

LLAIS POWYS REGION

WHAT WE'VE HEARD IN POWYS



Community Focused Engagement in Brecon Locality

April 2024

Executive Summary

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.

ABOUT LLAIS



We believe in a healthier Wales where people get the health and social care services they need in a way that works best for them.

We are here to understand your views and experiences of health and social care, and to make sure your feedback is used by decision-makers to shape your services.

We seek out both good and bad stories so we understand what works well and how services may need to get better. And we look to particularly talk to those whose voices are not often heard.

We also talk to people about their views and experiences by holding events in your local communities or visiting you wherever you're receiving your health or social care service.

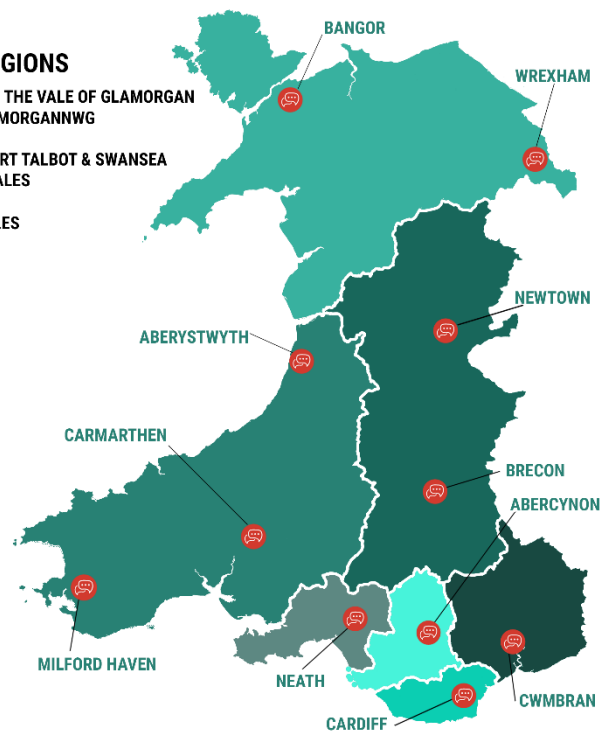
We also work with community and interested groups and in line with national initiatives to gather people's views.

And when things go wrong we support you to make complaints.

There are 7 Llais Regions in Wales. Each one represents the "patient and public" voice in different parts of Wales.

LLAIS REGIONS

- CARDIFF & THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN
- CWM TAF MORGANNWG
- GWENT
- NEATH PORT TALBOT & SWANSEA
- NORTH WALES
- POWYS
- WEST WALES



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the month of April 2024, Llais Powys engaged with the community of Brecon and the surrounding area, to understand people's experiences of health and social care services. This included various methods of engagement such as surveys, joining various groups and organisations for face-to-face discussion, visiting premises where health and care services are provided and talking to people at community events. We also hosted a free coffee morning for people to come along to chat with us. We spoke to people of different ages and with different health and care needs.

KEY FINDINGS

- 1. Praise for services within Powys and outside of the county.**
We received very positive feedback about many health and social care services provided locally in the area and in hospitals outside the area.
- 2. Accessing services was often challenging.**
We heard many comments about the difficulty accessing appointments at Brecon Medical Group Practice. We also heard about being unable to obtain NHS dental services; waiting times for planned care; concerns about travel and transport to services, especially for people who do not have their own vehicle.
- 3. Need for better communication.**
People told us that they often had difficulty obtaining the results of their diagnostic tests. We heard about the impact that lack of communication following referral has on patients. There were also comments about difficulties in sharing information between services and with patients or their GPs. This problem was worsened when

accessing services across the border in England.

4. **Need for better support for mental health and well-being.**

We heard reports of people waiting a long time following a referral for counselling. Some people said they would like more outreach support to help them at home. We also heard about the impact that loneliness and isolation have on people's well-being. We noted that there needs to be better awareness of the ChatHealth service that is available for children and young people.

5. **Workforce issues and capacity.**

We heard about the impact that the shortage of staff in some services has on people. Services highlighted were in social work, care work and specialist services such as neurology.

ACTIONS TAKEN

We are working closely with Powys Teaching Health Board and Powys County Council to ensure that they understand what people think about health and social care services and can make improvements to services where they are needed.

Once we had drafted the report outlining what we heard, we held a joint workshop with the Health Board, County Council and Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations. The aim of the session was to highlight some of the main themes, discuss areas of work which are already underway, and to jointly identify some actions which will be taken.

The following actions were agreed:

1. The Local Authority and Health Board promote a learning attitude towards complaints and would encourage people to contact their Complaints Teams so that individual concerns and issues can be addressed. Llais will ensure its staff and volunteers have the relevant information about services which people can access and

ways for people to be able to contact Social Services or NHS to raise any concerns directly with services.

2. The Health Board Primary Care Team will discuss feedback from the report with Brecon Medical Group Practice to support the continued improvement of services. Llais will arrange a follow-up visit to the Practice.
3. It was noted that access to NHS dentistry remains a challenge across the UK. A new national Dental Access Portal is being established which will help the NHS in Wales to understand overall demand for NHS dental services. Powys has been identified as a pilot area, and the national launch is expected later this year.
4. Comments regarding the age threshold for MIU were noted. The Health Board must ensure that it meets relevant clinical governance and quality standards, and that staff are trained to provide care for people aged 2 and over. The Health Board does not have training and clinical support in place to provide MIU services for children under 2. It is recognised that this does mean there will be additional travel for children under the age of 2.
5. Feedback about appointments at Brecon War Memorial Hospital will inform the Health Board work to develop a Single Point of Access for appointments.
6. The Health Board will use its Commissioning, Quality and Performance Review Meetings with secondary care providers to share the feedback regarding appointments. All health boards have been asked by Welsh Government to introduce Waiting Well services that support people during their waits for planned care treatment.
7. The Health Board will continue to work with providers in England to identify better ways to share patient information across the border. It must be mindful of the need to ensure data protection requirements are met and address risks of sharing information between different systems, including in relation to cyber security.
8. The Health Board will undertake a refreshed marketing campaign to raise awareness of the ChatHealth service for children and young

people.

9. The information within the report about Parkinson's will be shared with the Therapies teams in Powys, to consider the scope for expanding therapy support.
10. Feedback about the wellbeing teams in schools will be picked up with the Local Authority Education Service for consideration.
11. The Director of Social Services will liaise with the Education Service and provide a response to Llais about the closure of the hydrotherapy pool at Ysgol Penmaes in Brecon.
12. The Director of Social Services will raise the issue of poor communication with the senior leadership team at Powys County Council.

CONCLUSION

The engagement activities carried out provided valuable insights into the experiences and needs of the Brecon community regarding health and social care services. The positive feedback about many local and external services highlights the strengths within the current system. However, significant challenges were also identified, particularly in accessing services, communication, mental health support, and workforce capacity.

Our findings underscore the need for targeted improvements to ensure that health and social care services in Powys are accessible, responsive, and adequately supported. The actions agreed upon during the joint workshop demonstrate a committed effort to address these challenges and improve services.

We are confident that the collaborative approach taken will lead to meaningful improvements in the areas identified. Continued engagement with the community and stakeholders will be essential to

monitor progress and ensure that any changes made meet the needs of the residents of Brecon and surrounding areas.

THANKS

We thank everyone who took the time to share their views and experiences with us about their health and care services and to share their ideas.

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

FEEDBACK

We'd love to hear what you think about this publication, and any suggestions about how we could have improved it, so we can use this to make our future work better.

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