July 2026 Insight & Intelligence

During July 2026, the Health Board's Engagement team visited **6** venues across Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen and spoke to a total of **61** people (**39** Females and **22** Males). The team interacted with residents across various settings, including community venues, organised events and at their workplaces via large employers.

What did we hear this month?

- **Access to medical appointments:** Concerns were raised regarding the increasing use of online booking systems and QR codes for accessing healthcare services. Some older people do not have access to smartphones or digital technology, creating barriers to booking appointments. As a result, some individuals may disengage from seeking care, potentially leaving health concerns unaddressed.
- **Language barriers in healthcare settings:** Language barriers during medical appointments were identified as a challenge for some diverse communities. Many individuals rely on family members to act as interpreters, which can sometimes result in inaccurate translation and contribute to misunderstandings between patients and healthcare professionals.
- **Awareness of the Pharmacy Common Ailments Service:** Feedback on the Common Ailments Service was mixed. While some people reported using the service regularly and finding it beneficial, others were unaware it existed.
- **Access to NHS dental services**: Access to NHS dentistry continues to be a significant concern for residents. Many individuals reported not having an NHS dentist and were subsequently signposted to the Dental Access Portal. Information about the portal was positively received and welcomed.
- **Screening**: Residents spoken to told us that they participate in screening programmes for which they are eligible and are proactive with getting regular check ups.
- **Addressing one health concern at a time:** Feedback was received that healthcare consultations often focus on a single health issue at a time, which can make it difficult for patients with multiple or interconnected conditions to have all their concerns addressed during one appointment.
- **Vaccinations**: Praise was given for the RSV vaccine which has helped people during the winter period. The Vaccination Centre in Cwmbran was also discussed with people telling us they are happy it is available for them to visit.








What next?

Over the coming months, the team will continue to share information on:

- How Gwent residents can access **Cancer Screening Services** and **Women's Health support for menstrual health, contraception and menopause services**
- Focus on Mental Health Awareness will continue through promotion of **Melo** and **111 Option 2**

The team will also be engaging with Health Board staff across our hospital sites.

All feedback received is logged and reviewed to identify key themes and trends. We share what we have heard with the teams responsible for those services and with senior leaders. The insights help shape service improvements, planning decisions and policies. We also aim to close the loop by sharing updates with communities so people can see how their feedback has helped influence change. For more information about community engagement please visit our website: **www.abuhb.nhs.wales/about-us/public-engagement-consultation/community-engagement/**