

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board Neighbourhood Care Network (NCN) News

ISSUE 7: November 2024 - January 2025

Welcome to issue seven of our quarterly newsletter.



We are delighted to bring you the latest news, updates, and highlights from Neighbourhood Care Networks (NCNs) across the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board area.

This newsletter is designed to keep you informed about the incredible work happening within our communities, showcasing the innovative initiatives, partnerships, and achievements that make a real difference to people's lives.

Whether it's upcoming events, inspiring stories, or exciting developments, we're here to keep you connected and involved. Thank you for your continued support—together, we can strengthen our communities and improve health and well-being for all.

We hope you enjoy this edition!

For further information about the NCN programme, please visit [Neighbourhood Care Networks \(NCNs\) - Aneurin Bevan University Health Board \(nhs.wales\)](#), or please email: abb.strategicchangeteam@wales.nhs.uk



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What is a Neighbourhood Care Network (NCN)?

Neighbourhood Care Networks (NCNs) bring together local health and care services within a specific geographic area, typically serving populations of 40,000 to 60,000 people.

Each NCN includes General Practitioners (GPs), Dentists, Optometrists, Pharmacists, Community Nurses, Allied Health Professionals (AHPs), and Social Care specialists, combining a wide range of expertise.

Working within an NCN enhances care coordination, enabling better assessment of population needs, prioritisation of service improvements, and the development of tailored local solutions to improve the health and well-being of individuals and communities.



Blaenau Gwent

Advanced Paramedic Practitioner Hospital Admission Avoidance Programme

Blaenau Gwent NCN have successfully launched the Advanced Paramedic Practitioner – Hospital Admission Avoidance Project (APPHAAP) and look forward to developing the project as it becomes an established service.

APPs are specialised and autonomous clinicians and provide advanced clinical assessment skills, diagnosis, treatment and referral of patients using a medical/management model of care.

As part of this pilot the APPs will be undertaking home visits to treat a range of acute medical presentations to provide Care Closer to Home, reducing the impact of patients accessing the 999 system and proportionate conveyance to secondary care as well as supporting Primary Care capacity to help mitigate the pressure on the wider care systems.



Happy Retirement Dr Killeen!

After an incredible 40 years as a dedicated NHS GP which included the past 13 years as a beloved GP at Cwm Calon Surgery, it's time to say a heartfelt goodbye to Dr. Killeen.

Throughout her career, Dr. Killeen has been a pillar of care, compassion, and expertise. She has touched the lives of countless patients, supporting families through both challenging and joyful times. Her warmth, dedication, and unwavering commitment to her patients have made her an integral part of our community.



Dr. Killeen, your colleagues and patients alike will deeply miss your kind presence, but we know you've more than earned a chance to relax and enjoy this new chapter of your life. From all of us within the Blaenau Gwent locality, NCN team and beyond: thank you for everything you've done. Wishing you happiness and fulfilment in your retirement!

The Bevan Health & Wellbeing Centre celebrate their first Christmas

To celebrate their first Christmas at The Bevan Health & Wellbeing Centre in Tredegar which opened earlier this year, Place Based Care Co-ordinator, Angela Thompson-Roach organised a Christmas event for staff, including a wellbeing activity which enabled staff to decorate their own tree decoration. The choir from Ysgol Gyfun Tredegar Comprehensive School made up of students from Year 7-11 also treated staff and patients to a selection of Christmas songs.

A special thanks to Kier Construction who kindly donated £250 to enable staff to buy Christmas decorations for the centre.





Caerphilly

Wellbeing Pop-Up at Coed Cefn-pwll-du Parkrun



On 18 January 2025, the Caerphilly IWN team (Cwtsh), in partnership with Wellbeing Connectors, the Nature Wellbeing Coordinator, and Ty Bryn Surgery, held a wellbeing pop-up at the Coed Cefn-pwll-du (Machen) parkrun.

parkrun is a free, inclusive community event where participants can walk, jog, run, volunteer, or spectate on a 5km course every Saturday at 9am. There is also a 2km Junior parkrun for 4-14-year-olds and their families every Sunday.

The 169th Coed Cefn-pwll-du parkrun saw 74 participants and 16 essential volunteers—9 more attendees than the previous week. Online promotion reached 6,785 people via Facebook. During the event, the team engaged participants in conversations about community health and wellbeing, both on the course and at a pop-up café.

The takeover was part of the wider Be Active campaign, promoting movement through activities like gardening, walking, or singing, which benefit both physical and mental health. Find more activity ideas on the Cwtsh website: [Be Active](#).

There are 10 parkruns across Gwent, including locations in Machen, Cwmbran, and Newport. Learn more at [parkrun UK](#).

Community Hub Continues to Thrive

The White Rose Information and Resource Centre, a cornerstone of New Tredegar's regeneration since 2004, remains a vital hub for the community. It houses the New Tredegar Library, Elliot's Café, and hireable meeting, activity, and conference spaces.

In June 2022, the centre hosted the successful three-day Cwtsh Wellbeing Festival, organised by Caerphilly IWN. This event inspired ongoing weekly activities such as Youngstars Drama, Seated Dance, and the popular Cwtsh Café.

The White Rose Centre continues to thrive, supporting and enriching the New Tredegar community. It offers a wide range of regular activities and serves as a base for essential services like the Foodbank, Post Office, Communities for Work, and Platform. For more information email whiteroseirc@gmail.com.

Participatory Budgeting

Participatory budgeting allows citizens to help decide how public money is spent and has been implemented across all local authorities in Gwent, supported by the Integrated Wellbeing Network Team.

In the Caerphilly borough, it first launched in the Upper Rhymney Valley. A public meeting on 19 February 2024 initiated the process, leading to the formation of a residents' panel that met bi-weekly. Community groups and third-sector organisations were invited to submit projects addressing the following priorities:

- Built environment
- Economic wellbeing
- Community safety
- Community connection

The panel reviewed applications, and on 3 August 2024, a decision day at Rhymney Rugby Club saw 200 community members vote on eight wellbeing projects.

Participatory budgeting is now being rolled out in Risca, with the second round of "Rhymney Decides" starting this November. For more information email Geraint.Jones@GAVO.org.uk.





Monmouthshire

Monmouthshire Wellbeing Link Advisor (WBLA)

Case Study:

An individual, awaiting counselling through their GP surgery, sought help from a Wellbeing Links Advisor (WBLA) after feeling burnt out from a split with an abusive partner and business partner. The WBLA connected them with community resources, including a Cyfannol Women's Aid worker, a local gardening group, and a MIND-led walking group.

Though physical health issues temporarily hindered their engagement, a recent review showed the individual is now ready to reconnect with support services. These connections, including one-to-one sessions with a walking group leader, have helped prevent a return to the GP, avoiding a potential mental health crisis.

The individual is now focused on rebuilding their business and maintaining a healthy work/rest balance, with additional support suggested through volunteering in their garden. This case highlights the value of community-based support in complementing traditional GP services.

The day services at Monnow Vale Hospital

The day services at Monnow Vale Hospital support people with dementia, offering a day of activities, friendship and fun.

Everyone is made to feel welcome, included and supported during the day.

Individuals are able to have a hot meal and drinks served by the fantastic catering staff at Monnow Vale and supervised by the day service staff which is a joy to see. Leftovers are very rare!

Leanne Watkins, ABuHB Assistant Head of Service for Monmouthshire said, "since joining the team on an interim basis at Monnow Vale I see and hear the joy of the day service users, the local authority staff are absolutely wonderful and treat each and every service user as if they were their own family without question. We often hear the sound of singing old nursery rhymes and older popular music of their time coming through the corridors. Family members are given a well-deserved break whilst their loved one is at Monnow Vale which I know is invaluable to them. This service gives me hope that we are doing a great job for our community"

Monmouthshire GP Dr Rowena Christmas Awarded MBE in New Year Honours

Dr Rowena Christmas, a Monmouthshire-based GP and chair of the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) in Wales, has been awarded an MBE in the New Year Honours list for her services to General Practice. Having dedicated 25 years to her practice in Trellech, Dr Christmas expressed her gratitude, emphasising her passion for general practice and its crucial role in healthcare. She noted that it allows for patient care closer to home, reducing hospital admissions and easing pressure on the NHS.

Her recognition has been praised by colleagues, including Lloyd Hambridge from Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, who commended her dedication and the vital role of general practice in the healthcare system.

Dr Christmas's MBE highlights the importance of GPs in providing accessible, high-quality care to communities across Wales.





Newport

19 Hills Health & Wellbeing Centre, Ringland

Ringland Medical Practice are the first service to move into the centre and opened to the public on Monday 13th January 2025. This week the District Nursing Team, Health Visiting Team, Podiatry, Speech & Language Therapy, Sexual Health, Community Respiratory and School Health Nurses will be moving into 19 Hills from Alway Clinic, with mental health service sessions and minor ops podiatry starting at the end of this month.

Park Surgery are scheduled to move in at the end of February, along with the Community Service Clinics and wellbeing activities due to start w/c 24th February.

Other services going live on 24th February 2025 include:

- Audiology
- Memory Assessment Clinic
- CAMHS
- Dietetics
- Weight Management
- LAC
- Paediatric Recovery from illness
- Adferiad
- Child and Family Psychology



Community and General Dental Services will go live in March.

Update - Health & Wellbeing Groups in Newport - KidCare4U

Newport NCN funding is supporting KidCare4U in 2024/25 to provide projects, support, and opportunities for adults and children from disadvantaged ethnic communities across Newport.

KidCare4U, a registered charity, helps families build skills and confidence, promoting health and wellbeing through physical activity and healthy eating. The charity also works to reduce barriers between disadvantaged ethnic groups and other communities.

Rusna Begum, Founder of KidCare4U, expressed gratitude for the NCN funding, which has significantly supported their women's groups. She highlighted the funding's impact on promoting health, increasing physical activity, and providing mental health support, with interpreters ensuring language isn't a barrier. Staff training has also empowered them to better support their communities.

Bettws Pharmacy Icon Retires on Friday After 59 Years of Service

Betty Pritchard, aged 91, is retiring after 59 years of service at Watkin-Davies Pharmacy in Bettws, Newport. Starting her career over seven decades ago, Betty became a beloved figure at the pharmacy, having previously worked at a pharmacy on Malpas Road. Reflecting on her time at the pharmacy, Betty said, "The customers and staff are amazing, and the local community is so loyal." Throughout her career, Betty witnessed many changes in the profession, including the days when "we used to prescribe poppy heads for toothache".

To celebrate her retirement, Betty's colleagues and customers threw a heartfelt farewell, with gifts and gratitude pouring in.

Betty's departure marks the end of an era at Watkin-Davies Pharmacy, where she will be greatly missed.





Torfaen

Local Gender Team in Torfaen

The Local Gender Team (LGT), or 'Alex Clinic', established in May 2020, works alongside the Welsh Gender Team (WGT) in Cardiff to provide hormone therapy for ABUHB patients aged 18 and over. Starting with 15 patients, the team now supports 163 active patients, with 54 on a waiting list. They operate from the Cedar Unit at County Hospital, Pontypool, and administer hormone injections at the Outpatients Department.

The team includes Dr Eleri Roberts, Dr Sarah Jones, and Administrator Charlotte Black. Patients wishing to be referred should contact their GP. Those 17 and older can be referred directly via WCCG, while those under 17 must go through CAMHS.

After the WGT completes assessments, patients who wish to start hormone therapy are referred to the LGT. Though there is a waiting list, the team is working to reduce wait times.

Hormone therapy begins after an initial telephone consultation, with referrals for Speech and Language (SALT) or gamete preservation available if needed.

For more information, contact ABB.AlexClinic@wales.nhs.uk.

Sandy Bear in Torfaen

Sandy Bear is a charity focused on improving the emotional health and well-being of children, young people, and families affected by the death of a loved one. Their aim is to reduce emotional difficulties and prevent long-term mental health issues.

Offering 1:1 and peer-group support, Sandy Bear also helps parents and carers manage their own grief and support their children. They provide tailored training for professionals, including school nurses, emergency service workers, and health and social care staff, on managing bereavement in various settings.

We are pleased that this service is now available in Torfaen, providing crucial support to local families.

For more information, visit www.sandybear.co.uk.

What is the CATCH?

The Clinical Assessment Team for Care Homes (CATCH) collaborates with GP practices in Torfaen to provide enhanced healthcare for residents in nursing and residential care homes. Working with care home staff and community MDTs, CATCH nurses conduct comprehensive assessments, make referrals, and discuss advanced care preferences with residents and families to ensure appropriate care. The CATCH service includes: Same-day clinical assessments by a nurse practitioner; Promotion of Anticipatory Care Planning (ACP); Hospital avoidance strategies; Support and advice to care home staff for safe care delivery; Delivery of the care home DES with relevant service agreements; Flu/Covid vaccination delivery when GP practices or DN services are unavailable; Support during outbreaks of infectious diseases; Fit-to-travel assessments for residents transferring homes; and Falls assessments for residents unable to join formal falls programs.

Viki Brice, Team Lead, Torfaen CATCH, provides an overview of the CATCH Service in a short video:



For more information, contact viki.brice@wales.nhs.uk.



Other News...

Just ask... "Could it be sepsis?"



New Campaign to Raise Awareness of Sepsis to Launch in Gwent

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, in partnership with the UK Sepsis Trust, is launching a campaign to raise awareness of sepsis among staff and the public.

Sepsis, a life-threatening complication of infection, claims five lives every hour in the UK. Early recognition and swift action are critical to saving lives, but awareness of its symptoms remains low. The campaign aims to highlight the early warning signs, identify those most at risk, and encourage people to seek help quickly.

Launching for staff at the end of 2024, public-facing messaging will follow in the coming months, with a new sepsis page already going live on our website abuhb.nhs.wales/sepsis.

James Calvert, Medical Director, stressed the urgency of recognising sepsis early. "Sepsis is a medical emergency that requires rapid treatment. Every hour counts, so raising awareness is vital to ensure the best possible outcomes for patients."

Primary and Community Care Academy Launches New Course Brochure

The Primary and Community Care Academy has unveiled a new course brochure designed to promote education and training opportunities for colleagues working in Primary and Community Care.

The brochure provides detailed information about the Academy, an overview of the courses available, and links for booking. To ensure users stay up to date, the electronic brochure will be regularly refreshed as new education and training events are added to the programme.

Primary Care Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) Update

NHS Wales is moving from a paper-based prescription process to a digital service.

The Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) will bring benefits to healthcare professionals in primary care, making it easier, safer and more efficient for you to prescribe and dispense medicines.

EPS is an end-to-end electronic process, allowing GPs and other prescribers to send prescriptions electronically to a pharmacy or dispenser chosen by the patient.

Implementation is dependent on multiple co-dependencies and DHCW is working closely with health boards to schedule the rollout. Given the scale and complexity of the task the rollout started with first of type approvals in April 2024 and will run until 30th September 2027. In Aneurin Bevan University Health Board progress to date has seen 5 GP practices and 14 linked pharmacies go live. This relatively slow start has been due to the assurance process for system suppliers and the challenges of practice and pharmacy interdependencies.

With all system suppliers now approved the rollout will gather momentum.

Since the Welsh launch of EPS in November 2023, over 630,000 prescription items have been issued by 25 GP practices and dispensed by 128 pharmacies, marking significant progress.

For further information on EPS, visit the DHCW web pages <https://dhw.nhs.wales/product-directory/our-digital-services/eps>



Nursing Professional Lead Support Group

We held our Nursing Professional Lead Support Group on 6th December to share, support and celebrate the year of developing the Nursing Professional Collaboratives within each Locality of Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.

The well-attended event, which was opened by Lucy Kings, Head of Nursing Primary Care, included a review of the last year and a look forward to 2025 presented by the Nursing Collaborative Lead from each of the five Boroughs. Lucy said, "Today is all about our journey so far and supporting our leads. It's so empowering for nurses to come together to have open and honest conversations. It's about us nurses and what we can do to support our communities".

If you would like further information about the Nursing Professional Collaborative, please contact:
katie.molumby@wales.nhs.uk



Nature Prescribing in Newport

The Integrated Wellbeing Network, in partnership with the RSPB and other local organisations, is designing a new Nature Prescription project to connect people with nature-based activities that improve physical and mental wellbeing. Activities include walking groups, community gardening, conservation volunteering, and food growing programmes.



The project encourages people to engage with nature in simple, meaningful ways, such as listening to birdsong or watching a sunset. Practices across Newport are already involved, and the project team welcomes further input.

To help shape the project, email info@yournewport.co.uk.



Dementia Hubs Launched Across Gwent

Gwent Regional Partnership Board are thrilled to announce the launch of Dementia Hubs across Gwent! These hubs are dedicated spaces where individuals living with dementia, their families, and caregivers can access vital information, advice, and support. They provide the opportunity for people to come together to create a supportive community and ensure no one faces dementia alone.

For  locations and  opening hours visit:

<http://www.gwentrpb.wales/dementia-hubs>

Or contact Gwent Regional Partnership Board directly:

 Email:

gwentregionalpartnershipboard@torfaen.gov.uk

 Telephone: 01495 761691

All editions of our quarterly newsletter are available on the [ABUWB website](http://www.abuwb.wales). If you would like more information about any of the featured stories or wish to be added to our mailing list to receive this newsletter, please email lisa.orford@wales.nhs.uk.

