

May 2026 Insight & Intelligence

During May 2026, the Health Board's Engagement team visited **5** venues across Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen and spoke to a total of **104** people (**59** Females and **45** Males). The team interacted with residents across various settings, including community venues and groups, employment settings and Monmouthshire Livestock Centre.

What did we hear this month?

- Concerns about dental access were raised throughout the month across Gwent. The team signposted to the Dental Access Portal and provided details of the Emergency Dental helpline.
- Positive experiences of the NHS Wales App, particularly its repeat prescription function were highlighted. The app's notification system—alerting users when medication is ready for collection—has improved convenience and reduced uncertainty around prescription management.
- **Barriers to seeking help** - some men reported delaying or avoiding GP visits; Farming communities described limited time and ingrained habits that reduce engagement with healthcare; and individuals are prioritising caring responsibilities over their own health.
- Sun safety emerged as a recurring theme, especially among farmers who openly acknowledged that they rarely use sunscreen and often forget to apply it. Conversations also highlighted the importance of protecting children in hot weather, with emphasis on covering up, staying hydrated, and maintaining consistent sun-safe habits.
- Many people we spoke with expressed reluctance to attend screening appointments—particularly for cervical and bowel cancer—with some noting that although cancer is a family concern, they *“don't have the time to check themselves.”*
- Patient referrals for CT scans and to other services are being delayed due to a backlog of blood test appointments at GP practices which are required before a referral can be made.



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 carrying out engagement 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/



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