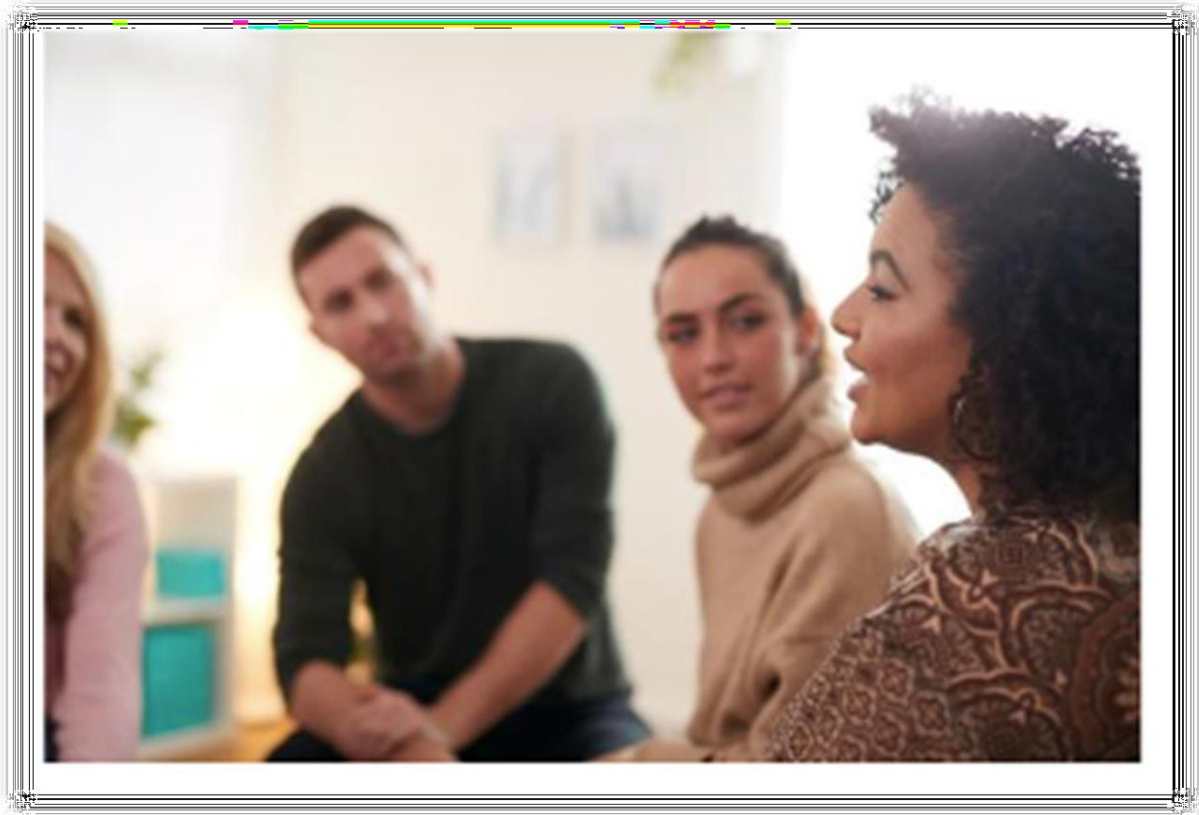


Llais West Wales

Report for Hywel Dda University Health Board – Public Board Meeting

May 2024



Accessible formats

This publication is also available in Welsh.

If you would like this publication in an alternative format and/or language, please contact us. You can ask for a copy by contacting our office:

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About Llais

Llais is a statutory body, set up by the Welsh Government to give the people of Wales much more say in the planning and delivery of their health and social care services – locally, regionally, and nationally.

We are here to understand people's views and experiences of health and social care, and to make sure feedback is used by decision-makers to shape services for the future.

We want to hear both good and bad stories about local health and social care so we understand what works well and how services may need to get better. We also look to talk to those whose voices are not often heard by reaching out and working in our communities so that people can find us near where they live and work.

There are 7 Llais Regions in Wales. We all work together to represent people's voices in relation to their health and social care needs.

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to inform Hywel Dda University Health Board of current issues of concern and positive comments and any other kind of public feedback that we hear in Llais West Wales. We regularly get this information from a wide variety of sources and we know it is important that people involved in the planning and delivery of health and care services across the three counties of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire know what people are experiencing.

Llais continues to engage with the population, scrutinising, and offering independent challenge to the NHS and social care, to monitor and consider routine and urgent service changes. We also continue to provide an independent Complaints Advocacy Service.

National and Regional Priorities

As an organisation spread across Wales in seven different regions, we have a strategic plan that helps us work together sensibly so that we can achieve things that make a difference for the people of Wales. You can find more about this here [Llais Strategic Plan 2024-2027.pdf](#) (llaiswales.org)

As well as having a forward looking plan for the next few years, we also look at our work over shorter time periods. We have an annual plan that explains what we are doing now and in the months ahead. We need this so that we know what we are doing across the whole of Wales, whether we live in the north, south, cities or rural areas, whether we have university towns or tourist areas. Our national plan represents the things that we are going to do in all Llais regions across Wales.

These priorities are shared by all seven regions in Wales and for 2024-2025, these involve driving a national conversation about the future of health and social care services and trying to push for services that meet people's needs.

We also plan our work regionally to make sure we have the most impact in our three counties. Our regional priorities stem from what people living in our area have told us are their 3 main priorities for West Wales.

Our priorities are:

- 1) Being supported whilst you are waiting for treatment
- 2) Supporting carers
- 3) Looking at young people's mental health

We will aim to speak to people in West Wales about each of our priorities so we can understand how things are working for now, and what needs to happen next so that these are better for all of us now and for our future generations..

Llais West Wales Region update

Current activities and feedback:

1. Public feedback from our Advocacy service

During April 2024, our Advocacy service has received 27 new contacts from members of the public with enquiries or formal concerns about health or social care.

- 21 contacts were about the NHS and 5 of those contacts involved to Social Care. 1 concern was a joint issue about health and social care. 1 concern related to an out of area client and involving another health board.
- 10 of the contacts were general enquiries about the NHS. Enquiries have been mixed in terms of their subject ranging from waiting times for test results, waiting times for operations, waiting times for hospital appointments, GP access and discharge/transfers from hospital.
- 21 advocacy information packs were sent out to people who had contacted the service, 11 authorisation forms were returned during this period and this means that these people will now be receiving advocacy support so that they can pursue a formal complaint. This is in addition to the current 121 complaints we are already supporting. There are also 16 clients awaiting allocation to an advocate.
- New contacts during the month of April were enquiries or concerns about issues such as care home provision, poor communication about diagnosis, access to GP appointments, delayed referrals and poor administration procedures, outpatient appointment cancellations, attitude and manner of consultant, mental health support, end of life care, catheter management, cross border treatment, waiting times for urgent surgery, misdiagnosis, dental care, insufficient care at home, lack of community mental health care, chaperoning arrangements, priority for surgery, environment in A&E, ophthalmology waiting times, poor personal care support in A&E, seeking generalised advocacy support.

- 15 cases were closed last month and these related to
 - delayed cancer surgery
 - contradictory information given in cancer treatment
 - issues about palliative care in hospital
 - care and treatment in A&E
 - 5 year wait for dental extraction
 - access to mental health support
 - concern about attitude of ambulance staff
 - GP surgery appointment problems
 - unnecessary treatment
 - primary care treatment
 - discharge from hospital issues
 - post-operative complications
 - unanticipated death in hospital
 - lack of district nurse support
 - lack of communication about biopsy results
- There were 8 referrals to the Ombudsman in April 2024
- There was 1 home visit in April

2. Representations that we have made or been involved in

We have a duty to make representations to health and social care services on behalf of our population. This may happen when services change or we hear about health and social care performance matters that impact on people's experiences (positively or negatively). We might make these representations via formal letter, in emails or by attending planned service groups/meetings hosted by our health and social care partners.

During April 2024 we have implemented a new CRM system to help us track our representations better and we have been involved in or made representations about:

- Primary Care issues relating to GP surgeries in the Ammanford area, in Pembroke Dock and in St David's
- We have been involved in the Health Board's Clinical Services Plan meetings to represent public perspectives on various services delivered across the 3 counties

- We have represented the interest of disease specific groups in relation to the support that they require from local hospitals to keep them well when their conditions require frequent input in services where there is a shortage of appropriate consultants across Wales
- We have advised the Health Board when there have been premises health and safety concerns raised in hospital sites
- We have queried the transport arrangements for patients attending hospital clinics that take place on the weekends. Whilst these aim to reduce waiting times for those individuals needing investigations, treatment and care, we know it isn't always possible for people to get to places if they don't have their own transport.
- We have also asked the Health Board for clarity on the timings and postal arrangements for appointment letters so that individuals are able to arrange transport. We also know that people need enough advance notice so that they can make travel arrangements and care plans for relatives, thereby making sure that there are fewer wasted appointments in busy hospital clinics.
- We have asked about reporting arrangements for breast screening as we were made aware of some variations across regions in Wales. This was in relation to non-symptomatic women deemed to be at high risk of developing breast cancer but where the national surveillance arrangements were not fully in place through the Breast Test Wales programme.
- We managed safeguarding issues with a Local Authority organization and also made a same-day referral to CIW on the matters raised with us.
- We have also linked in with local authorities in relation to service changes in care homes across 2 counties which affect people using those services
- We have attended meetings and liaised with Health Board personnel in relation to service changes involving mental health sites, GP surgeries and phlebotomy clinics
- We have clarified with the Health Board the arrangements in place for children requiring blood tests and the waiting times

associated with this.

- We have reviewed previous Learning Disability Service changes and asked to meet Health Board colleagues as we are aware of current national campaigns related to certain people with a learning disability receiving care in adult mental health wards.
- We have linked in with Health board managers in relation to people's A&E experiences and we are currently drafting a report on our findings
- We have liaised with the Health Board ahead of a series of ophthalmology site visits. We are doing these visits to speak to people who may be experiencing protracted waits for ophthalmology, to understand the significant impact this has on their lives
- We have also asked the health board to clarify ward visiting arrangements and the information available to people about when they can see their loved ones in hospital because information on this has not been clear.

3. Meetings we have attended

Our Llais staff in West Wales along with our volunteers across the three counties have attended a range of events and meetings linked with health and social care:

- Clinical plan meetings with the Health Board
- Quality and safety meeting with the Health Board
- Meeting with Chief Executive of Health Board
- Meeting with Vice Chair of Health Board
- Meeting with Director of Operations of Health Board
- Putting things Right Welsh Government Stakeholder meeting
- Primary Care team

- Llais Staff conference in Llandrindod Wells
- Launch event for Llais Strategic Plan, held in the Principality Stadium and attended by Eluned Morgan
- Online meeting with Lupus UK
- Care Forum meeting in Parc y Scarlets
- Home care provider forum, on-line meeting
- Strengthening Safeguarding Review meeting
- Meeting with Children's Commissioner
- Extraordinary Public Board meeting in relation to EMRTS
- Amman Gwendraeth Cluster Team meeting

4. Engagement in West Wales

Since April 1st we have attended events across our three counties and engaged with people in their communities. These have included:

- Aberystwyth food kitchen - events for people struggling economically and who may feel socially disadvantaged
- Coffee morning meet up with Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire Lupus Group
- Friends of Tycroes Parks
- Aber vs Arthritis
- Ty Gwyn Salvation Army drop in
- Pater Hall Warm room
- Ceredigion refugee support group
- Llanerch Ladies OAP group
- Pembrokeshire 50+forum
- We hosted 3 online events for people across Wales to have an input into the review of the Putting Things Right process

We continue to increase our community engagement so that people know about Llais and have the opportunity to speak to us.

5. An overview of NHS feedback:

These are some of the things we heard during the month of April:

- People are extremely grateful to the NHS.
- People value warm hubs and those kind of events because they live alone and feel isolated and it supports their mental health
- Telephone appointment systems for GP surgeries are problematic
- People still sometimes feel that GP receptionists are triaging them
- Challenges in pre-booking appointments
- Why is it so difficult to get an appointment when the GP surgery seems to be empty
- “More staff” needed for all services, particularly at the Emergency Department.
- Access to Mental Health Services is a problem.
- Planned care waiting lists being “too long.”
- Issues accessing an NHS dentist.
- Being told by WAST to take a taxi to ED when you are 91yrs old
- Lack of support for carers
- 6year wait for a new hip
- 1.5 hours on the phone to a social worker to find out how to support a family member coming home from hospital
- Unhappy booking a doctor’s appointment to end up seeing a nurse practitioner
- Fantastic treatment, had CT scan, ECG, echo, bloods and cardiologist discussion all on one visit

- Polite and professional ED staff working under difficult conditions
- Lack of orthodontics, children join the list and become adults before they are seen
- Problems with direct funding for carer support
- People needing a little bit of support end up living alone in chaotic conditions and this makes them deteriorate
- Lack of suitable care for people with lupus because of insufficient consultants with appropriate expertise
- Not able to get osteoporosis assessment in another county
- Failing to monitor the effect of disease modifying drugs is putting people at risk
- Healthcare sometimes feeling non existent as patients are pushed from one person to another
- Difficulties in getting to blood tests.
- Problems with repeat prescriptions often having to phone around to get complete supplies
- Lack of mental health support
- Concerns about siting of Drug and Alcohol support services in Llanelli
- Not happy to give name and address on needle exchange programmes

6. What we're doing next

Currently we are still involved in undertaking survey work and visits to ophthalmology clinics

We're planning for our waiting for care project

We're talking a hyperlocal engagement approach to some of our communities and we're planning when we are going to visit groups individuals and communities in our smaller towns and villages across our three counties over the summer and autumn months

If you want us to join you for an event or to hear more about our work or to tell us what your group's experiences are, please contact us so we can join with you.

Thanks

We thank everyone who took the time to share their views and experiences with us about their health and social care services and sharing their ideas with us.

We hope the feedback people have taken the time to share with us influences health and social care services to recognise and value what they do well – and act where they need to as quickly as they can.

Feedback

We would love to hear what you think about this publication, and any suggestions about how we could have improved it, so we can use this to make our future work better.