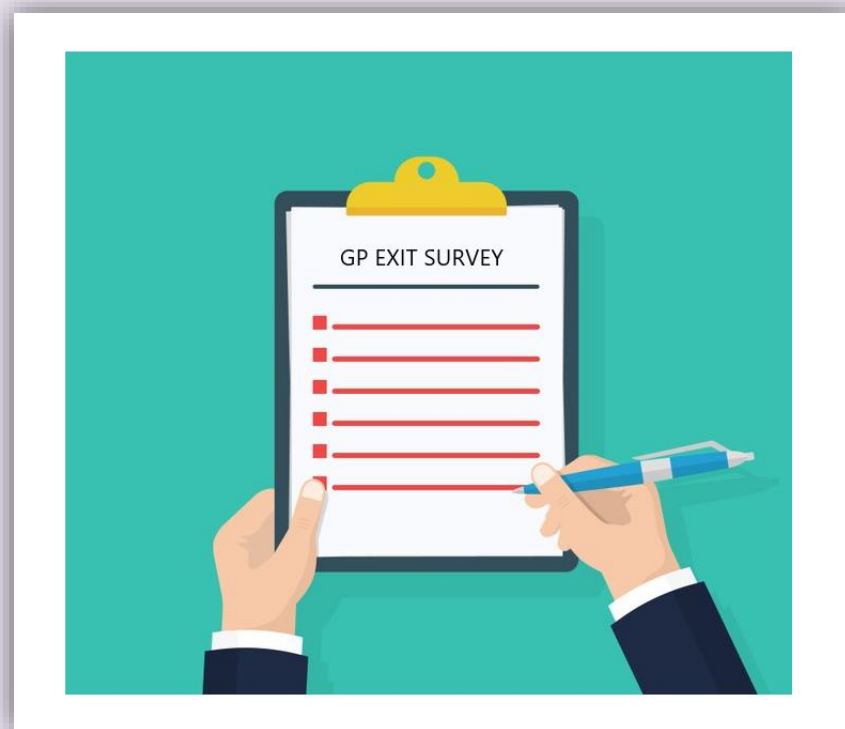

Aneurin Bevan Community Health Council

Engagement Report

GP Exit Survey

August 2022



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Introduction & background

Aneurin Bevan Community Health Council's Annual Plan shows that we are committed to undertaking engagement with the local population, and to gaining feedback from people who have accessed NHS treatment and care within the Aneurin Bevan Health Board area.

As a Community Health Council, with a statutory duty to monitor and scrutinise health services, we were keen to understand more about people's access to their GP Surgery in the Aneurin Bevan area.

Therefore, we completed a GP Exit Survey with patients at five practices in the Aneurin Bevan area. This involved CHC members attending the GP Surgery site and speaking with patients as they left the practice by completing a survey with them.

The five practices visited:

- Llanbradach Health Centre (The Village Surgery)
- Brynmawr Medical Practice
- Nant Dowlais Health Centre
- The Usk Surgery
- Isca Medical Centre

The five practices were contacted two weeks prior to our visit. We informed the Practice Managers of the dates and times our members were planning to attend. Survey packs and posters were also sent to the practices to place in their reception area, in order for us to reach as many people as possible before we visited.



What we did

As we continued to engage with the public during the pandemic a pan-Wales survey was created for people to tell us their experiences of accessing NHS services and how they felt they could be improved.

Since the launch of the pan-Wales survey, we have received 380 responses from members of the public who told us about both positive and negative experiences in relation to accessing their GP Practice.

Therefore, we created a GP Exit survey for this project, in order for us to obtain more information regarding people's experiences when going to their GP practice. This survey was also available online via a link and QR code.

Our members attended the five practices twice over the period of 2 weeks to ensure we spoke with as many people as we could.

What we found out

As a result of our visits and people filling in our survey online, we heard from 191 people. A breakdown of response numbers per practice is as follows:

- Llanbradach Health Centre (The Village Surgery): 39
- Brynmawr Medical Practice: 30
- Nant Dowlais Health Centre: 38
- The Usk Surgery: 40
- Isca Medical Centre: 9

We also received an additional 35 responses from individuals, but we could not identify which surgery they were registered at.



Q1. We asked, "How easy is it to make a routine appointment?":

Surgery	Very easy	Easy	It's ok	Difficult	Very difficult
Llanbradach Health Centre (The Village Surgery)	17	13	6	2	1
Brynmawr Medical Practice	0	2	0	7	21
Nant Dowlais Health Centre	0	2	4	15	14
The Usk Surgery	19	5	11	4	0
Isca Medical Centre	0	2	2	2	0

Q2. We asked, "How do you usually make a routine appointment?":

Surgery	Telephone	In person	My Health Online	Other
Llanbradach Health Centre (The Village Surgery)	35	1	2	0
Brynmawr Medical Practice	29	0	0	0
Nant Dowlais Health Centre	29	9	0	0
The Usk Surgery	35	1	2	E-consult: 1 They notify us: 1
Isca Medical Centre	7	0	2	0

Q3. We asked, "Would you like to be able to make an appointment using a different method?"

Surgery	Yes	No
Llanbradach Health Centre (The Village Surgery)	14	24
Brynmawr Medical Practice	17	11
Nant Dowlais Health Centre	24	12
The Usk Surgery	10	30
Isca Medical Centre	3	5

Those who selected "yes" told us they would like to use the internet or My Health Online to be able to make an appointment.

Q4. We asked, "Does your doctor limit you to discussing one issue during your routine appointment?"

Surgery	Yes	No	I'm unsure
Llanbradach Health Centre (The Village Surgery)	7	17	10
Brynmawr Medical Practice	20	1	8
Nant Dowlais Health Centre	10	8	16
The Usk Surgery	8	24	7
Isca Medical Centre	1	5	3

Q5. We asked, "How long do you have to wait and see a doctor for a routine appointment?"

Surgery	Less than 48 hours	Under a week	1-2 weeks	2-3 weeks	More than 3 weeks
Llanbradach Health Centre (The Village Surgery)	4	5	28	0	0
Brynmawr Medical Practice	1	1	10	9	6
Nant Dowlais Health Centre	5	10	7	4	7
The Usk Surgery	21	8	3	1	3
Isca Medical Centre	1	0	4	3	1

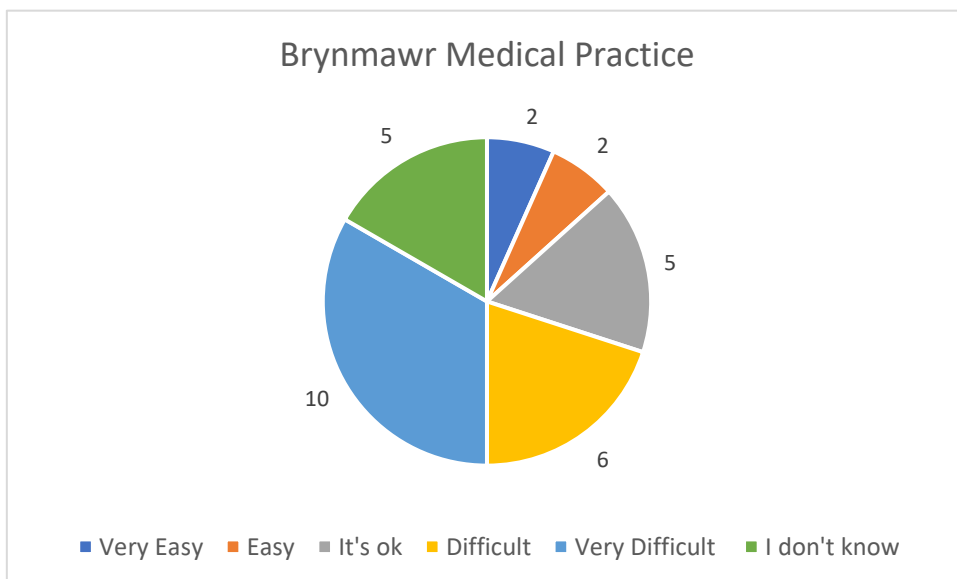
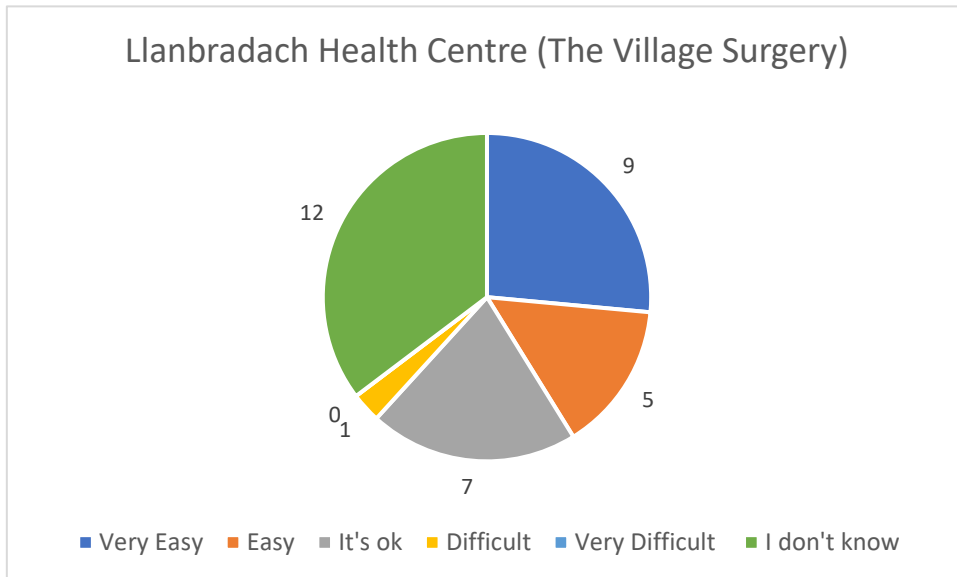
Q6. We asked, "When booking a routine appointment, would you prefer to be seen quickly or to be able to choose the doctor for consistency?"

When reviewing this data, it was clear that most patients would either like the option to choose the doctor they wanted see for consistency, or it would depend on the reason they needed the appointment before they decided if they wanted to see a particular doctor.

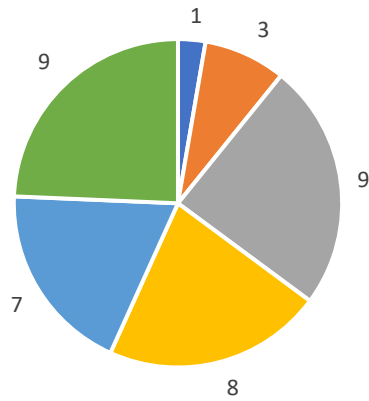


Q7. We asked, "How easy is it to access an emergency* appointment?"

Meaning urgent appointments

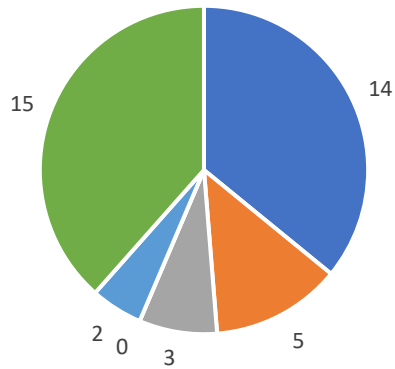


Nant Dowlais Health Centre



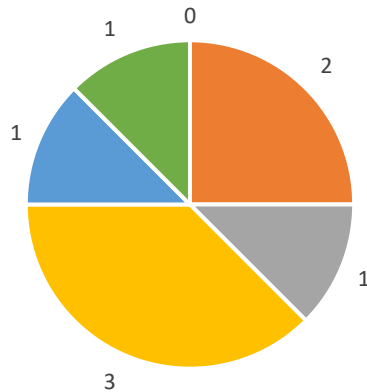
■ Very Easy ■ Easy ■ It's ok ■ Difficult ■ Very Difficult ■ I don't know

The Usk Surgery



■ Very Easy ■ Easy ■ It's ok ■ Difficult ■ Very Difficult ■ I don't know

Isca Medical Centre



■ Very Easy ■ Easy ■ It's ok ■ Difficult ■ Very Difficult ■ I don't know

Q8. We asked, "Do you use My Health Online?":

The majority of patients across all five practices told us that they had heard of My Health Online, but they do not use it.

Those who used My Health Online to make appointments at their GP Practice:

Llanbradach Health Centre (The Village Surgery)	5
Brynmaur Medical Practice	2
Nant Dowlais Health Centre	0
The Usk Surgery	3
Isca Medical Centre	1

Q9. We asked, "How easy is it to have a home visit if you needed one?":

Surgery	Very easy	Easy	It's ok	Difficult	Very difficult	I don't know
Llanbradach Health Centre (The Village Surgery)	0	0	2	0	0	32
Brynmaur Medical Practice	1	1	1	0	14	13
Nant Dowlais Health Centre	1	0	0	7	5	23
The Usk Surgery	2	3	0	0	6	29
Isca Medical Centre	0	0	0	1	0	4

Q10. We asked, “How easy is it to request a repeat prescription?”:

The majority of patients at the Usk Surgery and Isca Medical Centre, told us that they found it very easy to request repeat prescriptions.

Most patients who we spoke with at Nant Dowlais Health, Llanbradach Health Centre (The Village Surgery) and Brynmawr Health Centre told us they found it “easy” or “ok” to request repeat prescriptions.

Q11. We asked, “What is your preferred language?”:

Nearly all patients across the five practices who answered this question, told us their preferred language was English. Two patients from Llanbradach Health Centre (The Village Surgery) told us their preferred language was Welsh.

Q12. We then asked if people were able to communicate in their preferred language:

All patients at Brynmawr Medical Practice, The Usk Surgery, Isca Medical Centre told us that they were able to communication in their preferred language. However, one patient at Llanbradach Health Centre (The Village Surgery) and Nant Dowlais Health Centre told us that they were not able to communicate in their preferred language.



Q13. We asked, "Is the communication you receive from your surgery adequate? (I.e., letters sent/telephone calls made to you)"

Surgery	Yes	No
Llanbradach Health Centre (The Village Surgery)	33	2
Brynmawr Medical Practice	16	13
Nant Dowlais Health Centre	29	7
The Usk Surgery	37	3
Isca Medical Centre	7	1

Comments from those who answered "no" to the question above:

"Appointment reminders sent too early – 1 day before would be better" – Llanbradach Health Centre (The Village Surgery)

"Telephone calls rather than letters would be preferable" – Brynmawr Medical Practice"

"No consistency, lack of care" – Brynmawr Medical Practice

"Unclear/Poor communication" -Brynmawr Medical Practice

"Test results are not communicated, only if requested. Borderline results could be treated earlier" – Nant Dowlais Health Centre

"Always have to chase" – Nant Dowlais Health Centre

"Reply to requested information more quickly" – The Usk Surgery

"There are no communications if changes are made. They rely on notices within the surgery." – Isca Medical Centre

Q14. We asked, "Do you feel you have enough privacy at the reception desk area?"

It was reported across all sites that reception areas could be improved in relation to privacy for patients.

Q15. We asked, "Do you have any difficulties getting to the surgery?"

Most patients across all five practices told us they did not have any difficulties getting to their practice.

One person of Isca Medical Centre told us *"I don't drive, and I am expected to accept appointments with any of the surgeries in 3 villages."*

Following on from this question, we asked, *"Do you have any difficulties accessing the building?"*

Similarly, most patients across all five practices told us they did not have any difficulties accessing the building.

One patient of The Usk Surgery told us that the building would benefit from better disabled access as they experienced parking difficulties outside.

One patient of Nant Dowlais Health Centre told us they experience difficulties accessing the building, this is usually because of queuing people. They told us *"They still restrict 1 person entry at a time"*, as the reception desk at this practice is manned by one member of staff, they told us that if one person had a long query, it can take a long time to *"even set foot inside the building"*.

We asked people to rate the following at their practice:

Llanbradach Health Centre (The Village Surgery):

	Very happy	Happy	It's ok	Unhappy	Very unhappy
Surgery opening times	4	2	0	2	1
The waiting area	4	1	3	0	0
Reception staff	4	4	0	1	0

Brynmawr Medical Practice:

	Very happy	Happy	It's ok	Unhappy	Very unhappy
Surgery opening times	11	7	10	2	0
The waiting area	9	8	12	0	0
Reception staff	5	5	12	4	3

Nant Dowlais Health Centre:

	Very happy	Happy	It's ok	Unhappy	Very unhappy
Surgery opening times	7	16	11	3	0
The waiting area	5	15	15	2	0
Reception staff	10	13	6	6	0

The Usk Surgery:

	Very happy	Happy	It's ok	Unhappy	Very unhappy
Surgery opening times	20	8	9	1	0
The waiting area	18	8	12	1	0
Reception staff	19	8	11	0	1

Isca Medical Centre:

	Very happy	Happy	It's ok	Unhappy	Very unhappy
Surgery opening times	4	2	0	2	1
The waiting area	4	1	3	0	0
Reception staff	4	4	0	1	0

Comments:

Llanbradach Health Centre (The Village Surgery):

"Excellent GP Practice. All GPs are kind, friendly and care about their patients. Best GP practice I have been registered with."

"Would like to access My Health Online"

"I appreciate the care and treatment received by all the doctors and support staff."

There were no negative comments given by patients who filled in our survey.

Brynmawr Medical Practice:

"I have found it very difficult trying to get an appointment"

"My GP Surgery is a nightmare to book a routine appointment. I have been on hold for an hour to be told all appointments have gone. Unable to reschedule appointments, only cancel and rebook which takes an additional 2 weeks."

There was a common theme identified when reviewing feedback for this practice: patients would like more face-to-face appointments with a GP. Furthermore, they want to access GP appointments more quickly.

A member of the public informed us that they had recently called Brynmawr Medical Practice to book an appointment to see a doctor. The patient originally phoned the practice in the morning to be told they were "number 31" in the queue. Therefore, they decided to call back later that day.

When they called back, they had to wait a long time in the telephone queue. They were made aware their call was next to be answered.

However, they had to wait a further 30 minutes. When their call was answered, the patient had a lot of trouble trying to book an appointment to see the GP with the receptionist. This patient told us they were disappointed with their experience and the challenges they faced to book an appointment to see a doctor.

The Aneurin Bevan Community Health Council have also been made aware that a public meeting was held by local councillors and local residents of this area, to discuss access needs for Brynmawr medical practice.

Nant Dowlais Health Centre:

"There seems to be a problem with prescriptions at times"

"Once you get through the door, it's quite easy to get an appointment. I tried over 200 times today and got through because I persevered. It shouldn't be this difficult to see a doctor"

"Generally happy with the service provided"

There were multiple comments reported to us about the waits people were experiencing when attempting to get through to the practice via the telephone to arrange an appointment.

The Usk Surgery:

"I am deaf so have difficulties understanding phone conversations"

"All staff, doctors and nurses provide this area with excellent care in what are very challenging times for the NHS"

"Impression that since the other surgery closed and they took on 2,000 patients, they don't seem to have staffing and doctors to cope so falling off of quality of service"

Multiple comments were received in relation to patients having to provide a high amount of information to reception staff to book an appointment.

Isca Medical Centre:

"Staff are all excellent"

"Need to have longer opening times and answer phones"

"Reception staff are rude and try and enforce e-consult which is not fit for purpose – asks irrelevant questions and GPs not ensuring relevant checks are done"

External Environment

Llanbradach Health Centre (The Village Surgery):

It was noted that this surgery was a new building, which was described as "excellent". There was adequate parking available and suitable access to meet people's needs. However, it was reported that a patient had to rest on a cycle rack for support on entry to the surgery, as there were no handrails in place. The surgery's opening times and Out of Hours contact information were not published outside.

Brynmawr Medical Practice:

It is positive to report that this surgery has a large car park and is easily accessible to meet all patient needs. The outside area was observed as clean and tidy. However, similar to the above observation, the opening hours for this practice are not visible outside the practice. This information seemed to be on a notice board at the entrance to the waiting area. This notice board also had Out of Hours contact information visible.

Nant Dowlais Health Centre:

It was reported that there was no external signage regarding the opening hours of this practice, or further information given regarding Out of Hours contact numbers, etc.

Adequate parking at this surgery was observed and additional public parking was not too far from the practice.

Our visiting team observed that there were no waste bins outside the practice and the garden areas were not tended, where rubbish was evident.

The Usk Surgery:

It was noted that the disabled parking bays at this practice need re-painting as they are faded. Opening hours for the practice were only visible if you are able to look through the glass doors. There was no Out of Hours contact information outside the practice.

Isca Medical Centre:

It was noted that there is no designated parking for patients at this practice. There are seven car parking spaces for staff, with two disabled parking bays available.

This practice is situated on a busy road and therefore has restricted parking. To walk from the public footpath to the main entrance of the medical centre, people need to walk up a slight slope, which was reported as uneven.

Positively, opening hours for the practice were displayed on the main entrance door. Although, Out of Hours contact information was not displayed anywhere.

It was reported that the practice did provide suitable access to meet peoples' needs. However, during our visits, it was noted that there was a "large brown stone" that was being used to prop open the entrance door to the surgery, which could have been a trip hazard.

Members noted that the signage for this surgery on the nearby roads were very difficult to see.

Recommendations

1. The CHC would be pleased if the practice managers could share the positive feedback received with their teams.
2. Following the feedback received, all five practices are asked to consider providing patients with more information on how to book appointments via My Health Online.
3. Brynmawr Medical Practice is asked to assess whether the access to home visits could be improved.
4. Nant Dowlais Health Centre and Llanbradach Health Centre (The Village Surgery) are asked to ensure that all patients are able to communicate in their preferred language.
5. Brynmawr Medical Practice is asked to consider reviewing how they send information to patients to ensure consistency.
6. All practices are asked to assess whether the reception desk/area could be made more private for patients.
7. Isca Medical Centre is asked to look at the outside grounds of the practice to ensure there is safe access for patients.
8. All practices are asked to assess the appointment booking system, particularly people's long waits when contacting the practice to arrange an appointment.

9. All practices are asked to ensure that the opening times of the practice and Out of Hours contact information are visible on the outside of the building.
10. Nant Dowlais Health Centre is asked to consider the use of waste bins outside the practice to ensure members of the public have a place to dispose of their rubbish.
11. Llanbradach Health Centre (The Village Surgery) is asked to ensure there are appropriate handrails in place to assist patients when they attend the practice.

Thanks

The CHC would like to thank everyone who took the time to share their views and experiences with us about access to their GP practices. We also thank our members who carried out surveys with patients.

We hope the feedback people have taken the time to share, influences healthcare services to recognise and value what they do well and to enable them to act where they need to, as quickly as they can, to make things better.

About the Community Health Councils (CHCs)

CHCs are the independent watchdog of the National Health Service (NHS) within Wales. CHCs encourage and support people to have a voice in the design and delivery of NHS services.

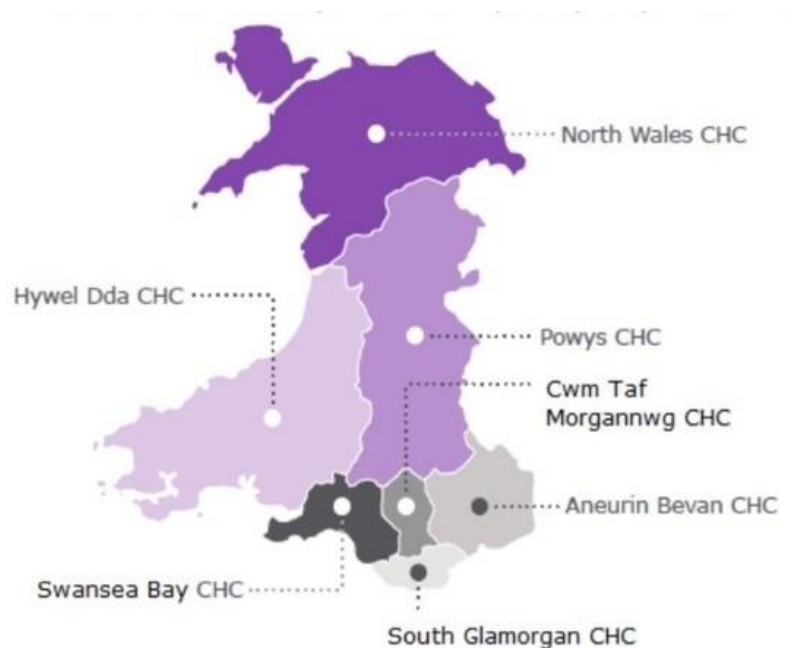
CHCs work with the NHS, inspection, and regulatory bodies. CHCs provide an important link between those who plan and deliver NHS services, those who inspect and regulate it and those who use it.

CHCs receive feedback from the public in many ways. Before the coronavirus pandemic, CHCs regularly visited NHS services to hear from people while they were receiving care and treatment. CHCs also heard from people at local community events, and through community representatives and groups.

Since the coronavirus pandemic, CHCs have focused on engaging with people in different ways.

This includes surveys, apps, videoconferencing, and social media to hear from people directly about their views and experiences of NHS services as well as through community groups.

There are 7 CHCs in Wales. Each one represents the “patient and public” voice in a different part of Wales.



Contact details



Aneurin Bevan Community Health Council
Raglan House
William Brown Close
Llantarnam Business Park
Cwmbran
NP44 3AB



01633 838516



Enquiries.AneurinBevanCHC@waleschc.org.uk



www.aneurinbevanchc.nhs.wales



@Bevanhc



CIC Aneurin Bevan CHC

Appendix 1 – Equality and Diversity Survey Results

Number of people who filled in the Equality and Diversity Questions: 163

Preferred Language								
English			Other			Not answered		
149			0			14		
Gender								
Woman/Girl	Man/Boy	Non-binary	Prefer not to say	Other	Not answered			
105	55	0	1	0	2			
Do you consider yourself to be a trans person?								
Yes		No		Prefer not to say		Not answered		
1		154		1		7		
Sexual Orientation								
Asexual	Bisexual	Gay	Lesbian	Heterosexual/Straight	Pansexual	Prefer not to say	Other	Not answered
4	3	0	1	144	2	5	0	4

Month and Year of birth							
Jan 1947- 60	Feb 1940- 03	Mar 1940- 95	Apr 1932- 04	May 1942- 00	Jun 1934- 90	Jul 1939 -85	Aug 1935 -75
8	9	17	11	7	12	14	9
Sept 1947- 03	Oct 1930- 86	Nov 1949- 95	Dec 1939- 02	1940- 64			
8	7	3	12	7			
Not Answered							
39							
Ethnicity							
Asian or Asian British:							
Bangla deshi	Chine se	Indian	Pakistani			Other	
0	0	0	0			0	
Black or Black British:							
African		Caribbean			Other		
0		0			0		
White:							
Welsh/English /Scottish/Nort hern Irish/British		Gypsy of Irish Traveller		Irish		Other	
154		0		2		0	
Other Ethnic group:							
Arab		Prefer not to say			Other		
Religion or belief							

Buddhism	Christianity	Hinduism	Islam	Judaism
0	86	1	0	0
Sikhism	Atheism	No Religion	Prefer not to say	Other religion or belief
0	4	46	9	4
Not answered				
13				
Do you consider yourself to have a disability?				
Yes	No	Prefer not to say	Not answered	
43	101	8	11	

Do you look after, or give any help or support to a family member, friend, or neighbour because of a long-term physical disability, learning difficulty, mental ill-health or problems related to old age?			
Yes	No	Prefer not to say	Not answered

39	116	0	0
Are you currently pregnant or have you been pregnant in the last year?			
Yes	No	Not answered	
1	152	9	

Appendix 2

Equality Impact Assessment

Please complete the following table to state whether the following groups will be adversely, positively, differentially affected by the policy/activity or that it will have no affect at all

Impact	None	Negative	Positive	Comments
Protected Characteristics				
Age	x			
Disability	x			
Sex	X			
Race	X			
Religion/Beliefs	X			
Sexual Orientation	X			
Gender reassignment	X			
Marriage and civil partnership	X			

Pregnancy and maternity	x			
Other characteristics to consider				
Welsh Language			x	Reports & Surveys published bilingually
Other Languages		x		Reports & Surveys can be published in required language on request
Human Rights	x			
Poverty level	x			
Persons with dependents	x			
Rural residence	x			
Gypsy and traveller communities	x			
Digitally vulnerable	x			Survey was available both printed and online.

Risk Assessment

Are there any risks arising from the implementation of this policy?

N/A

What measures are in place to manage or remove these risks?

N/A

Welsh Language

This document/policy has been assessed in line with our Welsh language requirements for standards:

- i) 37,38
- ii) 69,70,71

In coming to our impact determination, we sought advice/reviewed the evidence of/considered:

All CHC public facing documents are available in Welsh & English.

The CHC undertakes an Equality Impact Assessment for all public documents and identify them as positive for Welsh translations.

Outcome

Positive impact –

Standards 37, 38 – All public documents are produced and published bilingually in Welsh and English.

Standards 69-71 - We undertake Equality Impact Assessments for all public documents and identify them as positive for Welsh translations

Negative Impact – None

Accessible formats

This report is also available in Welsh.

If you would like this publication in an alternative format and/or language, please contact us.

You can download it from our website or ask for a copy by contacting our office.