



Implementing *A Healthier Wales* across the NHS

THE WELSH NHS CONFEDERATION
CONFFEDERASIWN GIG CYMRU



Introduction

This is an unprecedented time for the NHS as we deal with the outbreak of COVID19 in Wales. This promises to be the toughest challenge we have faced and already we have seen NHS organisations in Wales react quickly to the need to transform services, increase capacity and provide the person-centred care people need.

NHS organisations continue to work towards delivering on the vision outlined within the Welsh Government's long-term plan for an integrated health and social care system despite the immense pressure they currently face.

Within the Welsh NHS we had been calling for a long-term vision, enabling a health and social care system which support people to live healthy, happy lives and help people stay well at home. A Healthier Wales is an ambitious vision for how we do just that, transforming the way we deliver services for people in Wales.

The Plan aims to take us from an acute service to a wellness service, and from hospitals into our communities. The NHS will not be able to do this in isolation and are working with a range of partners to deliver this vision. Integrated and seamless services lead to better service satisfaction, better outcomes for patients and service users, and when implemented effectively, make better use of resources.

Integration is about all parts of the system working together so that people receive efficient and effective care with the outcomes that matter to them. To achieve this, we need services to work together in health and social care, primary and secondary care and across communities. Across Wales there are now a significant number of services which are helping to change the culture and delivery.

The examples in this briefing focus on some of the person-centred projects and initiatives which involve our members, the seven Local Health Boards, three NHS Trusts and Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW), working in partnership with the public and voluntary sector across Wales. If we are to achieve our shared vision, we'll need to learn from these projects and identify and overcome the key barriers to scaling them up at pace and scale.

**Aneurin Bevan
University Health
Board**

New POD facility introduced to reduce ambulance delays

A new facility has been installed outside the Royal Gwent Hospital's Emergency Department to speed up the care of patients who arrive by ambulance.

This Health Board has worked with the Welsh Ambulance Service Trust to introduce the new ambulance transfer facility – named the POD (Patient Offload Department).

The POD contains six hospital beds to accommodate ambulance patients at times when the Emergency Department is full. The new facility will help ambulance patients to be transferred safely at the hospital, enabling ambulance crews to be released more quickly to answer 999 calls across Gwent.

The Health Board has already cared for an unprecedented number of patients in its Emergency Departments this winter and often ambulance crews had to wait outside the hospital with patients until space has become available in the hospital.

In December of 2019, the Health Board's EDs experienced their busiest ever month on record – the number of patients seen (14,533) being 8% higher than in the previous busiest month on record (December 2018).

Find out more about the POD in the following [video](#).



**Betsi Cadwaladr
University Health
Board**

One-stop dysphagia clinic delivers more efficient service at Ysbyty Gwynedd

A one-stop dysphagia clinic at Ysbyty Gwynedd is providing a more efficient service for patients, with quicker diagnosis and minimal waiting times for appointments.

The unique benefit of this service is that it allows patients, who are experiencing swallowing problems, to have their initial consultation followed by an endoscopy and their follow-up consultation in the same day, thereby reducing the need for multiple visits.

The service, which was first introduced as a pilot project, is led by Consultant Gastroenterologist Jonathan Sutton and Nurse Endoscopist Daniel Marshall.

Daniel was shortlisted for the RCN Wales Nurse of the Year award in 2019 after being recognised for making a significant difference to the care of patients undergoing endoscopy and gastroenterology care.



Transoral Robotic Surgery (TORS)

A patient with head and neck cancer has undergone robotic surgery at the University Hospital of Wales (UHW), in what is a first for Wales. Transoral Robotic Surgery (TORS) for head and neck cancer has been introduced at the UHW as a regional service for patients across South Wales. Until now, head and neck cancer patients in Wales have had to travel to London or Newcastle for robotic surgery.

Treatment of head and neck cancer can have a severe impact on patients' overall quality of life, affecting how patients look, talk, eat or breathe, but the new procedure can greatly improve functional and cosmetic outcomes for patients. The cutting-edge procedure uses the da Vinci Robotic Surgical System, which is the most advanced robotic technology currently available. The robot, which is already in use at the UHW to treat patients with kidney and prostate cancer, equips surgeons with 3D visualisation and high magnification of the area being operated upon. TORS enables surgeons to identify, reach and resect tumours by passing the arms of the robot through the patient's mouth, which is far less invasive than conventional procedures that often require cutting through the patient's neck or opening their jaw to access and remove the tumour.

Delivering a range of benefits including less bleeding and pain, faster operating times and recovery, decreased chance of damage to important nerves, a reduction in unnecessary tissue damage and avoidance of tracheostomy, the TORS procedure can in some cases provide a definitive treatment, allowing the patient to avoid adjuvant treatment involving radiation and chemotherapy.

Approximately 25 patients from across Wales are expected to benefit from TORS at the UHW during the next 12 months.

**Cwm Taf
Morgannwg
University
Health Board**

Joint working benefits patients in the community

In January 2019 Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board physiotherapy staff teamed up with Merthyr Tydfil Leisure Centre to provide physiotherapy rehabilitation to patients in the community who need treatment for Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL). ACL is one of the key ligaments that help stabilize your knee joint and one of the most beneficial treatments for this type of injury is strength testing.

A year on and the results and feedback are all very positive. So much so that the service has been extended to patients with other physiotherapy needs and not only those with ACL problems and to those who live in the Cynon Valley.

Physiotherapist Nathan Davies said: *“There are many benefits of holding physiotherapy sessions for this kind of treatment in the local leisure centres. The equipment and space are much more suitable for this type of rehabilitation as well as the fact that some people prefer not to be in a hospital setting so they become more relaxed.*

“The patients referred to physio are generally referred from their GP, consultant or A&E and are for those that need advanced rehabilitation or have had lower limb injuries and require high strength physiotherapy exercises enabling them to be in a position to return to a sport or hobby”.



Health Education and Improvement Wales

New gender diversity and trans health training modules

Healthcare professionals can now access two training modules on gender diversity and trans health, the first of their kind across NHS Wales. Launched by Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW), each module is based on the typical cases that might present to a GP.

The first covers 'Gender Diversity' and aims to improve awareness of language, develop the skills to consult affirmatively and deliver best practice while touching on legal aspects of care. The second focusses on 'Trans Health' and covers specific health considerations including gender-affirming hormone regimes, sexual and reproductive health, and screening. The new modules have been written by Dr Sophie Quinney, a GP with a special interest in trans health, with support from the academic, Ben Vincent.

In addition to better informed GPs, trans patients in Wales are now also supported by 'Local Gender Teams' who provide prescribing support in each local health board. This means that patients no longer face uncertainty regarding access to hormone therapy.

For more information on the new 'Gender Diversity and Trans Health' modules, or to see all modules offered by HEIW, please visit <https://gpcpd.heiw.wales/>.



Pilot scheme to provide guidance on how to spot loneliness in elderly people

A pilot scheme has been administered by the National Pharmacy Association (NPA) in conjunction with the Hywel Dda University Health Board to provide community pharmacy delivery drivers, who distribute medicines to a patient's residence, guidance on how to detect symptoms of loneliness in vulnerable adults.

Drivers will conduct examinations using a computerised device and the findings will be used to evaluate whether the OAP will benefit from social services or NHS referral.

The NPA came up with the concept to identify people who may be lonely and socially isolated which would help health and social care professionals make targeted interventions, as well as addressing other health and care needs.

The stakeholder team put in place by the Health Board will decide what is measured, once the measures have been agreed then appropriate training will be provided to the delivery drivers to allow them to use the technology and undertake the assessment.

A large number of patients are older, vulnerable and live in very rural, isolated communities where the pharmacy delivery driver is sometimes the only person they have any regular contact with. This scheme will build upon the relationships with local communities so that together with local authorities and third sector partners, the Health Board can offer interventions to reduce the risk of loneliness and social isolation, as well as promoting health and wellbeing.



**Powys
Teaching
Health Board**

Dementia Matters in Powys

Dementia Matters in Powys is an independent charitable organisation that works in partnership with communities, third-sector and statutory organisations. They aim to create a dementia-friendly county that fully supports the health, wellbeing and quality of life of people living with dementia, and those who care for them.

The staff and volunteers at Dementia Matters in Powys are committed to giving a voice to those living with dementia. They are working closely with partners and other groups to create communities that respect, value and empower individuals so that they are more able to face the challenges of dementia. The group has previously benefitted from ICF funding, allocated by Powys Regional Partnership Board.

Living in a rural area such as Powys can be challenging for anyone looking for support and accessing services on their doorstep. Dementia Matters in Powys seeks to provide helpful information for people to find both support and local initiatives that make life easier. Community development officers and voluntary facilitators plan and deliver 'meeting centres' across four Powys towns: Brecon, Newtown, Llandrindod Wells, and Ystradgynlais. Meeting centres are a great low-cost, community-based and person-centred way of supporting people living with dementia and their families. They provide a safe place where people are supported to understand and adapt to living with dementia. Dementia Friendly initiatives are recognised both nationally and internationally as having a key role in promoting inclusivity and supporting people affected by dementia. Other areas of the team's work include encouraging schools to be more dementia aware, working with the farming community and particularly rural areas, and several creative projects, such as 'The Hwyl Project' and 'Art in Care Homes'.

Within Powys, it is estimated 2,500 people live with dementia, many without a diagnosis, and because of our ageing population, this number is set to rise by 44% within the next six years. Increasingly, people with dementia are living much longer in the community, but sadly, and all too often, people with dementia and their carers experience loneliness and social exclusion. Dementia Matters in Powys are effective in mobilising communities and reducing social isolation across the county.

A short film has been produced by Powys' Regional Partnership Board to show the vital impact Dementia Matters in Powys is having. It is available [here](#).

**Public Health
Wales NHS
Trust**

Memorandum of Understanding between Public Health Wales and Natural Resources Wales to protect and improve health and the natural environment in Wales

Natural Resources Wales and Public Health Wales have committed to work more closely together to protect and improve the lives and health of people in Wales, as well as the natural environment they live in.

A Memorandum of Understanding, signed on 30 January 2020, will ensure that the organisations work collaboratively to develop shared objectives, guidance, evidence and actions to demonstrate the role our natural resources have in protecting and improving human health and wellbeing.

Both organisations currently work closely and effectively in several areas, such as climate change, air quality, responding to operational incidents and promoting the physical and mental health and wellbeing benefits of the outdoors. The memorandum provides an opportunity to reinforce this existing work and promote greater strategic collaboration. It will also add value to our sustainable ways of working and contribute to our ambitions to champion the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the Environment Act.

The aspirations of the memorandum will be supported by an action plan and overseen by a joint steering group to drive the collaboration forward, in support of delivering our respective organisational wellbeing objectives.

A short film has been produced to provide an overview of how the MOU was developed. It is available [here](#).

Swansea Bay University Health Board

An award-winning collaboration empowers patients to manage their care

During a special event in Swansea on 4th December, Patients Know Best (PKB) and Swansea Bay University Health Board (SBUHB) were recognised for transforming healthcare services, winning the prestigious MediWales Award for ‘Partnership with the NHS 2019’.

For over 3 years, PKB has been working with health boards across Wales to empower patients with the tools and information to self-assess and manage their care. In Swansea Bay UHB, PKB is active across 15 services including dermatology, audiology, cardiology, rheumatology, diabetes, gastroenterology, urology and breast services – where for the first time, patients are taking control by choosing who to share their information with.

From clinicians, family, friends or carers, they are joining up information to ensure they always receive the best care, no matter where they are. Patients have been able to send asynchronous messages to clinicians, conduct virtual consultations, access a library of resources, co-edit and co-create care plans and track symptoms to spot deterioration early. Patients also have access to their test results in real-time and with granular consent, they have the power to decide who they share this information with.

As the first organisation in Wales to connect to the NHS Wales National Informatics infrastructure, PKB has currently supported over 2,000 patients in Swansea Bay to access their lab results including historical blood results.



Patient creates app to help with cancer treatment

A mobile app designed by Velindre patient Karen Bonham, clinical lead physiotherapist Kate Baker and breast surgeon at Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, Donna Egbeare, is helping people with breast cancer prepare for the start of radiotherapy.

The radiotherapy treatment requires patients to raise their arm above their head, but patients often find that difficult or painful after breast surgery. The new app offers a series of exercise videos which help more women prepare for this treatment.

Staff at Velindre Cancer Centre in Cardiff say they have noticed fewer patients needing an urgent referral for physiotherapy ahead of the treatment since the "Breast Axilla Postoperative Support app", or BAPS App, was launched in February.

Kate Baker, clinical lead physiotherapist at Velindre, who helped devise the app, said: *"Previously, we've always handed out information on exercises in a leaflet, that patients would be given by a physiotherapist and taken home. But often these pieces of paper get lost and they're not followed through. What we wanted to do was provide exercises, physical activity advice and further information in an app format, which would allow individuals to have it with them at all times."*

Heather Cootes, a radiographer at Velindre, said: *"We've noticed far fewer patients needing a referral for physio because they're able to get arms into that position. They're a lot more prepared and less anxious when they're coming to us for planning."*

Ms Bonham, from Radyr, is still receiving cancer treatment but is back in work. *"It is great to think that my role as a patient has been able to produce something like this. It helps tremendously recover your confidence and the sense of control so that you can play a part in your self-management, because being a patient is emotionally very difficult, so this has been extremely helpful in recovery."*

The team now hope to roll the app out across Wales to allow more patients to benefit from it.

**Welsh
Ambulance
Services NHS
Trust**

1000th compassionate journey End of Life Care Rapid Transport Service

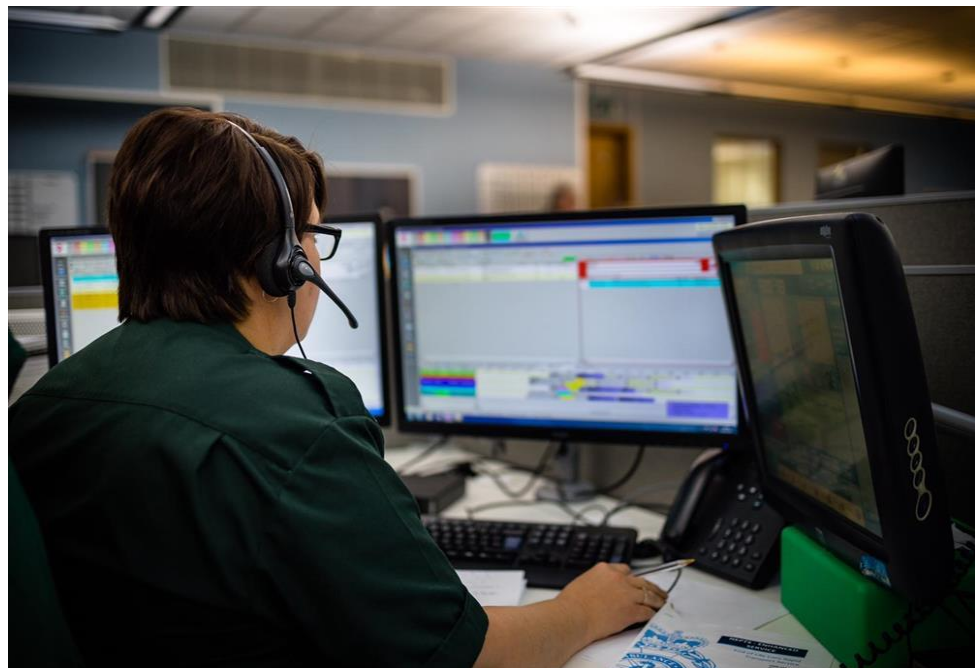
A service providing transport for end of life care patients in Wales has reached a special milestone.

Launched in August 2017, the Welsh Ambulance Service's dedicated End of Life Care Rapid Transport Service has made its 1000th compassionate journey. Operated by the Trust's Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service (NEPTS), the team swiftly and safely move terminally ill patients to their preferred place of death, easing the stress from patients and their families and relieving the pressure on emergency vehicles.

The milestone was passed recently where a gentleman was transported from his home to a specialist palliative care unit. The service was initially trialled in four pilot sites in South Wales, which allowed the Trust to test the criteria and booking process ensuring the right questions were being asked, the correct patient data was being captured and to ensure patients' needs were being fully met.

Now operating across all of Wales, the service has a dedicated booking number and desk in the control room which healthcare professionals use to arrange transport.

The service has proved a great success with the average waiting time for end of life care transport now just 52 minutes.



How can the Welsh NHS Confederation help you?

The Welsh NHS Confederation is the only national membership body which represents all the organisations that make up the NHS in Wales: the seven Local Health Boards, the three NHS Trusts and Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW).

You can visit our website at www.welshconfed.org or follow us on Twitter  [@WelshConfed](https://twitter.com/WelshConfed)

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