



Hyrwyddwyr Cymunedol Nye Nye's Community Champions



Issue 29 October 2025

Welcome to your October Newsletter



October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. All breasts are different. It is important to get to know how your breasts look and feel normally because this will help you notice any changes that are different.



Breast changes to look out for:

- Lumps
- Change in size or shape
- Puckering/dimpling
- Nipple changes
- Nipple discharge
- Nipple rash
- Swelling



Although uncommon, men can get breast cancer so it is important that men are breast aware too.

For more information on breast cancer awareness, screening, and support services, please visit:
<https://abuhb.nhs.wales/news/new-s/breast-cancer-awareness-month-gwent-residents-urged-to-take-action/>

World Menopause Day



World Menopause Day is held every year on 18th October. The purpose of the day is to raise awareness of the menopause and the support options available. Did you know that the Health Board offers Menopause Awareness sessions run by an Advanced Nurse Practitioner? For more information or to attend a session, please contact us on 01495 768645 or OAKReferrals.ABB@wales.nhs.uk



Menopause Champions Transforming Care Across Gwent

Patients across Gwent are now benefiting from improved menopause care, thanks to an innovative project led by Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.



The Menopause Champions Project, launched in June 2024, is reshaping how menopause support is delivered in GP practices. The initiative ensures that people experiencing menopause receive consistent, compassionate, and evidence-based care from their primary care teams.

Spearheaded by Jayne Forrester-Paton, Menopause and Sexual and Reproductive Health Specialist Doctor, Dr Michelle Olver, Clinical Lead of the Menopause Team, and Nikki Noble, Nurse Consultant in Menopause, the project equips clinicians with the latest knowledge and tools to support patients through every stage of menopause. To date, 41 GP practices across Gwent have a dedicated Menopause Champion, a clinician specially trained to offer expert advice and care. This means patients can expect more informed consultations and access to a wider range of treatment options, including both hormonal and non-hormonal therapies.

Clinicians are also supported by a network of peers and menopause specialists, helping them stay confident and up to date when managing more complex cases.

Dr Jayne Forrester-Paton said:

"We're proud of the success of the Menopause Champions Project so far. It's helping to ensure menopause is treated with the same care and attention as any other health issue.

"We're continuing to grow the programme, with plans to expand educational sessions, introduce virtual case discussions, and strengthen links between primary care and specialist services."

For more information, visit: <https://abuhb.nhs.wales/hospitals/gps-dentists-opticians-ncns/gps/>

Flu Campaign for 2-3 year olds has launched!



From September, children aged 2-3 will be invited to receive the flu vaccine given at their GP surgery; in some areas of Gwent, it may also be available within your child's nursery setting.

Flu can be serious for children and complications can include bronchitis, pneumonia and ear infections. Some children may become so unwell with flu that they need to go to hospital.

The children's nasal spray flu vaccine helps protect against flu. Flu is caused by viruses and spreads easily. Anyone can get flu but children have the highest rate of infection and can also spread flu to vulnerable family members.

For more information on the nasal flu spray for 2-3 years, visit:

<https://linktr.ee/2to3flu>

If you have other children who attend school (Reception - Year 11), the flu vaccine will be given by the School Nursing Service at your child's school. Find out more here:

<https://abuhb.nhs.wales/hospitals/staying-well-and-healthy/living-well/immunisations/childrens-nasal-flu/>

You can also get your child vaccinated at our Vaccination Centre in Cwmbran, visit

<https://abuhb.nhs.wales/vaccinations/vaccination-pop-up-clinics/> for further information

The ABUHB Vaccination Centre provides additional access to the public for all things vaccine related – from advice, checking an individual's vaccine status to administering vaccines.

The centre is open Monday-Saturday 9:15am-4:30pm and will stock a vast range of vaccinations for all ages. It will complement existing healthcare delivery services for vaccination. We ask that you honour any pre-booked appointments with other services (GP, pharmacy etc), however anyone can walk into the vaccine centre and get a vaccination without booking, if they are eligible.



The Common Ailments Service is available in all local pharmacies - free of charge!

Mater iechyd?
Mae'r Gwasanaeth Anhwylderau Cyffredin ar gael ym mhob Fferylfa leol – am ddim

Gallwch gael cymorth ar gyfer nifer o broblemau iechyd cyffredin, o lau pen a darwden y traed, i ddolur gwddf a heintiau'r llwybr wrinol (UTIs).

Mae fferyllywyr yn arbenigwyr hyfforddedig sy'n gallu asesu symptomau, rhoi cyngor, a darparu triniaeth os oes angen.

Ar gyfer dolur gwddf ac UTIs, gellir defnyddio prawf cyflym i wirio a oes angen gwrthfotigau.

Mae ymgynghoriadau'n gyfrinachol ac fel arfer ar gael o fewn 24 awr.

Health issue?
The Common Ailments Service is available in all local Pharmacies – free of charge

Get help for lots of common health issues, from head lice and athlete's foot, to sore throats and urinary tract infections (UTIs)

Pharmacists are trained experts who can assess symptoms, give advice, and provide treatment if needed.

For sore throats and UTIs, a quick test may be used to check if antibiotics are required.

Consultations are confidential and are usually available within 24 hours.

Siaradwch â'ch Fferyllydd Cymunedol, neu sganiwch y cod QR.

Talk to your Community Pharmacist, or scan the QR code.

The Common Ailments Service is available free of charge at participating pharmacies, offering help for a range of common health problems – from head lice and athlete's foot to sore throats and urinary tract infections (UTIs).

We are pleased to share that the UTI service and the Sore Throat Test and Treat service are now fully included within the Common Ailments Service. This means these services should be available in every pharmacy.

What patients can expect:

- Expert advice and treatment: Pharmacists are trained to assess symptoms, provide guidance, and supply treatment if required.
- Point of care testing: for sore throats and UTIs a simple test may be carried out to check if antibiotics will work.
- Fast and confidential care: Consultations are confidential and typically available within 24 hours.
- Access within 48 hours – if the service is unavailable at a chosen pharmacy patients can be directed to a neighbouring pharmacy to ensure they are seen.

This expansion makes it easier than ever for people to access safe, expert care without needing a GP appointment.

For further information, please visit:

<https://abuhb.nhs.wales/hospitals/pharmacies-chemists/>

Major improvements in ambulance handovers at The Grange University Hospital

A new drive to cut waiting times at The Grange University Hospital has seen dramatic results this month.

The initiative, called Your Next Patient, is designed to get patients to the right place in the healthcare system more quickly and to move people from ambulances into the hospital within 45 minutes – a target that only last month seemed out of reach. The difference has already been striking. The weekend before the launch in early September, ambulances lost more than 170 hours waiting outside the hospital in Cwmbran. During the first weekend of the new system, that figure fell to just 20 hours.



Figures released on 21st September show that since the beginning of the Your Next Patient initiative, nearly 86% of the 832 patients arriving at The Grange University Hospital's Emergency Department were handed over within the 45-minute window. That ranked the hospital fourth out of 12 in Wales, despite being one of the busiest sites in the country for ambulance arrivals, and being a specialist and critical care centre. Aneurin Bevan University Health Board's Chief Operating Officer, Leanne Watkins, said:

"Before Your Next Patient was launched we were among the worst in Wales for ambulance handovers, with some patients waiting many hours outside The Grange University Hospital. Now the average lost time per arrival has dropped from about two hours to under 15 minutes. That makes a huge difference – not just for our patients at The Grange University Hospital but for the whole community, because ambulances can get back out to people faster. Our staff and teams have all worked together and made an outstanding effort to find new ways of improving patient flow across our entire healthcare system."

The improvements are being seen beyond the Emergency Department. Some stroke patients have made their way to the hyper acute stroke ward within an hour of arriving, while others needing surgery for broken hips have been operated on the same day.

The new ways of working – including twice-daily team "huddles" to plan and adjust throughout each day – are still at an early stage but are already showing excellent results.





Chickenpox Vaccination (Varicella) Programme in Wales



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

On 29 August 2025, the Welsh Government announced that a routine chickenpox (varicella) vaccination programme will be introduced in Wales from January 2026. This will become part of the national childhood immunisation schedule.

The decision follows advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), which recommended a universal two-dose programme using the combined MMRV vaccine (measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella).

Chickenpox is a common but highly contagious illness caused by the varicella-zoster virus. While it's usually mild, it can sometimes lead to serious complications, especially in babies, older adults, and people with weakened immune systems. Evidence from other countries shows that routine vaccination helps reduce the number of cases and prevents severe illness.

We will share more information and guidance for parents and carers over the coming months.

To read the full statement from Welsh Government, please visit: **[Written Statement: Introduction of a routine varicella \(chicken pox\) vaccination programme \(29 August 2025\) | GOV.WALES](#)**

The Neighbourhood Care Network (NCN) Quarterly Newsletter

We're delighted to share the ninth edition of our newsletter, packed with the latest updates and developments from across our five boroughs. Explore new initiatives, celebrate local achievements, and stay connected with the vibrant communities throughout Gwent.

We hope you enjoy this issue and find it both informative and inspiring.

<https://abuhb.nhs.wales/files/primary-care/neighbourhood-care-network-ncn-news-issue-9/>



If You Smoke, I Smoke



"If You Smoke, I Smoke" – Hard-hitting campaign targets illegal smoking at Gwent Hospitals



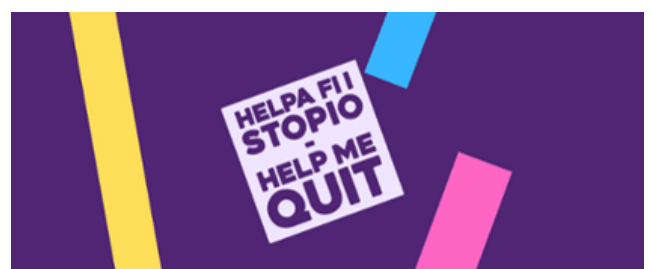
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) has launched a bold new campaign to crack down on illegal smoking on hospital grounds, using powerful visuals and audio prompts to highlight the devastating effects of second-hand smoke on the region’s most vulnerable patients – including children, pregnant women and those with serious health conditions such as cancer. Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death in Wales and is responsible for one in four cancers and many other life limiting conditions.

With the striking message “If you smoke, I smoke. Stop now,” the campaign aims to bring home the reality that second-hand smoke doesn’t stay outside. It makes its way into hospital entrances, waiting rooms, wards – and the lungs of the most vulnerable.

Despite legislation introduced in 2021 making it illegal to smoke on hospital grounds in Wales, the problem remains widespread. In the 12 months up to March 2025, 85 complaints were made about people smoking on ABUHB sites, with 70% of these incidents taking place at The Grange University Hospital alone.

To reinforce the message, large-scale campaign visuals have been installed at Grange University Hospital, Nevill Hall Hospital and Royal Gwent Hospital. These feature patients alongside Dr Brouns and clearly communicate the personal impact of second-hand smoke. In addition to the visuals, loud hailers will broadcast messages recorded by local children, a dual approach designed to make it impossible to ignore that smoking on hospital grounds is not only harmful, but illegal. The Health Board’s Smoke-Free Environment Policy guarantees the right of every patient, staff member and visitor to breathe clean air on its sites. The updated signage and campaign are part of a wider effort to shift behaviour and reduce the serious health risks associated with passive smoking.

Free help to quit smoking is available through Help Me Quit (www.helpmequit.wales), with QR codes on the new signage linking directly to the service.



Successful Big Conversation Event on Sepsis Held in Cwmbran

On Thursday 18th September, health professionals and those affected by Sepsis came together for The Big Conversation: Sepsis event - a powerful day of listening and learning hosted by Aneurin Bevan University Health Board in Cwmbran.



The event was opened by Nicola Prygodzicz, Chief Executive of Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, who welcomed attendees with a heartfelt acknowledgement of the Health Board's responsibility to improve sepsis recognition and care. She also offered a sincere apology for occasions when sepsis responses had fallen short and urged all present to share their experiences openly to help drive change. Throughout the day, powerful and moving patient stories underscored why sepsis awareness and rapid response are critical.

Videos shared the experiences of Corinne and Laurence Cope, who lost their son Dylan; Amy Whiting, bereaved mother of Skyla; sepsis survivor, Geraint Mullins; Leisha Davies, who continues her brave recovery; and Tracy and her fiancé Mark, who recounted their own sepsis journey. Their testimonies were described by participants as "courageous and deeply moving", reminding everyone that behind every clinical decision is a person, a family and a future.



The Health Board reaffirmed its commitment to making Think Sepsis instinctive across staff and the wider community, implementing updated national guidelines, and expanding Call 4 Concern so that every patient and family has a voice.

Sepsis is life threatening. It can be hard to spot.

For more information, including the symptoms of Sepsis, please visit:
<https://abuhb.nhs.wales/health-advice/sepsis/>



Cabinet Secretary Officially Opens The Bevan Health & Wellbeing Centre



Located in the heart of Tredegar, The Bevan Health & Wellbeing Centre marks a significant step forward in the Health Board's commitment to delivering integrated, community-based care. The Centre brings together a wide range of services under one roof, supporting both physical and mental wellbeing and making it easier for people to access the care they need, closer to home.

The Centre is a key part of the Health Board's Clinical Futures Programme, which aims to transform healthcare across Gwent by shifting more services into community settings and reducing reliance on hospital-based care. It offers a welcoming, modern environment for patients, staff and visitors, with purpose-built spaces for primary care, mental health support, community services, and wellbeing initiatives.

The event was attended by invited guests, including representatives from local government, partner organisations, and members of the construction and design teams who helped bring the centre to life. Staff from across the Health Board also joined the celebration, marking the culmination of years of planning and collaboration.



Nicola Prygodzicz, Chief Executive of Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, said:



"We are delighted to officially open The Bevan Health & Wellbeing Centre, a facility that reflects our vision for the future of healthcare in Gwent. This Centre is more than just a building—it's a hub for integrated care, designed to support people in the local communities to live healthier, more connected lives.

Our teams have worked incredibly hard to create a space that promotes wellbeing in every sense, from the services it offers to the environment it provides. We are proud of what we've achieved and grateful to all our partners who helped make this vision a reality."

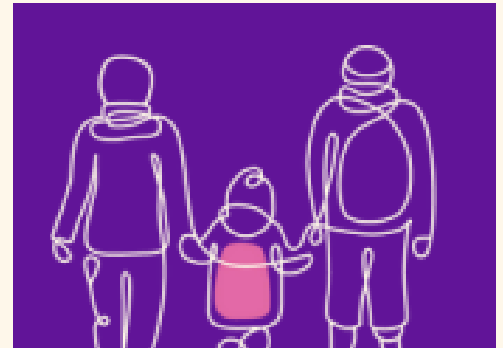
Ready to Learn, Ready to Grow

Ready to Learn, Ready to Grow, led by Home-Start Cymru, is a 6-session programme where families will be offered either group or 1:1 support for various aspects of child development, speech, language & communication, routines, play and more. Families will also be provided with a physical bag of resources to support their journey



Who's eligible? [all of the below]:

- Children aged 18 months – 3 years old (at the point of referral)
- Children and parents/carers who would benefit from support with child development and preparation to transition to school
- Families experiencing financial difficulty



How can you refer?

If you are working with a family who would benefit from this project, please complete the following Referral form at https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=_Dt7zVH3z0eYxWV-8bJK4tX68W1cTjZBu-phOHau5wNUQVZJNEIRTDdBVEdVOFRHTFZaWDZaUUNJQIQCN0PWcu&route=shorturl

Further information

In addition to the direct work with families, we will be undertaking a Consultation to understand more about the experiences of both families and early years professionals with respect to 'School Readiness'. This is specifically about understanding the needs of those experiencing poverty across Gwent. Further details will be shared soon as to how you can get involved.

If you would to know more, please do not hesitate to contact us. Queries can be sent to: readytolearn@homestartcymru.org.uk



Ariennir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Funded by
Welsh Government



Blaenau Gwent
County Borough Council



monmouthshire
sir fynyw



NEWPORT
CITY COUNCIL
CYNGOR DINAS
CASNEWYDD



Cydweithrediad Ymchwil
ar Benderfynnyddion Iechyd
Torfaen
Health Determinants
Research Collaboration
Torfaen



TORFAEN
COUNTY
BOROUGH
BWRDEISTREF
SIROL
TORFAEN

Community Engagement Schedule

WHERE CAN YOU FIND US?

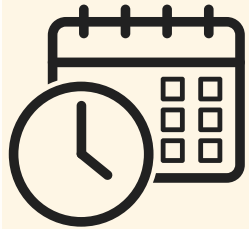
Our community engagement program is a great opportunity for the public to speak to Health Board staff about services and to ask any questions they may have as well as provide feedback on their experiences. The team are here to listen and help. Our engagement schedule is updated daily on our website:

www.abuhb.nhs.wales/about-us/public-engagement-consultation/community-engagement/



Next Meeting Date

The next meeting for champions will take place on **Thursday 20th November 2025 at 11am** via Microsoft Teams
We look forward to seeing you then but if you have any feedback or questions in the meantime please do get in touch!



Follow our **social media channels** and **WhatsApp** to receive the latest information about healthcare services in Gwent.

**EIN DILYN/
FOLLOW US:**



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bipab.gig.cymru abuhb.nhs.wales



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**SGANIWCH FI
SCAN ME**

We hope you find this newsletter both insightful and informative.

If you have any queries or comments, please contact us on

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