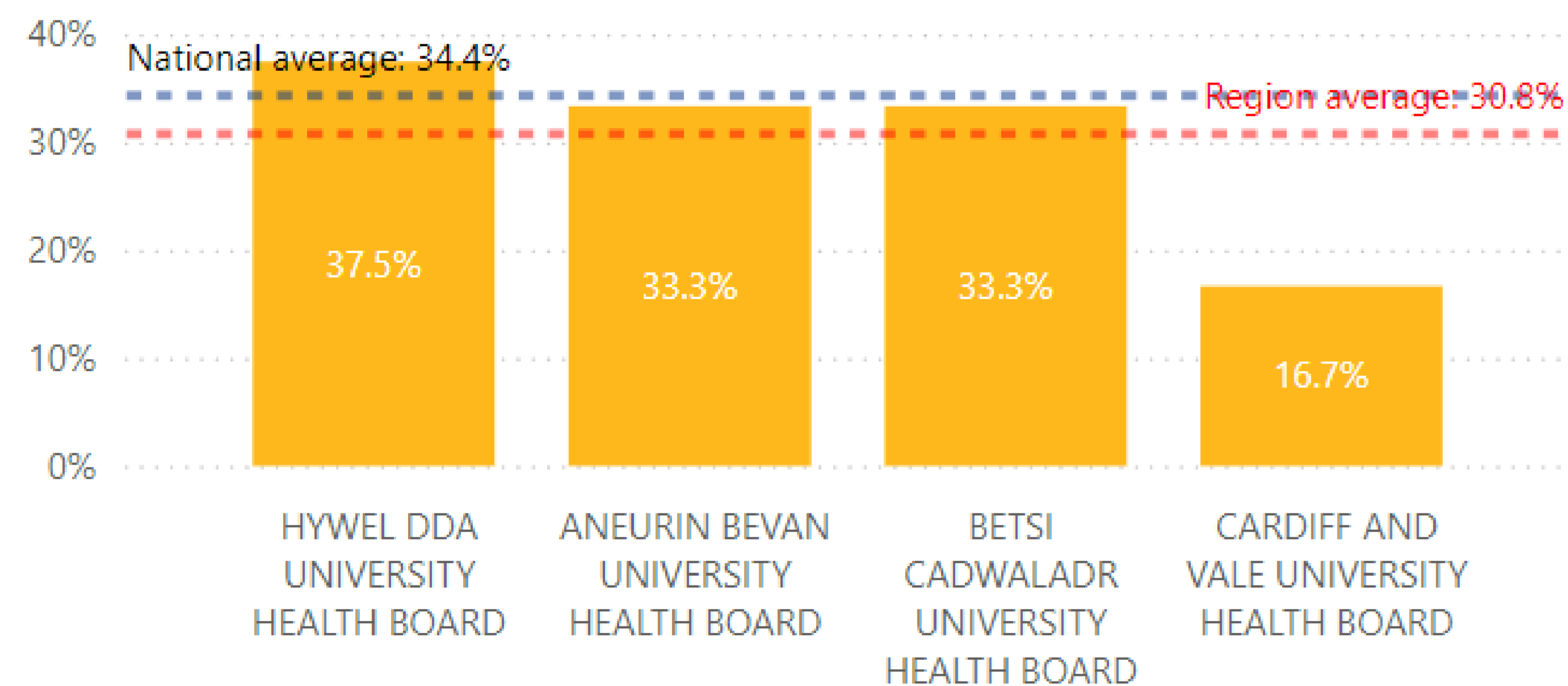
## Introduction

Limb salvage and peripheral arterial disease often are spoken about in the same sentence (1). Early intervention has been shown to be highly important in good clinical outcomes (2). Historically limb salvage patients would have to wait up to 12 weeks to be seen urgently, however since October 2021, patients can be seen the same week as first presentation in a Cardiff and Vale UHB podiatry setting. 334 new patients have been seen across 2 years saving a combined wait of over 4000 weeks.

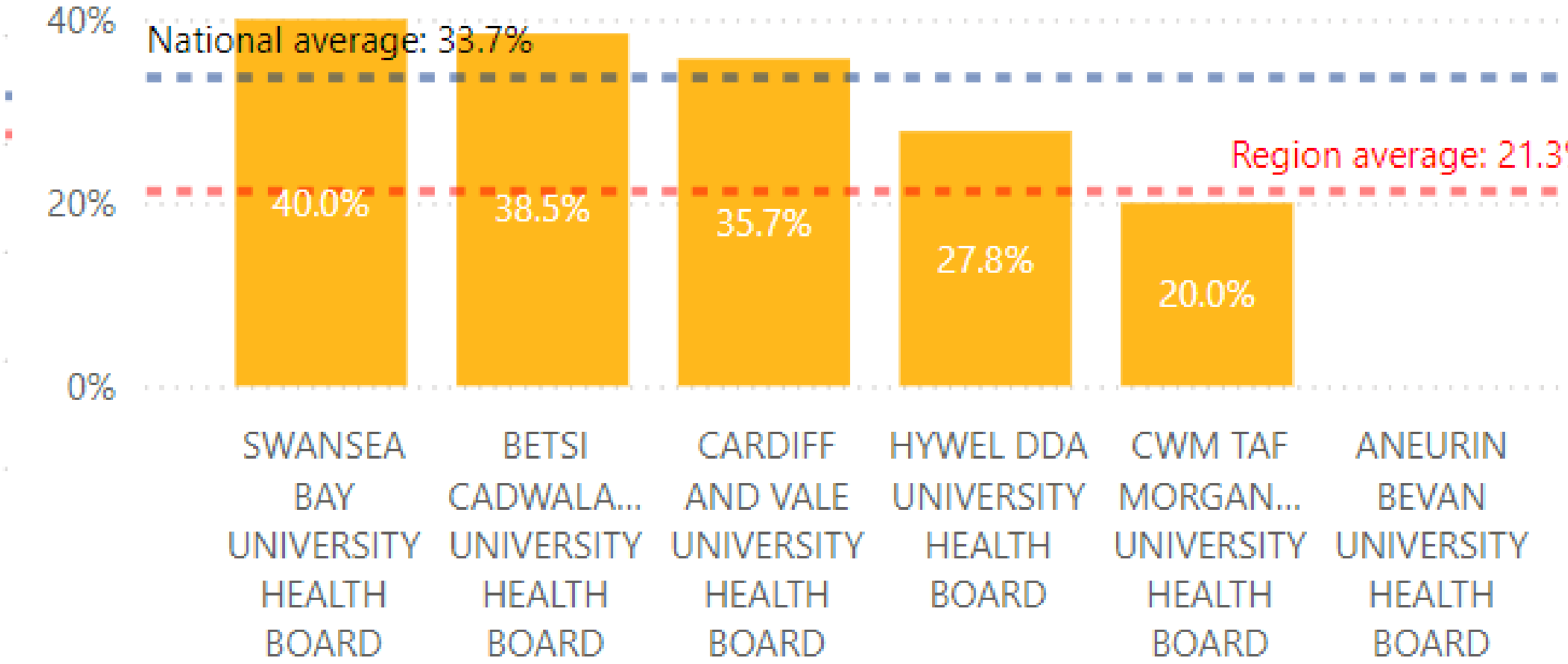
## Discussion

Patients who were reviewed in the joint clinic can now have an expedited same week plan for their limb threatening tissue loss. This allows for faster treatment planning and the ability to enact the VSGBI (3) guidelines for patients with CLTI. This clinic also aids expedited hospital discharge for early clinical review. Although the clinic is up and running further changes need to be made, including the inclusion of onsite arterial duplex scanning which is in the process of being implemented. This will further improve the patient journey and make the clinic far more prudent (4).

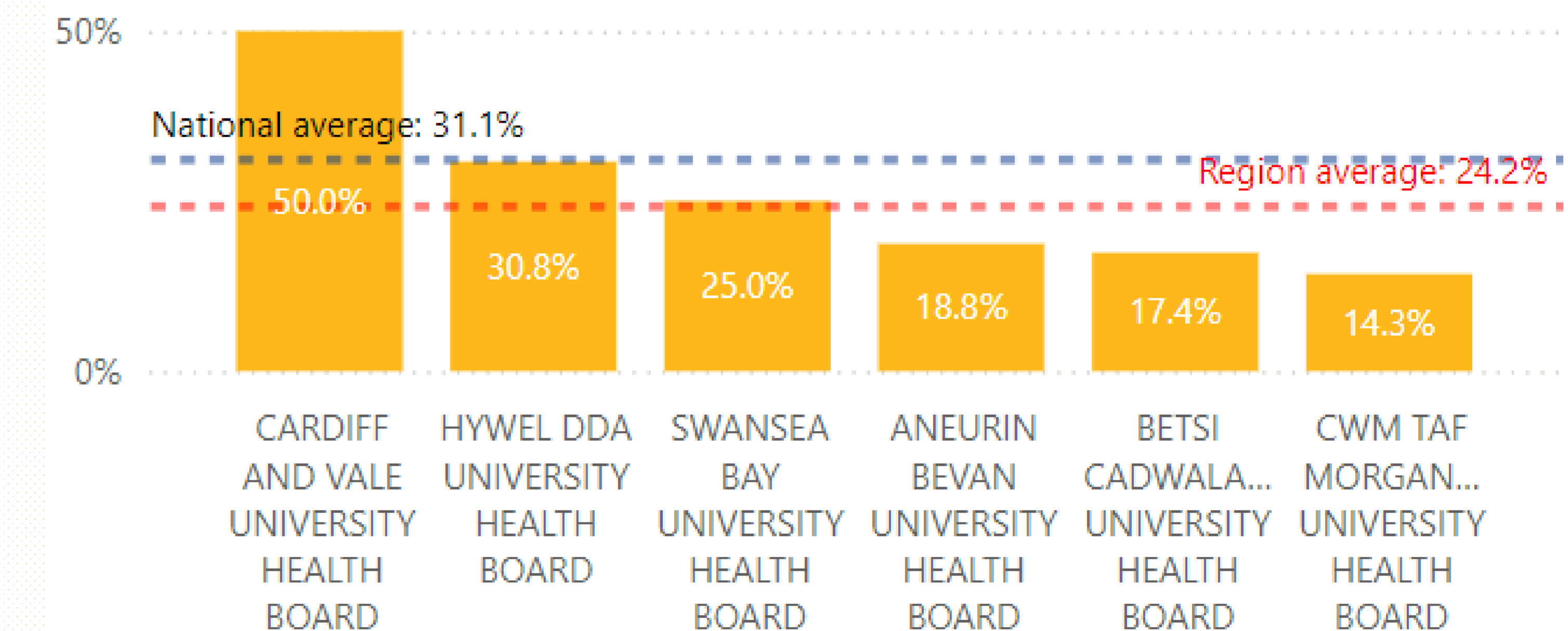
## Data



Stats from national diabetic foot audit: 2019/2020 data – healing rates within 12 weeks, 1 year before implementation of joint working clinic



Stats from national diabetic foot audit: 2021/22 data – healing rates within 12 weeks, 1 year after start of joint working clinic



Stats from national diabetic foot audit: 2022/23 - healing rates within 12 weeks, 2 years after implementation of joint working clinic.

## Conclusion

The suggestion is that early diagnosis and intervention salvages limbs and wounds heal faster. This improves morbidity and mortality rates and improves quality of life for this patient group. Covid-19 has given us many challenges, but out of adversity the opportunity to build on the lower limb MDT and joint working has meant Cardiff and Vale health board is the joint sixth best NHS organisation in England and Wales for healing rates. Vascular surgeons are key professionals with excellent skills in this patient journey. Podiatry often cares for these patients who have nowhere else to go, by engaging in this joined up way of working, streamlined care pathways can often improve working relationships, reduce amputation rates and ultimately improve care.

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