



Director of Public Health Annual Report 2019

Building a Healthier Gwent



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Aneurin Bevan University Health Board: Lucy Windsor

Aneurin Bevan Gwent Public Health Team:



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Building a Healthier Gwent

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Foreword

The publication of **'Building a Healthier Gwent'** is the start of a conversation about how together we achieve the ambition of people in all communities across Gwent living more of their lives in good health.

The many achievements since the NHS began have not changed the fact that people in some communities in Gwent live 18 years longer in good health than in others. The reason for that 18 year gap is that some people live the kind of healthy lives that prevent heart disease, cancer and lung disease while others don't.

The influences on people's health are complex. The places where we live, work, learn and play are a big influence on our opportunities to live in good health. Being connected to other people as part of a strong, supportive community is good for our health, but we know that 1 in 5 people in Gwent say that they feel lonely. How easy we find it to use facilities and services that help us to stay healthy is important too.

In **'Building a Healthier Gwent'** I have set out the actions that taken together would achieve the ambition of people living more of their lives in good health in all our communities. There are many good examples happening across Gwent already. We need to build on these and all play our part. *The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015* provides the opportunity to develop a new long-term, integrated and collaborative approach to preventing ill health and promoting wellbeing.

Through our conversation I hope we will develop a shared ambition and commitment that if we all do one thing, together we can Build a Healthier Gwent.

Please get involved in the conversation by attending one of the **'Building a Healthier Gwent'** events or through our online survey.



Dr Sarah Aitken,

Director of Public Health & Strategic Partnerships, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

The Ambition

In 2030 the places where we live, work, learn and play make it easier for people in our communities to live healthy, fulfilled lives.

All our children and young people live in smoke free environments and consider not smoking to be the norm. More of our children and young people live in an environment that supports being a healthy weight. We have vibrant, connected communities with people preferring to walk and cycle for local journeys. Families and children are active in our shared open spaces and getting the most out of our abundant, natural environment.

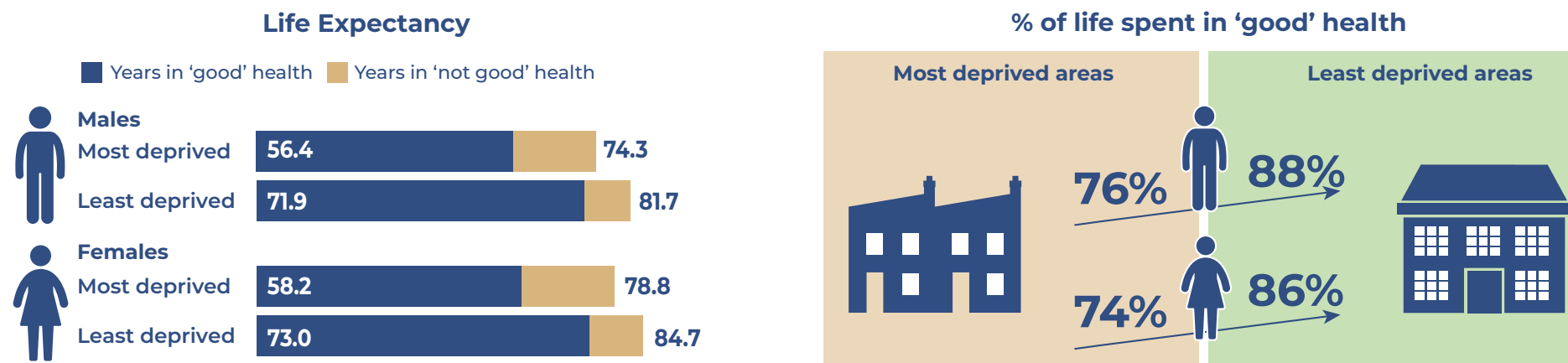
We live, learn and work in strong and mutually supportive, resilient communities - both real and virtual. We are taking concerted action to improve mental wellbeing because we understand that there is no health without good mental health.

All partners are focussing their collective efforts on the main things that create greater equity, and we are starting to see greater equity in the determinants of health. **Building A Healthier Gwent** is at the heart of what we all do.

1 The Challenge

People in some communities in Gwent live more of their life in good health and live longer than in other communities in Gwent (figure 1.1).¹

Figure 1.1 Life expectancy and healthy life expectancy at birth in the most and least deprived areas of Gwent: 2010-14



Source: Public Health Wales NHS Trust, 2016¹

A large proportion of the disability due to disease and premature deaths in the population are because of:



cardiovascular disease, which includes heart attacks and strokes



musculoskeletal disorders which are disorders of the muscles, joints or bones



respiratory disease, such as asthma



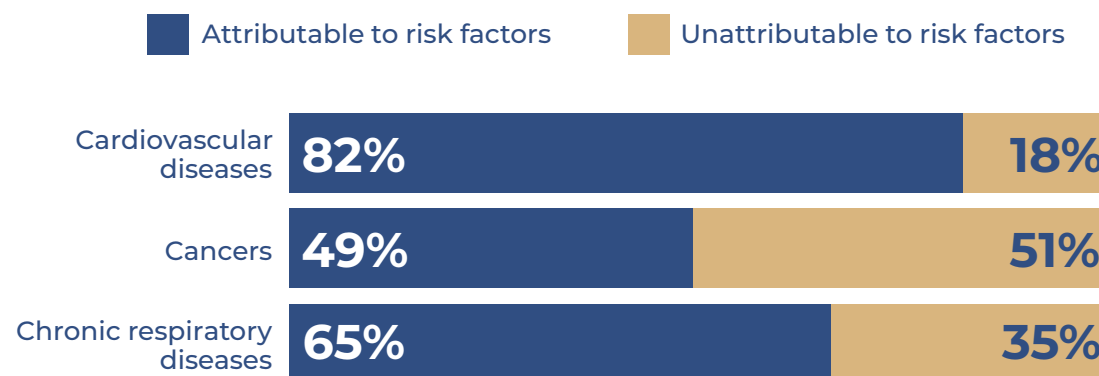
cancers



mental ill health

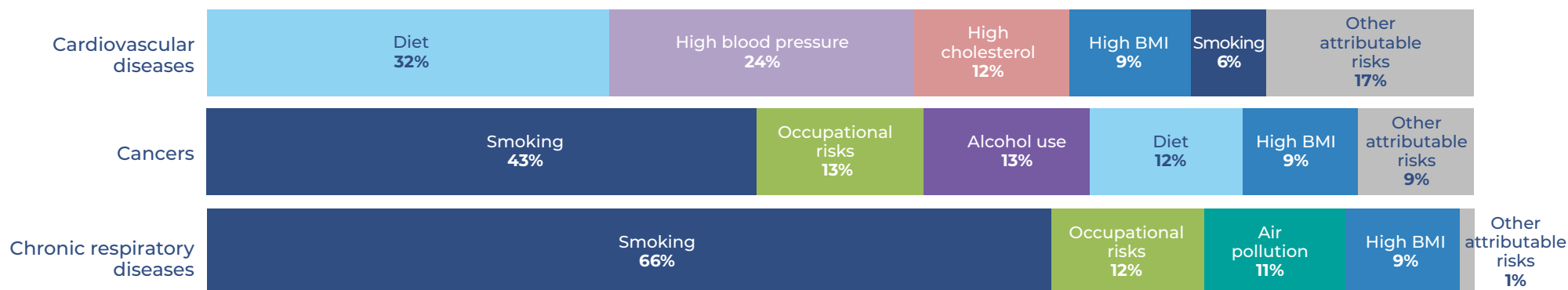
The development of a large percentage of these illnesses can be attributed to preventable risk factors (figure 1.2) including smoking, unhealthy diets and physical inactivity (figure 1.3). The difference in preventable risk factors across Gwent (figure 1.4) explains the major part of the difference in the average number of years people live in good health and how long they live. People living in disadvantaged areas in Gwent have a greater number of unhealthy behaviours.

Figure 1.2 Percentage of 3 major illnesses that can be related to risk factors



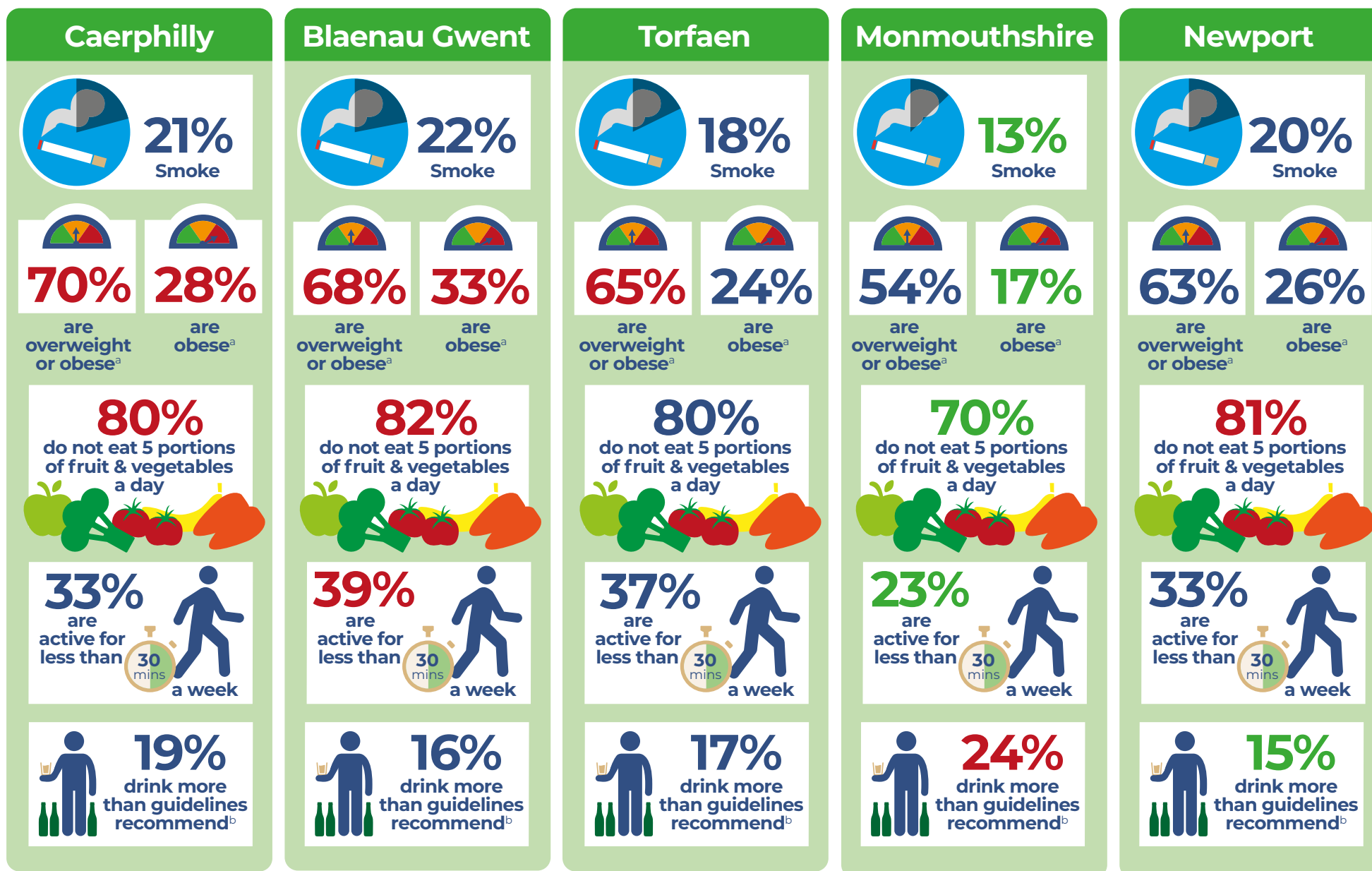
Source: adapted from Public Health Wales Observatory, using Global Health Data Exchange (IHME)²

Figure 1.3 Percentage contribution of risk factors to 3 major illnesses



Source: Public Health Wales Observatory, using Global Health Data Exchange (IHME)²

Figure 1.4 Key behaviours reported on average by adults across Gwent³



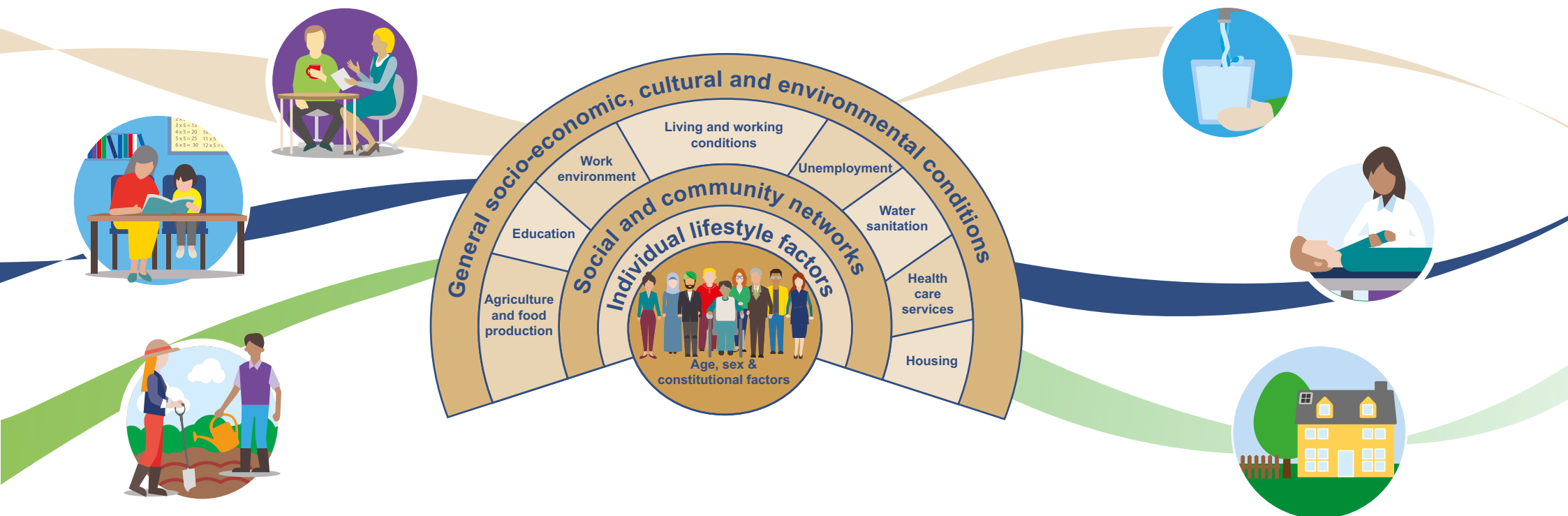
Source: Adapted from Public Health Wales Observatory using National Survey for Wales (WG)
^a Overweight = Body Mass Index of 25 to under 30; obese = Body Mass Index of 30 and over
^b Weekly alcohol consumption above 14 units
 Please note that this infographic uses National Survey for Wales data, not Welsh Health Survey.
 The NSW uses some different definitions and a smaller sample size. They can not be compared.

Figures in green are significantly better than Wales
 Figures in red are significantly worse than Wales

2 The ambition is achievable

There are many wide-ranging influences on the health and wellbeing of the population¹ (figure 2.1). As well as access to and quality of health services, there are equally, if not more important, influences on health and wellbeing.² Our social and community networks, and the physical, social and economic environments around us, directly and indirectly affect our individual 'lifestyle' risk factors.²

Figure 2.1 The determinants of health and well being



Source: adapted from Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991¹

The Marmot report identified 6 guiding principles for achieving greater equity of health:³

1. giving every child the best start in life
2. enabling all children, young people and adults to maximize their capabilities and have control over their lives
3. creating fair employment and good work for all
4. ensuring a healthy standard of living for all
5. creating and developing sustainable places and communities
6. strengthening the role and impact of ill-health prevention.

These 'Marmot Principles' have informed the approach to **Building A Healthier Gwent** set out in this report under three themes of:

- healthy homes, places and spaces,
- healthy communities and
- health promoting services.

The *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015* (figure 2.2) provides the opportunity to develop a new long-term, integrated and collaborative approach to preventing ill health and promoting wellbeing. Some actions are required at a national level, including legislation, but many activities are within our control at a local level.

Figure 2.2 Well-being of Future Generations Act
7 Well-being Goals and 5 Ways of Working



Source: Public Health Network adapted from Welsh Government (2015)

There are many good things going on in Gwent already, as illustrated by the case studies in this report. To achieve the ambition of **Building A Healthier Gwent** we need to build on what is already happening so that the things that help people to live healthier lives happen systematically everywhere.

3 Healthy homes, places and spaces

The ambition:

In 2030 the places where we live, work, learn and play make it easier for people in our communities to live healthy, fulfilled lives.

All our children and young people live in smoke free environments and consider not smoking to be the norm.

More of our children and young people live in an environment that supports being a healthy weight. We have vibrant, connected communities with people preferring to walk and cycle for local journeys. Families and children are active in our shared open spaces and getting the most out of our abundant, natural environment.

Places, spaces and buildings can create opportunities for people to be more physically active, feel safe and secure, use facilities and services, socialise and play (figure 3.1).¹

‘Creating and developing sustainable places and communities’ and ‘ensuring a healthy standard of living for all’ are two of the Marmot Principles.

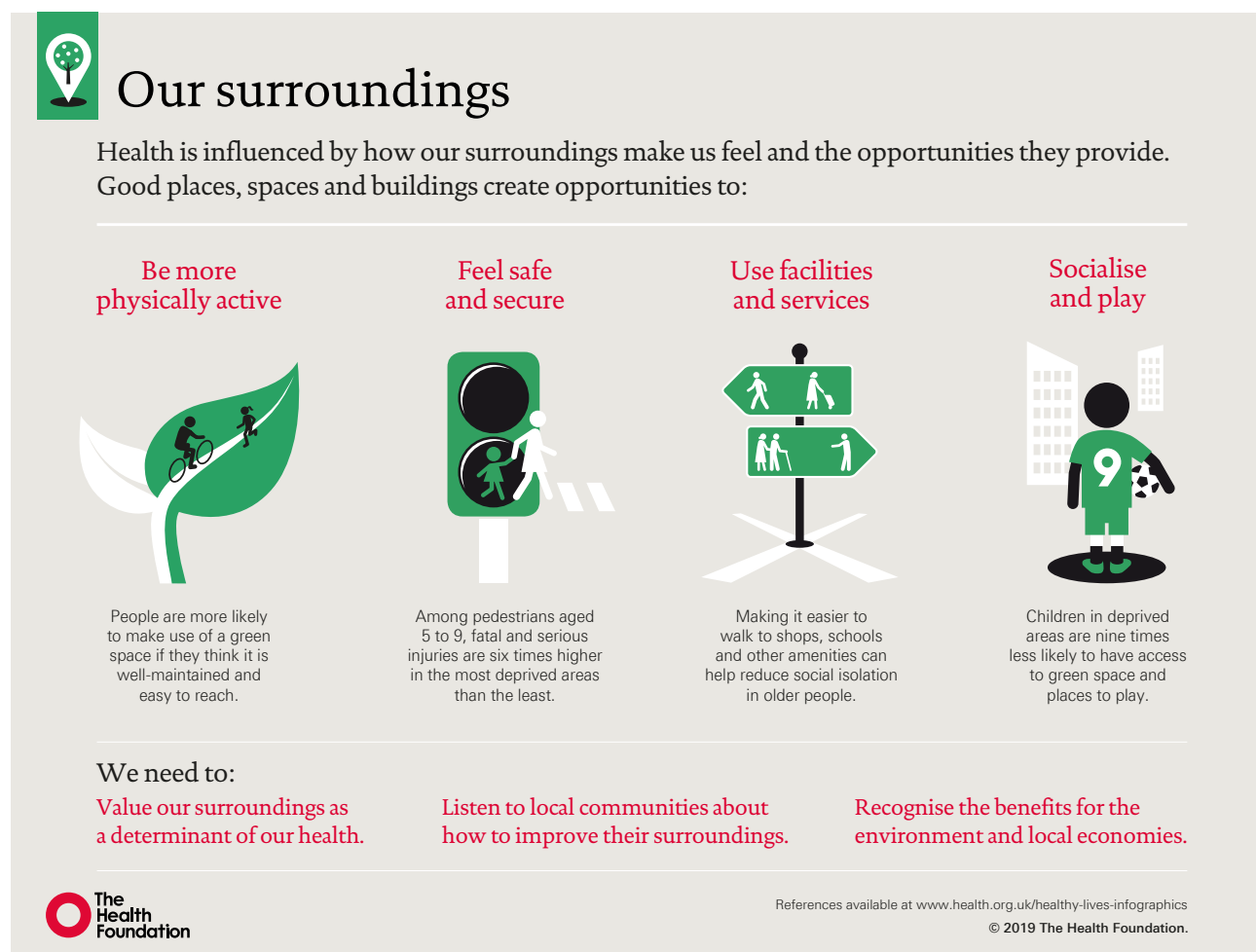
A healthy and sustainable transport system combined with well-designed streets, public and green spaces are all essential elements (figure 3.2). A healthy transport system should seek to minimise air, noise and light pollution and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.²

Key Message

Living in a neighbourhood that enables walking, cycling and public transport use makes it much easier to achieve the 150 minutes of weekly physical activity that is recommended for adults to maintain good health.³



Figure 3.1

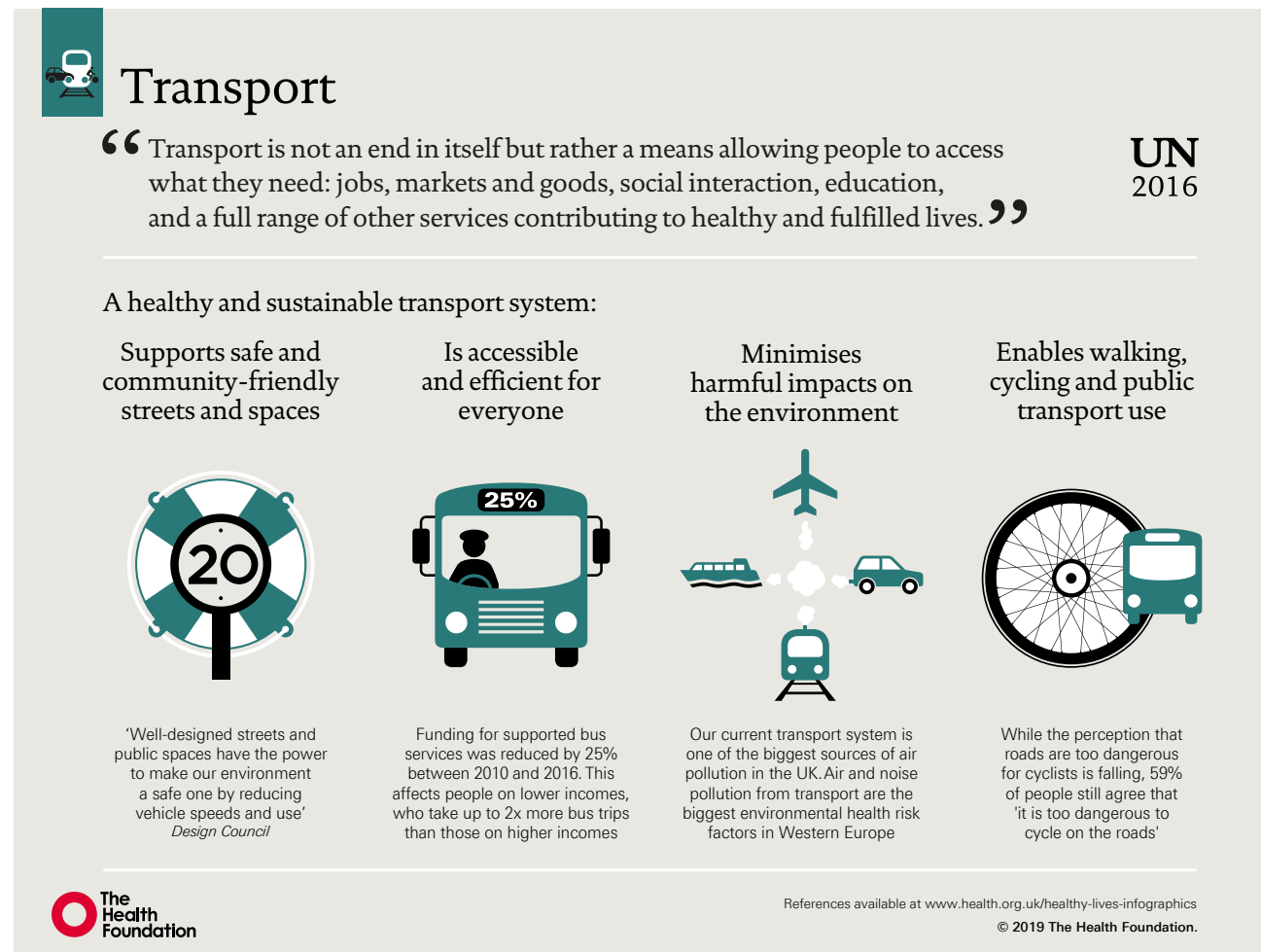


Air pollution has direct harmful effects on people's cardiovascular and respiratory health. Individuals and communities who are not in good health can be disproportionately affected by exposure to air pollution.

Current UK Local Air Quality Monitoring regulations do not take account of differences in the health of different communities. A new approach of combining health and air pollution risk assessments would encourage consideration of the impact of air pollution in a population health context across Gwent.⁴

The *Public Health (Wales) Act 2017* means that smoking in public playgrounds and on school and NHS hospital grounds will become illegal. Enforcement of this legislation will make these environments smoke free. This will be a significant step towards the ambition that more of our children and young people live in a smoke free environment and consider not smoking to be the norm.

Figure 3.2



The *Public Health (Wales) Act 2017* has also introduced a new legal requirement to conduct health impact assessments on all public sector policies and plans, including Local Development Plans, which will help to achieve healthier places, spaces and buildings across Gwent by facilitating:³

- An inclusive infrastructure that prioritises walking and cycling and improves road safety
- Accessible and well-maintained green infrastructure, open green spaces and blue spaces
- Local food growing and retail environments that enhance access to healthy food choices
- Community, health and social care services provided from local facilities
- Low levels of air pollution
- Building design that promotes health and wellbeing.

Building design includes healthy homes that are safe, warm and suitable for individuals' needs. People who live in homes which are cold, damp and unsafe are more at risk of cancers, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, arthritis, poor mental wellbeing, falls and injuries (figure 3.3).⁵

Improvements in the warmth and energy efficiency of homes have a positive impact on the health of people with a low income, particularly when targeted at older people or those with health conditions (figure 3.4). Home adaptations and modifications prevent falls and injuries, enable everyday activities and improve mental wellbeing. Money spent on preventing and moving people out of homelessness results in a return on investment across the public sector. The biggest opportunity for a return on investment in healthy homes for everyone, would come from targeting vulnerable groups most in need, through closer integration and collaboration across the whole public sector.⁵

Figure 3.3

People who live in homes which are cold, damp and unsafe are more at risk of:

> poor physical and mental health and well-being



> cancers, circulatory, cardiovascular and respiratory ill-health



> more falls and serious injury

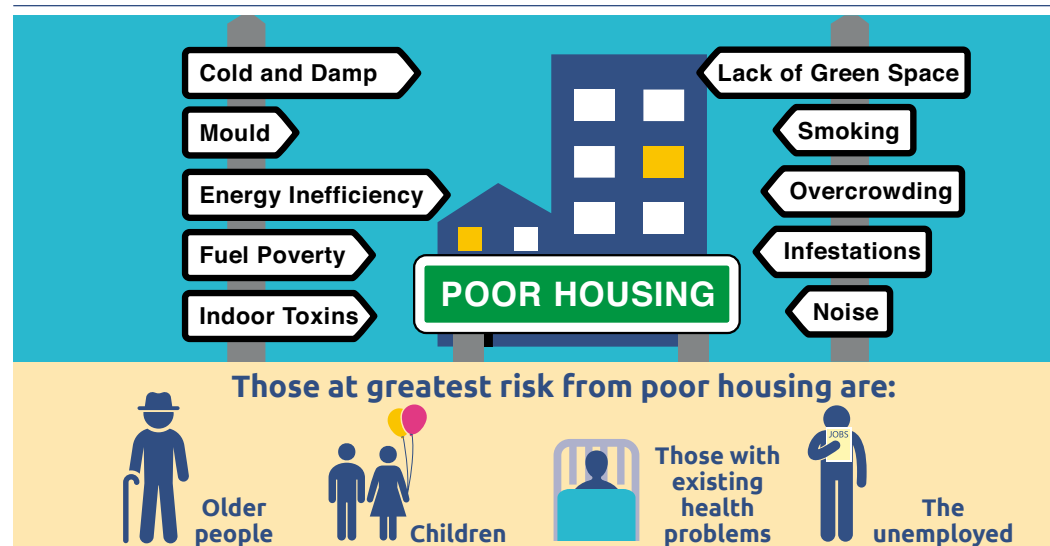


> arthritic and rheumatic conditions



Source: Public Health Wales NHS Trust, 2019⁵

Figure 3.4



Source: Public Health Wales NHS Trust, 2019⁵

Case study: Newport Green and Safe Network

As part of the work of the Newport Public Services Board, Newport's Green and Safe Network is an example of how organisations are working together to ensure Newport is a greener, healthier and safer place where all communities have easy access to quality greenspace for health, play and recreation.

A film demonstrating the work is available:
<http://www.newport.gov.uk/oneNewport/Well-being-Plan/Green-and-safe-spaces.aspx>

Case study: The APPROPRIATE and Rightsizing Study

A study has identified the housing solutions which would support older people in Gwent to live happily, healthily, safely and independently in later life. The study was undertaken on behalf of the Gwent Health, Social Care and Housing Partnership, and involved the public and service providers in identifying the housing issues older people face and the potential solutions. Work is now underway to implement the recommendations from the study in an integrated, collaborative way across Gwent.



4 Healthy communities

The ambition:

We live, learn and work in strong and mutually supportive, resilient communities - both real and virtual. We are taking concerted action to improve mental wellbeing because we understand that there is no health without good mental health.

'Community' describes the relationships, bonds, identities and interests that join people together.¹ Taking part in community life, having social connections and a voice in local decisions all have a positive impact on a person's health and wellbeing. 'Creating and developing sustainable places and communities' is one of the Marmot Principles. All communities have health assets (figure 4.1) that can contribute positively to the health and wellbeing of its members (figure 4.2).

Key Message

The fact that 1 in 5 people in Gwent report feeling lonely suggests that many people are not benefiting from the health assets in their community.

Figure 4.1

Public Health England

Healthmatters



Source: Public Health England, 2018¹

Figure 4.2



Connecting with people around us is one of the *Five Ways to Wellbeing*, the wellbeing equivalent of ‘five fruit and vegetables a day.’ These are five simple things that can be undertaken in daily life to improve and support mental wellbeing:



Connect – spending time with people around you



Being active – spending time being physically active by choosing something you enjoy and which suits your level of mobility and fitness



Take notice – being aware of the world around you, and being in the present moment, i.e. ‘mindfulness’



Keep learning – learning new/rediscovers old skills to give you a sense of achievement and a new confidence



Give to others – from a small act such as a smile/thank you/kind word to giving your time by volunteering

For more information:
www.publichealthwales.org/gwentfiveways

Rhwydwaith Pum Ffordd at Les Gwent

 Gwent Five Ways to Wellbeing Network

Case Study: Ffrind i mi (Friend of mine)



Ffrind i mi (or *Friend of mine*) is an initiative run by Aneurin Bevan University Health Board to try to help anyone who feels lonely or isolated to reconnect with their community. Volunteer befrienders are members of the public who spare about an hour a week to support someone who feels lonely by visiting for a cup of tea and a chat, making a telephone call etc.

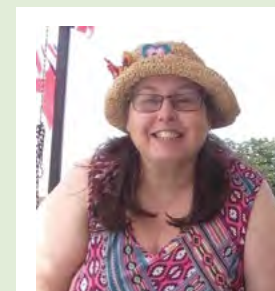
For more information: <https://www.ffrindimi.co.uk/>



Case Study: Screening Champions

A Screening Champions training programme is being rolled out across Gwent. Individuals have come forward to become Screening Champions and share their learning with friends, family, work colleagues and local community.

One Screening Champion, Sian Northey from the Caerphilly Parent Network, presented at a Women's Event in Lansbury Park in Caerphilly and ran a quiz on cervical screening to raise awareness on the Cervical Screening Wales programme.



Sian said that "after providing the answers to the quiz, some people were surprised at what they didn't know about the programme, which gave me the opportunity to deliver some clear messages, and reassure people."

After this event, one of the participants told Sian they were less nervous and more likely to attend their smear tests, and another who had missed her test had decided to re-book it.

The Gwent Integrated Well-being Network programme has been established to systematically build on the unique strengths and health assets that exist in all communities across Gwent. The programme will connect people who live, work and volunteer in the same place, building on the community's strengths to enable people to have more control over their own health and wellbeing (figure 4.3), which is one of the Marmot Principles.

Figure 4.3



Schools and colleges

Schools and colleges have a huge influence on the health and wellbeing of the children and young people they are educating. Their environment and ethos are as important as their curriculum and policies in promoting the health and wellbeing of children and young people. A whole school or college approach to health and wellbeing is needed. This requires students, parents, staff and governors to work together as an educational community across both the taught curriculum and the wide range of other activities that schools and colleges engage in (figure 4.4).

Half of mental health problems start by the age of 14,² making it particularly important that there is a whole school or college approach to promoting positive mental and emotional wellbeing, building resilience and detecting problems early (figure 4.5).³

Figure 4.4 A whole school approach

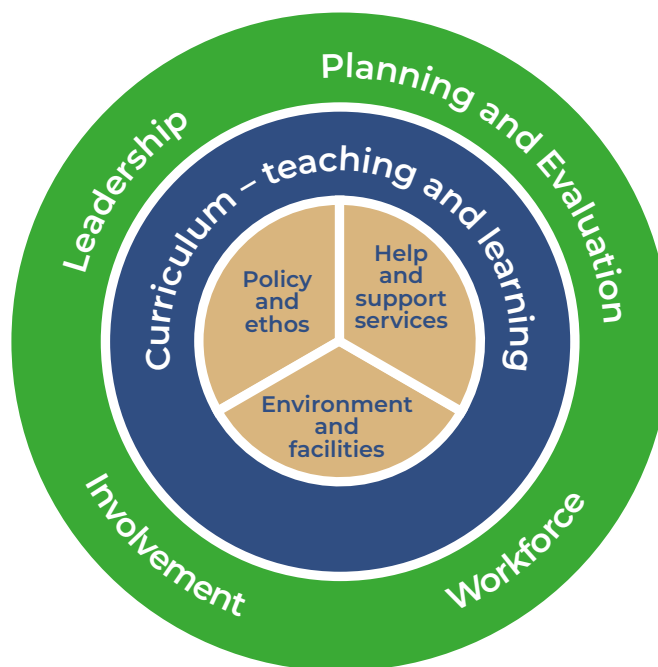


Figure 4.5 Promoting a whole school and college approach to emotional health and wellbeing



Source: Public Health England, 2015³

The Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Scheme promotes a whole school approach to wellbeing. Over 35 schools in Gwent have already achieved the National Quality Award, the highest standard for Healthy Schools. Building on the existing programme across Gwent to support all schools to achieve the National Quality Award would significantly contribute to promoting the health and wellbeing of the children and young people in Gwent.

Case Study: Ebbw Fawr Learning Community 'Couch to 5K'



Ebbw Fawr Learning Community has used the 'Couch to 5K' programme to inspire pupils and teachers to become active, improve their fitness levels and build their confidence. Over 100 people turned up for the first session, with many remaining committed to the 9-week programme, resulting in more than 50 completing the popular 5K Park Run at Parc Bryn Bach in Tredegar.

"I can't even begin to describe how incredibly proud I was of the girls completing the run – and they did it with huge smiles on their faces! I actually became quite emotional watching them cross the finish line; they had pushed themselves to their absolute limits and achieved what they thought to be almost impossible 9-weeks ago. Their confidence in not just their running, but everyday life, has soared as a result of the Couch to 5K program, and I'm thrilled to have been a part of their journey."

Victoria Morris, Us Girls Instructor

Workplaces

As well as providing an income, being in work can promote wellbeing by giving us a sense of purpose and of being part of a community. 'Creating fair employment and good work for all' and 'ensuring a healthy standard of living for all' are two of the Marmot Principles. Having a healthy workforce has wide benefits (figure 4.6).

The quality of the work and the work environment is crucial. As well as being safe, workplaces need to promote physical and mental wellbeing, and support people with health conditions to be in work through good employment practices.

Figure 4.6



Source: Public Health England, 2018*

Case study: Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board recognises that staff experience shapes patient experience, and that staff need to feel healthy and well so that when in work they can give their energy and attention to caring for others.

"The Health Board recognises that to continue to provide great services we need our great people to feel great"

The Health Board's new Employee Experience Framework is based on 6 'pillars', informed by the evidence of what works to promote employee wellbeing.



5 Health promoting services

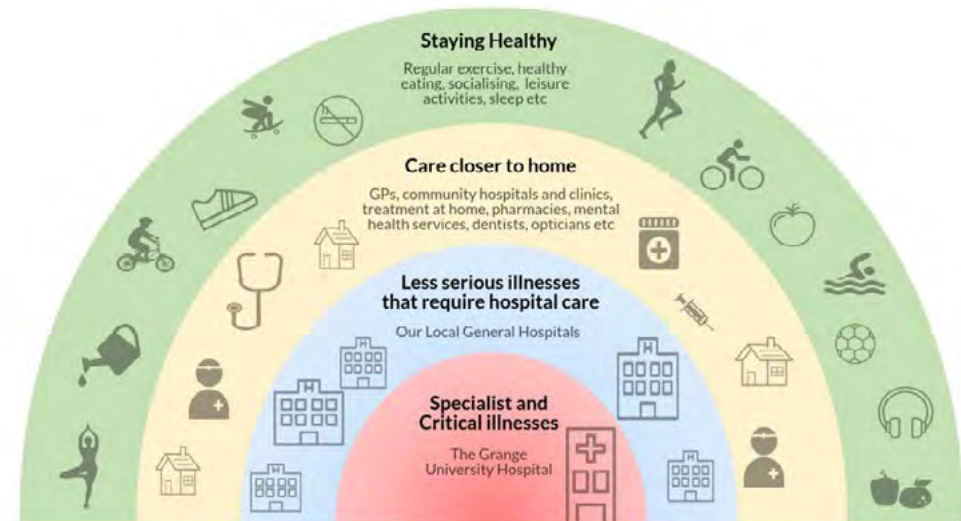
The ambition:

All partners are focussing their collective efforts on the main things that create greater equity, and we are starting to see greater equity in the determinants of health. **Building a Healthier Gwent** is at the heart of what we all do.

To achieve the ambition of **Building a Healthier Gwent**, services will need to be re-orientated towards prevention, supporting people's wellbeing by stopping problems arising in the first place, not just responding to problems when they happen. 'Strengthening the role and impact of ill health prevention' is a Marmot Principle. To create greater equity of health across Gwent, services will have to be delivered systematically and at population scale, and be proportionate to the needs of the community.

The ambition of **Building a Healthier Gwent** is consistent with the vision of *A Healthier Wales*¹ that 'everyone in Wales should have longer, healthier and happier lives' supported by an equitable 'wellness system'. It is consistent with the Gwent Clinical Futures Programme too (figure 5.1), which is moving care closer to home and enhancing support to people to stay healthy.

Figure 5.1 Gwent Clinical Futures model



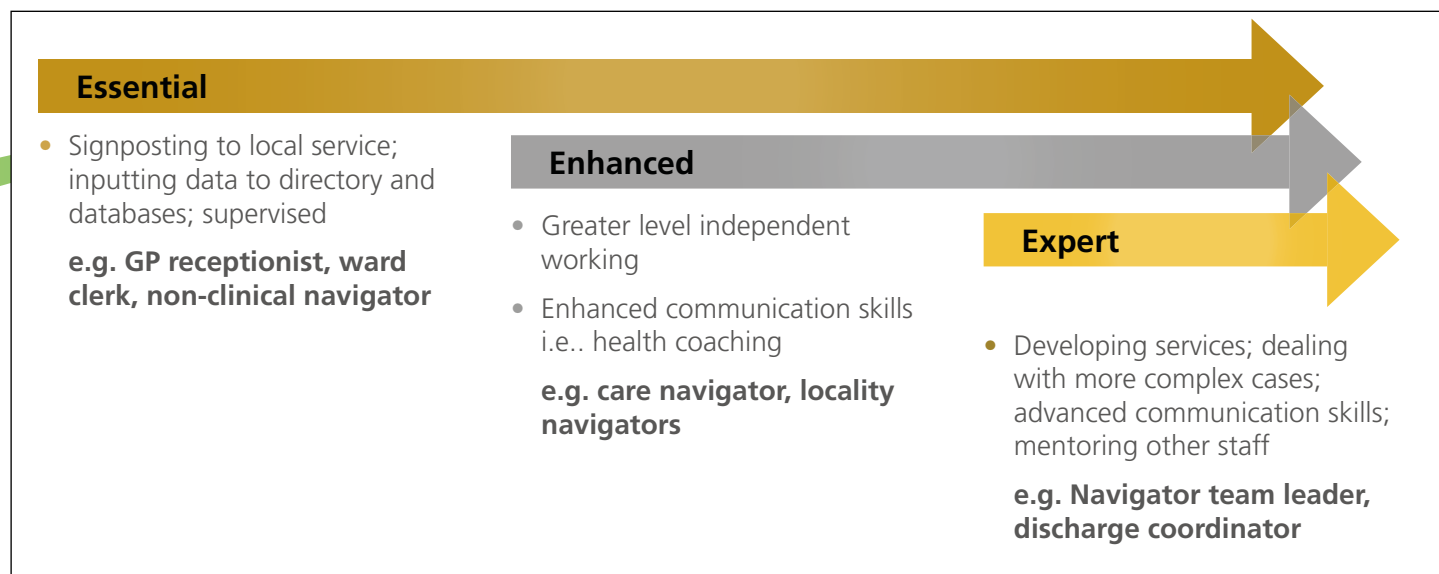
Source: Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

Making the connections

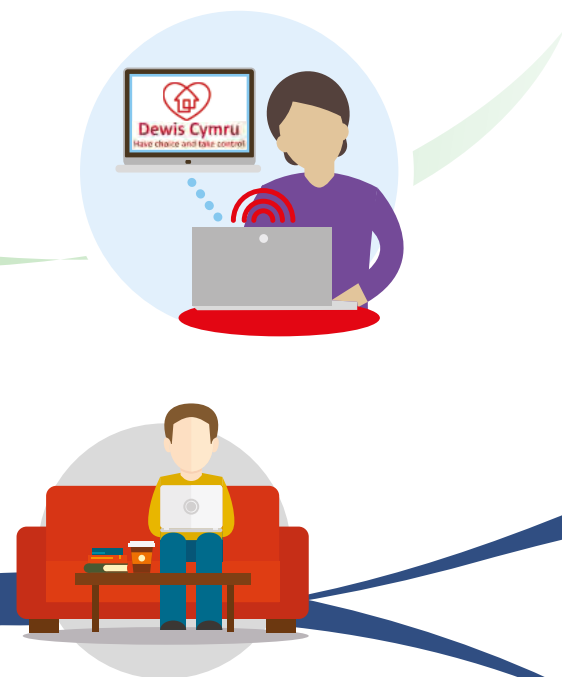
To enable people to live longer in good health, it needs to be easy for them to access information, advice, assistance and services. Increasingly people are choosing to access the help they need through digital routes, particularly using their phone. Digital help does not suit everyone, and there is an important role for connectors (link workers) who can help make the connections for people. Everyone who undertakes a connector role needs to be competent to support people in a holistic way to appropriately find the help they need in their community, with people employed as link workers having a higher level of competence (figure 5.2).

We have many examples of connector roles across Gwent to build on, including Community Health Champions, Community Connectors, Wellbeing Advisors, Social Prescribers and Care Navigators. The Integrated Well-being Network Programme is making a significant contribution to building on these foundations. Improving the connections between people and the help available to them will make the most of every pound being spent on public services in Gwent.

Figure 5.2. Care navigation competency framework



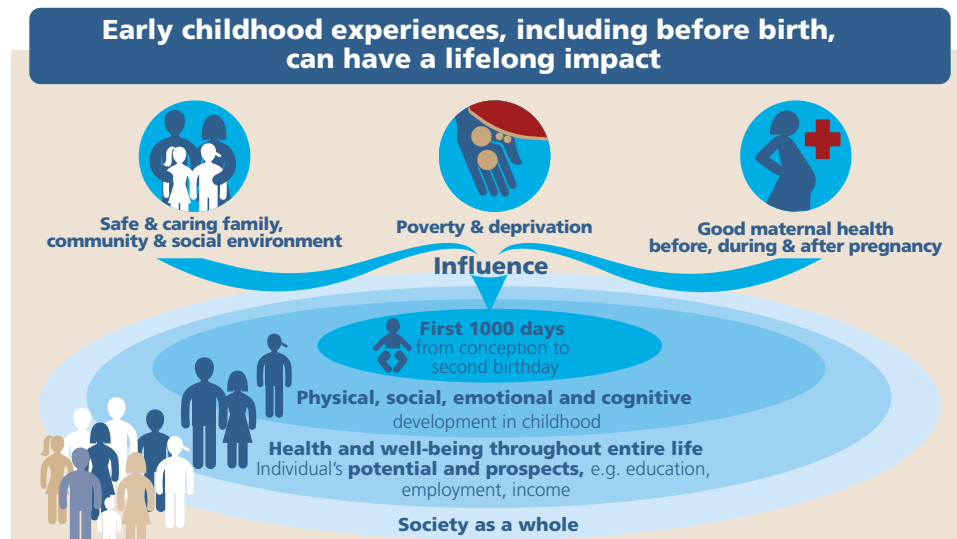
Source: Health Education England, 2016²



Giving every child the best start in life

'Giving every child the best start in life' is the most important Marmot Principle. Early childhood experiences, including before birth, can have a lifelong impact (figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3



Source: Public Health Wales NHS Trust, 2016³



Children who live in poverty are at higher risk of dying early, developing obesity or experiencing ill health (figure 5.4).

Figure 5.4



Source: Public Health Wales NHS Trust, 2016³

Figure 5.5

Women who smoke while pregnant put their unborn child at risk of miscarriage, premature birth and low birthweight (figure 5.5). Providing women with dedicated smoking cessation support as part of their ante-natal care is proven to help women to give up smoking whilst pregnant.



Source: Public Health Wales NHS Trust, 2016³

Providing specialist weight management services for pregnant women is important, because women who are obese are at greater risk of needing medical intervention when having a baby and on average spend 5 days more in hospital.⁴ Recording and monitoring a woman's weight from the beginning of pregnancy is essential to ensure women are offered help to control their weight if they need it.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are experiences that occur in childhood, ranging from verbal, mental, sexual and physical abuse, to being raised in a household where domestic violence, alcohol abuse, parental separation or drug abuse has occurred (figure 5.6). Evidence shows children who experience stressful and poor quality childhoods are more likely to develop health-harming and anti-social behaviours, more likely to perform poorly in school, more likely to be involved in crime and ultimately less likely to be a productive member of society.⁵

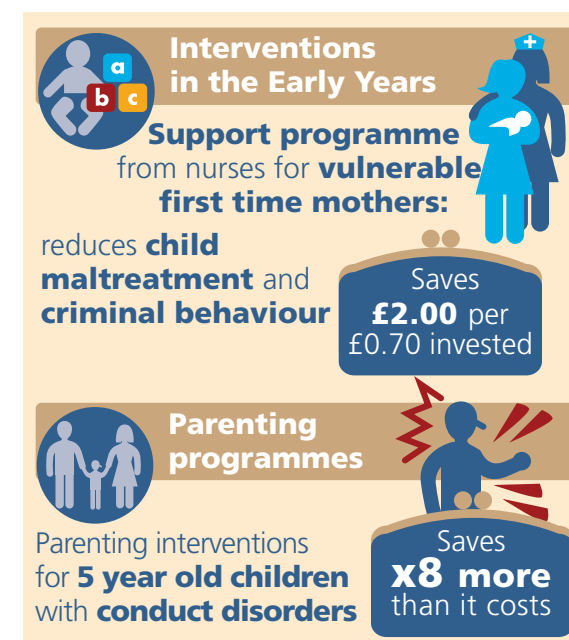
Organisations and professionals need to be aware of the impact of ACEs and how to intervene to prevent or reduce their impact. By making the connections to intensive parenting support and specialist emotional and mental health services that are trauma informed, all professionals can play a part in minimising the impact of ACEs and build resilience (figures 5.7 and 5.8).

Figure 5.6



Source: Public Health Wales NHS Trust, 2016³

Figure 5.7

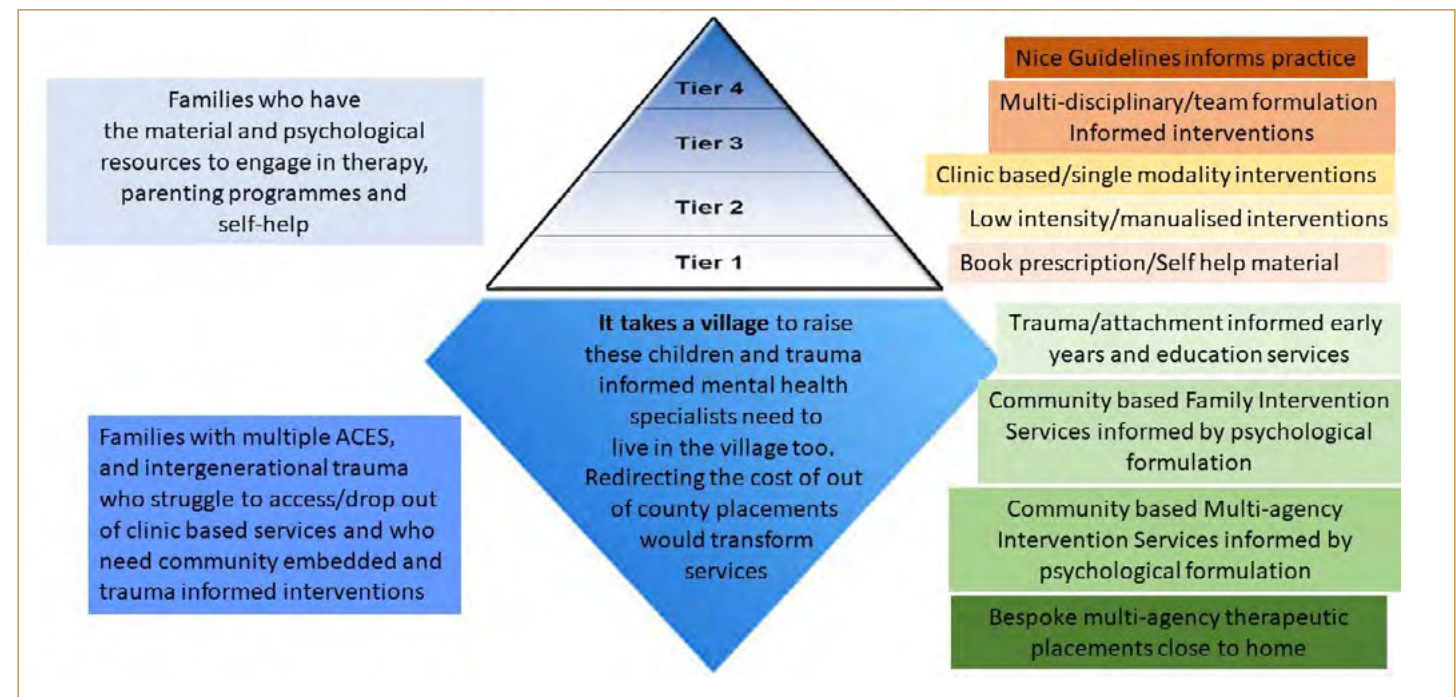


Source: Public Health Wales NHS Trust, 2016³

The whole system approach to childhood and adolescent mental health services ('Iceberg' model) being implemented across Gwent, is a transformational service development to improve outcomes for children and young people with emotional and mental health needs, including those who have been exposed to ACEs (figure 5.8).

Preventing unwanted pregnancies is an important part of preventing ACEs. Providing easy access to contraception services including long acting reversible contraception (LARC) and emergency contraception is a core part of preventing ACEs.

Figure 5.8 The 'Iceberg' Model: A whole systems approach to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services



Source: Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

Figure 5.9



Source: Public Health Wales NHS Trust, 2016³

The *Early Years Pathfinder Programme* is an opportunity to develop a systematic approach to providing the best start in life for all children, and has the potential to be a core building block for **Building A Healthier Gwent** by focusing on the things that work (figure 5.9).

The *Healthy Child Wales Programme* provides a platform for ensuring all families and children get the help they need from the time of conception to a child's 7th birthday. As part of the programme, Health Visitors make contact with all families at key times, and provide additional support for some families when needed, including initiating support from other services.

Being ready for school is very important for a child's future.⁴ The regular assessment provided by Health Visitors as part of the *Healthy Child Wales Programme* is crucial to identifying children who need additional support because their development is falling behind. Early years' education, supported by language and communication services, can make the difference to a child's development and their readiness for school.

Parenting support programmes help parents to develop strategies to build strong attachments with their children and to promote their development. Historically, parenting support programmes have tended to be made available once problems occur. To give every child the best start in life, parenting support needs to be made available to all families in all of our communities throughout childhood and adolescence.

Health promoting services in school

Health promoting services in school work best if they provide a range of help and support services within the context of a whole school approach to promoting the health and wellbeing of children and young people (figure 4.4 and 4.5). Others can help schools to develop the knowledge and skills of children and young people about risks to health and how to reduce them. There are good examples of this happening across Gwent already which need to be built on. One example is the *JustB Smokefree Programme*, which trains 12 and 13 year olds to be smokefree ambassadors. Another is *Schoolbeat*, the Police All Wales School Liaison Programme, which focuses on drug and substance misuse, personal safety and positive social behaviour. A further example is the *Health and Well-being: A Guide to Working with Young People* resource (figure 5.10).



The school nursing service has an important health promotion role in schools. When children first start school, the school nursing service provides the *Healthy Child Wales Programme*, including vision and growth screening, hearing impairment screening, the *Child Measurement Programme* and immunisation. School nurses provide additional support for some children and young people when needed, and can make the connections to support from other services. Children and young people value having contact with their school nurse and would welcome a greater role for the school nurse in addressing emotional and mental health related issues in schools.⁶

Figure 5.10

The *Child Measurement Programme for Wales* provides the opportunity for all children to be weighed and measured when they start school, enabling steps to be taken to help a child regain a healthy weight if they are overweight or obese. To support children to be a healthy weight, catering services in schools need to make it easy to drink water and eat healthy food. To encourage children to be physically active for 60 minutes every day, in addition to schools providing physical education lessons, leisure services and sports clubs in the local community can help schools to provide a broad range of extra-curricular activities that enable children and young people to be physically active.

Making Every Contact Count

There are thousands of contacts between professionals and the public every day across Gwent, providing the opportunity for *Making Every Contact Count* to support people to make behaviour changes to improve their health and wellbeing (figure 5.11).

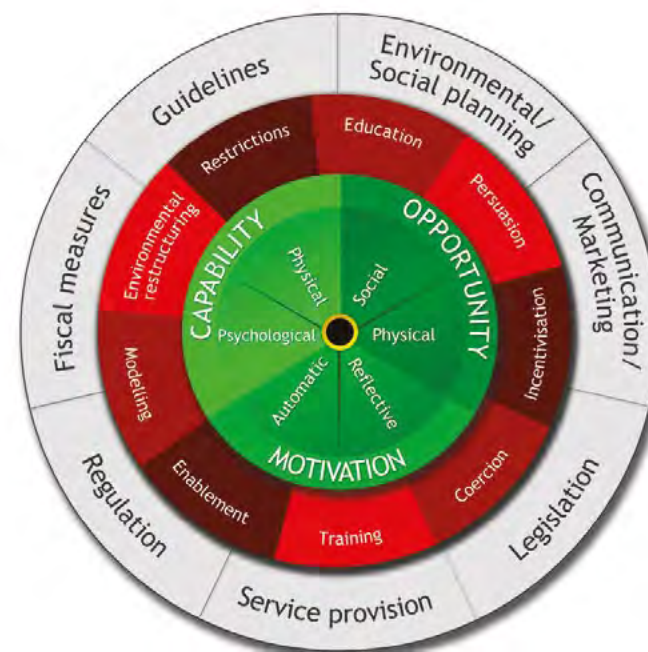
Professionals can give people the knowledge, skills, confidence and motivation to make a behaviour change (figure 5.12). When *Making Every Contact Count*, professionals need to recognise that people have different levels of knowledge, skills and confidence (health literacy) and that the physical and social environment that someone lives in may make it difficult to change their behaviour.

Professionals need training to give them the confidence and motivation to Make Every Contact Count, and they need the opportunity of sufficient time to have the conversation. Creating that time is of particular importance when a person has reason to consider making changes to their lifestyle because they are about to have an operation or have had a health scare.

Figure 5.11



Figure 5.12



Source: Michie, Atkins and West⁷

Smoking cessation services

Smokers are more likely to quit if they have support (figure 5.13). Using smoking cessation medicines increases the chance of a smoker successfully quitting smoking. All who are taking advantage of NHS funded licensed stop smoking medication should also be getting help from *Help Me Quit* services, either real or virtual.

To encourage more smokers to make a quit attempt, we should use our local knowledge and connections to enhance *Help Me Quit* campaigns and to increase referrals to *Help Me Quit* services. One size does not fit all, and we need to do more to tailor *Help Me Quit* services to suit different population groups, including people with an enduring mental illness, those with a smoking related illness, and those waiting for an operation.

Figure 5.13



Source: Public Health Wales NHS Trust²

Case study: Help me Quit

“There must be loads of people like me, who need help to stop smoking” says Robert, aged 72, from Blackwood.

Since starting smoking in the mid-80s, Robert made his first quit attempt after he was told by his Consultant that he needed to be a non-smoker to have a surgical procedure. Robert accessed free NHS help to stop smoking at his local community pharmacy in February 2018. Nine months on, Robert is still smoke free, has saved over £1,200 and is now on the waiting list to have his surgical procedure.



Robert rated his experience with the pharmacy as first class, saying *“what Jack (my pharmacist) has done for me, I will never be able to thank him enough. Without any pressure, Jack explained to me how I would achieve being a non-smoker. He put it in such a nice way, and was offering a number of things like patches etc”*.

Weight management services

The *Healthy Weight: Healthy Wales* strategy is expected to set standards for weight management services for people who are overweight (level 2) or obese (level 3 and 4). To meet these standards will require investment to provide access to local services for people in all communities, plus access to more specialist services for those who need them. To help people manage their weight it is important that we increase the proportion of people who have their current weight recorded in their patient record when they attend NHS services. This could be by a professional, but there is the potential for people to do it for themselves too. Having an up-to-date record of their weight would help people to realise when they are gaining weight and enable them to seek help from weight management services when they need it.

Exercise schemes

There are already programmes that encourage people to be more active across Gwent, including the *Couch to 5K* programme, the *Parkrun* programme and the *Daily Mile* in schools. We need to build on these and extend them across Gwent to enable people in all of our communities to be more active more often, taking advantage of opportunities such as the *Healthy and Active Fund*. The *National Exercise Referral Scheme*, the *Cardiac Rehabilitation Programme* and the *Pulmonary Rehabilitation Programme* provide the opportunity for people with health conditions to exercise under qualified supervision and more could be done to enable all those who would benefit to take advantage of these programmes.



Disease prevention services

Detecting disease early can help people to live longer and to improve their quality of life, as treatment started early is likely to be more effective and less intensive. Heart disease and strokes can be prevented by identifying people who are at high risk and offering them support to make behaviour changes and medication if indicated.⁸

The *Living Well Living Longer* programme (the Inverse Care Law programme) is running in the parts of Gwent with the highest levels of heart disease. There is scope to build on the role of the Wellbeing Advisors to support people at high risk of heart disease or a stroke in all of our communities to make behaviour changes.

In Wales there are screening programmes for breast, cervical and bowel cancer, diabetic retinopathy and abdominal aortic aneurysms (AAA). We need to work together to achieve more equal uptake of these programmes by people in all our communities because, historically, uptake is highest in communities that already live longer in good health.

Case study: Living Well Living Longer Wellbeing Advisors

Wellbeing Advisors undertake a Health Check with patients to assess their risk of heart disease, stroke and diabetes. The Wellbeing Advisors provide information and support tailored to specific needs and preferences to help them make changes to their lifestyle to improve their health.



For further information:
<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/866/page/89820/>

Mr P, aged 62, was found to be at high risk of heart disease. The Wellbeing Advisor worked with him over several months, supporting Mr P to set goals to improve his health and lose weight. He improved his diet by swapping biscuits and cakes for fruit. Mr P also increased his physical activity, starting with walking to the local shop and then gradually walking for longer.

Preventing infectious disease

Infectious diseases are a major health and economic burden in Wales. Rates of tuberculosis (TB), some blood borne viruses, HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are increasing.³

In Gwent we have had recent outbreaks of measles, which is a vaccine preventable disease. We have an extensive flu immunisation programme, but the low uptake of this vaccine means that every winter flu causes a lot of serious illness and deaths. We need to do more to increase uptake of free NHS vaccines by those who are eligible, to protect themselves and to protect others by stopping the spread of serious infectious diseases.

Doing more across Gwent to promote safe sex and strengthening contact tracing would improve prevention of STIs. The Gwent C-Card scheme provides free condoms for young people aged 14-24, to encourage their use and to raise awareness of NHS sexual health services. We need to do more to make this scheme accessible to all young people in all communities across Gwent.

Now that we have a new effective treatment, the World Health Organization has set an ambition to eliminate Hepatitis C. To do this we now need to try to contact all the people who were diagnosed with Hepatitis C before the new treatment was available and offer the treatment to them. In addition, we need to make the test widely available to people who are at risk of Hepatitis C, to identify those who have the infection and offer them the treatment.

The number of cases of TB is increasing in some population groups in Gwent, and TB services need to evolve to become better tailored to meet the needs of those populations.



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Contact us

Web: www.wales.nhs.uk/HealthierGwent

Email: AdminVH_ABGPHT@wales.nhs.uk

Tel.: 01633 261448

