



Eich llais mewn iechyd | Your voice in health
a gofal cymdeithasol | and social care

LLAIS GWENT REGION ENGAGEMENT REPORT

HIP AND KNEE PLANNED SURVEY

JULY 2024



**Does waiting for planned hip and knee surgery
affect people's mental health and wellbeing in
Gwent?**

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.

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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 decision-makers use your feedback to shape your services.

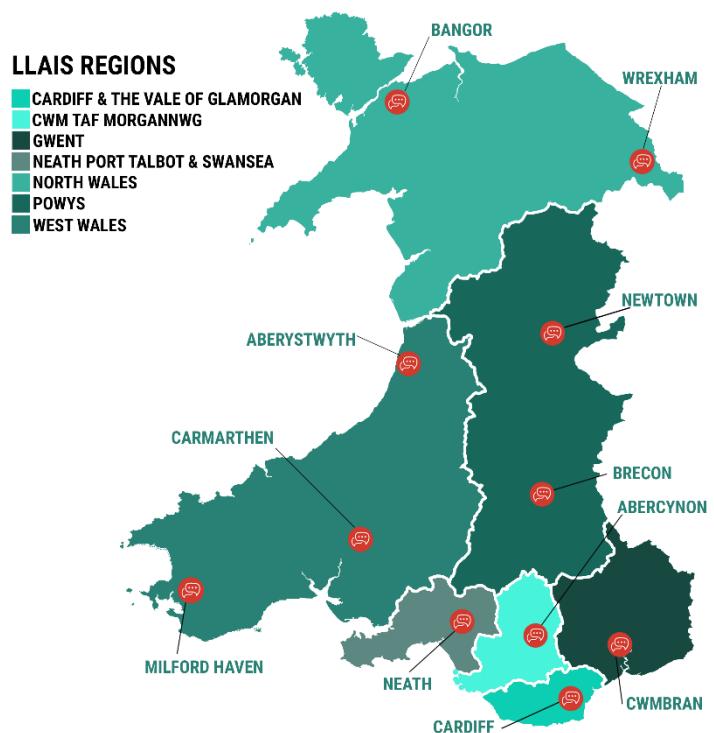
We seek out both good and bad stories so we understand what works well and how services may need to get better. And we look to particularly talk to those whose voices are not often heard.

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.





At the start of the pandemic, most appointments and treatments were postponed. However, this had an impact on people's waits for planned surgery across the UK.

In April 2022, the Welsh Government unveiled an ambitious plan to tackle long waiting times and transform planned care. The Health Minister said, "The plan aims to ensure no one will be waiting more than a year for treatment, in most specialities by Spring 2025".¹

However, the reality still remains challenging. As of January 2024, 11,736 patients in the care of Aneurin Bevan University Health Board were waiting over 36 weeks for Trauma and Orthopaedic treatment (not specific to hips and knees). By April 2024, this figure increased to 12,475.²

Llais created a survey which focused on people who are awaiting planned hip and knee surgeries in Gwent, aiming to understand the impact of prolonged waits on mental health and lifestyle.

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board supported our project by displaying our poster, as well as copies of the survey for people to complete and return to us in freepost envelopes provided. These were displayed in the relevant outpatient clinics.

From January – April 2024, people had the opportunity to share their experiences with us via our survey.

¹ <https://www.gov.wales/ambitious-plan-end-long-waiting-times-and-transform-planned-care>

² <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Health-and-Social-Care/NHS-Hospital-Waiting-Times/Referral-to-Treatment/patientpathwayswaitingtostarttreatment-by-month-groupedweeks-treatmentfunction>

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK



In total, 48 people took the time to share their experiences while waiting for planned hip or knee surgeries. Most of our respondents were aged over 64 years old.

- 18 – 24 years old: 1
- 25 – 34 years old: 1
- 35 – 44 years old: 1
- 45 – 54 years old: 3
- 55 – 64 years old: 10
- Above 64 years old: 32

27 people told us they were waiting for knee surgery, 17 people were waiting for hip surgery and 4 people told us they were waiting for both surgeries.

At the time people completed our survey, 22 people told us they were currently waiting between 1 – 2 years and 20 people told us they were waiting between 3 – 4 years.

We asked, **“Have you been told how long you are going to have to wait for your surgery?”** Among those informed, most were told to expect a wait of 1-2 years. However, some people have already exceeded the predicted 1-2 year wait.

People found the waiting time for their planned hip or knee surgery poor, and most reported no communication from the hospital or clinic during the wait.

“No update for 3+ years”

“I’m assuming it’s planned as no real details are fed back via doctor etc. No contact available for updates”

“The only updates I have had have been because I have phoned inpatient bookings and the scheduler. The longer I have waited, as

well as mobility being affected, it has impacted on my other hip and my mental health making me feel more anxious"

"I feel let down having to battle to get any information about what is going on"

Despite having access to pain medication, physiotherapy, and support from the "Keeping Well Hub" provided by Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, many people still report severe pain and feel it is worsening during their wait.

"Constant pain = mood swings"

"Makes you feel low being in permanent pain"

"Very depressed as always in pain – getting worse with no end in sight"

People told us that their general condition had deteriorated and felt their quality of life had been effected.

Most people felt to some extent that the wait for their surgery has impacted their mental health and wellbeing.

People reported their struggles to carry out day-to-day activities and felt that their independence had been affected, meaning they have to rely on others around them more.

"Not able to play sports with the grandchildren"

"Not able to walk independently"

"I have had to employ people to do my housework and look after my garden. Changed to automatic car"

"I got signed off work 8 years ago because of my knee and haven't worked since"

"No more walks with my wife, spending more time indoors"

"I cannot do all the everyday tasks"



It is clear that people are struggling in many ways whilst waiting for their planned hip and knee surgeries. People reported severe pain and felt that their quality of life had been effected. We were also told its impacting people's ability to carry out day-to-day activities with dignity. One person told us:

"I cannot walk on my own for fear of falling, I have to use a crutch. 21 years of age and find it embarrassing that I cannot do things on my own for myself"

While some people can lean on others for assistance, we must also consider those who lack a support network. And for those who do step up to help, their actions impact their own lives too.

Llais Gwent would like to make the following recommendations or "representations" to Aneurin Bevan University Health Board – on behalf of people who took the time to give us their feedback.

Representation 1: Communication

Please can you tell us if, how, and how often you communicate with people who are on a waiting list for planned hip or knee surgery?

Representation 2: Plans

Please can you tell us if you have any plans in place to try to reduce the long waits for people who are waiting for planned knee or hip surgery?

Representation 3: Mental Health and Well-being

Please can you tell us if you offer people alternative mental health and well-being support, other than the "Keeping Well Hub" whilst they wait for planned hip or knee surgery?

THANKS



We thank everyone who took the time to share their views and experiences with us about their waits for planned hip and knee surgery.

We would also like to thank staff at Aneurin Bevan University Health Board for their support for our project.

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

Appendix 1 – Equality and Diversity Survey Results

What is your preferred language?	
English	Other
41	

Which gender do you identify with?				
Man/boy	Woman/girl	Non-binary	Other	Prefer not to say
25	17			

Do you consider yourself to be a trans person?		
Yes	No	Prefer not to say
	40	

What is your sexual orientation?			
Asexual	Bisexual	Gay	Lesbian
2			
Heterosexual/Straight	Pansexual	Other	Prefer not to say
39			1

Month and Year of Birth					
Jan 1950-70	Feb 1950-60	Mar 1955-70	Apr 1945-70	May 1940-65	Jun 1940-00
4	1	4	5	4	7
Jul 1950-75	Aug 1960-65	Sept 1950-65	Oct 1945-70	Nov 1950-55	Dec 1935-40
4	1	3	5	1	1

What is your ethnicity?				
Asian or Asian British				
Bangladeshi	Chinese	Indian	Pakistani	Other

Black or Black British		
Bangladeshi Chinese	Indian Pakistani	Other

Mixed			
Asian and White	Black African and White	Black Caribbean and White	Other

White			
Welsh/English/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	Irish	Other
38			

Other Ethnic group			
Arab	Any other	Prefer not to say	Other
		3	

What is your religion or belief?				
Buddhism	Christianity	Hinduism	Islam	Judaism
	17			
Sikhism	Atheism	No religion	Prefer not to say	Other
		17	5	

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?		
Yes	No	Prefer not to say
15	14	6

Do you look after, or give any help or support to a family member, friend, or neighbour because of long term physical disability, learning difficulty, mental ill-health, or age-related problems?		
Yes	No	Prefer not to say
4	34	2

Are you currently pregnant or have you been pregnant in the last year?

Yes	No	Prefer not to say
1	37	2

Which of the following best describes your financial status?

I have more than enough for necessities, and a large amount of disposable income, that I can save or spend on extras or leisure	3
I have more than enough for basic necessities, and a small amount of disposable income, that I can save or spend on extras or leisure	17
I have just enough for basic necessities and little else	6
I do not have enough for basic necessities and sometimes run out of money	4
I do not know/prefer not to say	12

Appendix 2

Equality Impact Assessment

Please complete the following table to state whether the following groups will be adversely, positively, differentially affected by Llais' policy/activity/report 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 are available and published bilingually
Other Languages		X		Reports & surveys can be published in a 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			

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/report has been assessed in line with our Welsh language requirements for standards:

37,38

69,70,71

In coming to our impact determination, we can evidence that:
All Llais public facing documents are available in Welsh & English.
Llais 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

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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