
Aneurin Bevan Community Health Council

Engagement Report

Access to NHS Services at
HMP Prescoed & Usk

March 2023



Contents	Page
Introduction & background	3
Feedback we received	3
HMP Prescoed	4
HMP Usk	7
Conclusion	13
Recommendations	13
Thanks	14
About the CHCs	15
Contact details	16
Equality and Diversity	17
Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment	20

Introduction & background

Aneurin Bevan Community Health Council (ABCHC) is an independent statutory organisation who represent the interests of people in Gwent. We aim to encourage people to be actively involved in decisions affecting the delivery of healthcare.

As part of our annual plan, we wanted to understand people's experiences of accessing NHS Services whilst in Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) at Prescoed and Usk.

To do this we worked collaboratively with the Public Health Team in the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board. A suitable survey was created and a "survey pack" was put together, that contained:

- Survey (English and Welsh)
- Easy read version of the survey (English and Welsh)
- A copy of our privacy notice (English and Welsh)

The survey packs were taken to both HMP sites and distributed to people who wanted to give us their feedback.

The survey packs were available in both sites from January – March 2023.

The raw data of this survey has been shared with the Public Health Team to enable them to complete their needs assessment.

Feedback we received

In total, we received **104** responses to our survey, two of these responses were in Welsh.



HMP Prescoed

In total we received **9** responses from people in HMP Prescoed.

Primary Care and Secondary Care

Most people told us they found it easy to access the following Primary Care services:

- GP-led Services
- Nurse-led Services
- Health Care Assistant-led Services
- Opticians
- Dentists
- Pharmacy/Prescription Services
- Screening and immunisations
- On-going mental health support

Similarly, people found it easy to access secondary care services. However, two people told us they had experienced delays when wanting to access NHS services, such as long waiting times and waiting for a new referral for treatment or an appointment. One person told us that they had been waiting to be seen by podiatry for 18 months.

When we asked people in HMP Prescoed to rate the NHS services that they access, most people rated the services as *"very good," "good,"* or *"ok."* Although, one person rated physiotherapy as *"poor."*

Wellbeing

When we asked, *"How would you rate the following services provided by the prison (physical activity/exercise, food and smoking cessation service)?"* most people rated these services as *"ok."* Three people rated the food as *"very poor."*

Most people in HMP Prescoed told us that their current physical and mental health was *"ok."* Two people rated their physical health as *"poor,"* and one person rated their mental health as *"poor."*

It was encouraging to read that people in HMP Prescoed felt that the services provided by the prison support their health and wellbeing needs.

We asked, *"What physical health and wellbeing interventions are currently being provided in your prison?"*

The options that people could select from were:

- Peer support
- Mindfulness
- Diet based & Lifestyle
- Sports/Physical activity
- Smoking cessation
- Substance Misuse Support

We received mixed responses to this question, which could suggest that people in HMP Prescoed are unsure of what physical health and wellbeing interventions are available for them to access.

Most people did not access the physical health and wellbeing interventions. However, those that did, rated their access to the services:

	Not accessed	Very poor	Poor	Ok	Good	Very good
Peer Support	3	2				1
Mindfulness	4		2			
Diet based & Lifestyle	3	2				1
Sports/Physical Activity	3			3		
Smoking cessation	4		2			
Substance Misuse Service	4	2				

We wanted to understand if there were any reasons that would stop people from being able to look after their physical and wellbeing needs. People at HMP Prescoed told us:

- Activities or support is not planned at a good time for them
- Not enough equipment
- Not enough indoor or outdoor space
- Not enough staff time to enable supervision

- Poor relationships between people and the staff who run the activities
- Not enough money for the staff to run activities or buy equipment

Communication

Everyone who filled in our survey at HMP Prescoed told us that they were able to communicate in their preferred language when accessing NHS Services. During appointments, people felt that their communication needs were also met.

People felt that they were involved in decisions about their care.

Comments

We asked people *"Do you feel there is anything that the prison service does particularly well when helping you access NHS services?"*

"Helpful, approachable staff. Accessible service mostly better than outside"

"No"

"NHS excellent"

"No"

"All health and wellbeing services are efficiently run/provided"

"The healthcare department at HMP Prescoed are brilliant, helpful, polite and will do anything to accommodate if possible"

"NHS service excellent"

"The system which runs at Prescoed works well for me and my needs!"

We also asked, *"Do you feel there is anything that could be better when helping you access NHS services?"*

"1) Longer notice for appointments, especially for outworkers. 2) Easier collection of prescriptions, or maybe be able to leave in lockers?"

"Not that I can think of"

HMP Usk

We received **95** responses from people in HMP Usk.

Primary Care and Secondary Care

We asked people how easy it was for them to access Primary Care Services whilst in prison. Most people told us that it was either "*very easy,*" or "*easy*" to access these services.

There were not many people in HMP Usk who accessed Secondary Care (Hospital based) services. However, those that did access the services, told us they accessed the following:

- Physiotherapy
- Podiatry
- Cardiology
- Diabetic Services
- Sensory Impairment
- Respiratory
- Neurological
- Pain Management Services
- Cancer Services

There were also others who received treatment from Trauma and Orthopaedics, Radiology and Gastroenterology.

People who accessed Secondary Care Services told us it was mostly "*very easy,*" "*easy,*" or "*ok*" when needing to access these services. However, five people told us it was "*difficult*" and three people told us it was "*very difficult.*"

People in HMP Usk told us that they had experienced some delays when accessing NHS Services. This was due to transport, long waiting times and access to ongoing treatment. Nine people reported that they were still experiencing delays for treatment/appointments which they had previously been referred for.

Comments:

"Not knowing a ballpark date for operation"

"No delays accessing any treatment or care at HMP Usk, better care than outside [the] prison system"

"Keep it up"

"I find healthcare very good"

"No real problems"

"Well organised at HMP Usk"

"Been waiting over 12 months for audiology referral for tinnitus after being informed I was eligible for assistance"

Overall, most people rated the services they accessed as either *"very good," "good"* or *"ok."* However, there were some services that people rated their access to as *"poor"* or *"very poor"*:

	Not accessed	Very poor	Poor	Ok	Good	Very good
Ongoing Mental Health Support	25	3	3	16	13	16
Counselling Services	51		1	2	8	4
GP-led Services	10		4	9	3	29
Nurse-led Services	31	2	2	5	14	28
Healthcare Assistant-led Services	46		1	3	8	16
Sexual Health Services	58			3	3	3
Screening and immunisations	17			14	18	25
Opticians	14		8	14	26	22
Dentists	14	3	5	8	26	30
Pharmacy/Prescriptions	3	1	1	6	23	53
Physiotherapy	50	3	2	7	5	2
Podiatry	56	2	1	3	6	2
Cardiology	48		3	6	4	8
Diabetic Services	51		1	5	8	9
Sensory Impairment	53	1	1	5	6	3
Respiratory	48	1	5	4	7	8
Neurology Services	59	1		3	1	2
Pain Management Services	43	5	2	11	3	4
Cancer Services	58		1	2	2	3
Substance Misuse	56		1	7	3	1
Palliative Care	61			1		2

Wellbeing

It was encouraging to read that most people in HMP Usk rated their current physical and mental health as either *"very good," "good" or "ok."* However, 30 people rated their physical and mental health as *"poor" or "very poor"*. No further information was given.

We asked people how they would rate the following services that are provided by the prison:

	Not accessed	Very poor	Poor	Ok	Good	Very good
Physical activity/exercise	8	5	11	34	23	9
Food		27	29	31	4	4
Smoking cessation	35	21	5	14	5	2

It's important that people feel that they are supported with their health and wellbeing needs, therefore, we asked *"Do you feel that the services provided by the prison support your health and wellbeing needs?"*

Yes: 65 No: 28

We asked, *"What physical health and wellbeing interventions are currently being provided in your prison?"*

We gave people the option to select the following:

- Peer Support
- Mindfulness
- Diet based & Lifestyle
- Sports/physical activity
- Smoking Cessation
- Substance Misuse Support

When reviewing the responses to this question, people selected a variety of services. This is like the responses received from people in HMP Prescoed. This could suggest that people are not aware of the services that are available to them for their health and wellbeing.

We then asked people to rate their **access** to these services:

	Not accessed	Very poor	Poor	Ok	Good	Very good
Peer Support	42	1	2	13	17	11
Mindfulness	39	3	4	18	12	1
Diet based & Lifestyle	34	14	8	20	5	1
Sports/Physical Activity	16	4	11	28	21	7
Smoking cessation	56	9	0	6	6	3
Substance Misuse	36	2	0	3	5	3

We wanted to find out if there were any obstacles that stopped people from being able to look after their physical and well-being needs.

Most people felt there isn't enough:

- indoor or outdoor space
- staff time to enable supervision
- money for the staff to run activities or buy equipment

A small number of people felt:

- There isn't enough equipment
- It's hard to get people to join in with the activities
- There are poor relationships between people and the staff who run the activities
- Activities or support is not planned at a good time for them.

Communication

It was encouraging to read that most people who filled in our survey at HMP Usk, were able to communicate in their preferred language when they access NHS Services. However, two people told us they were not able to do this, as their preferred language is Welsh.

One person told us that they would like to express general requests in Welsh, but they are unable to do this because: *"there are no Welsh speakers in the NHS or in the prison at all."*

Two people told us they did not feel that their communication needs were met during appointments. One person told us that they sometimes find it hard to understand what people are trying to say.

53 people told us that they felt things are *"always"* explained to them in a way that they can understand when speaking with someone from the NHS. Thirty-two people felt this *"usually"* happened and nine people felt this *"sometimes"* happened.

It is important that people feel they are involved in decisions about their care. Therefore, we asked, *"When speaking with someone in the NHS, are you involved as much as you wanted to be in decisions about your care?"*

Always: 42

Usually: 37

Sometimes: 15

Never: 1

Comments

We asked, *"Do you feel there is anything that the prison service does particularly well when helping you access NHS services?"*

Please see below a summary of comments:

"The system works well to a point here at HMP Usk but falls down when you request to see a doctor and end up seeing a nurse, as they are limited as to what treatment they can provide, and [when] you really need to see the doctor you have to make another appointment to see the doctor which is what you originally did in the first place"

"The healthcare service here is exceptionally good although the waiting times for my knee operation is overly long"

"Always happy to help"

"Staff in mental care give us time. We are treated like humans. It's a safe space where I can feel I can offload my problems and concerns. I know

that other prison services are available for this, but I cannot talk with these. Something about the healthcare staff makes me at ease, and allows me to talk"

"The staff in USK are so good in their jobs"

"No sorry"

"Friendly and very helpful. It's the only part of the prison that works really well"

We asked, *"Do you feel there is anything that could be better when helping you access NHS services?"*

Please see below a summary of comments:

"Seeing the right person, you have applied to see. i.e., the doctor not the nurse."

"I would love to be prescribed extra gym sessions as part of weight loss programme. Have access to better food – again, part of weight loss programme – not because prison food is poor. Access to non-drug pain relief. i.e., Tens"

"Forms need to be filled in faster as I am waiting for [a] form to be done so I can go to the gym and sports. This is not good as I suffer from PTSD, so sport/gym is a massive help for me to stay stable"

"To be seen quicker by specialist when referred. To be referred sooner rather than be delayed with non-effective treatment"

"After starting any form of treatment such as dental would be nice to finish what was started and not leave things to get worse"

"More money needed to the NHS by Government"

"Appointment times a bit more flexible with other commitments"

"Explain things simpler when they're trying to say"



Conclusion

Overall, people in HMP Usk and Prescoed mostly have positive experiences when they access NHS services. However, the findings of this survey have highlighted areas where improvement is needed, such as:

- People in HMP Usk and Prescoed selected various options when we asked what health and wellbeing services were available to them. This could suggest that people are unsure of what services they can access.
- Most people rated the food in both sites as “poor.”
- People faced obstacles when trying to access services to look after their physical and mental wellbeing.
- Two people from HMP Usk said they were not able to communicate in their chosen language (Welsh) because there are no Welsh speakers.

Recommendations

As a result of the responses we received, the CHC would be grateful if the Public Health Team would consider the following:

- 1) Share positive feedback that has been highlighted throughout this report, with the relevant teams.
- 2) Ensure that people in both sites are made aware of what health and wellbeing interventions are available to them, through providing relevant information that is regularly updated.
- 3) Ensure that people can communicate in their preferred language. One person told us they would like to express general requests in Welsh, but they were unable to do this as *“there are no Welsh speakers in the NHS or in the prison at all.”*
- 4) Review people’s feedback regarding the obstacles they face when wanting to access services to look after their physical and mental wellbeing.

Thanks

The CHC would like to thank everyone who took the time to share their views with us. We hope the feedback influences healthcare services to recognise and value what they do well and enable them to act where they need to.

We would also like to thank the Public Health Team in the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board for collaborating with us for this project.



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.aneurinbevanhc.nhs.wales



@Bevanhc



CIC Aneurin Bevan CHC

Equality and Diversity Survey Results

Preferred Language		
English	Other	
63	5	

Gender					
Woman/Girl	Man/Boy	Non-binary	Prefer not to say	Other	
	92	1	2		

Do you consider yourself to be a trans person?			
Yes	No	Prefer not to say	
	92		

Sexual Orientation								
Asexual	Bisexual	Gay	Lesbian	Heterosexual/Straight	Pansexual	Prefer not to say	Other	
	4	3		84	1	2		

Month and Year of birth							
Jan 1960-90	Feb 1960-2001	Mar 1960-90	Apr 1960-76	May 1960-85	Jun 1960-99	Jul 1960-90	Aug 1960-90

8	4	6	7	7	9	8	7
Sept 1960-84	Oct 1960-99	Nov 1960-95	Dec 1960-53	1957-99			
5	9	6	9	5			

Ethnicity				
Asian or Asian British:				
Bangladeshi	Chinese	Indian	Pakistani	Other
Black or Black British:				
African	Caribbean		Other	
	1		1	
White:				
Welsh/English/Scottish/Northern Irish/British		Gypsy of Irish Traveller	Irish	Other
85		1		2
Other Ethnic group:				
Arab		Prefer not to say	Other	
1		1		

Religion or belief				
Buddhism	Christianity	Hinduism	Islam	Judaism

3	41	1	1	
Sikhism	Atheism	No Religion	Prefer not to say	Other religion or belief
	6	27	2	9

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Yes	No	Prefer not to say	Not answered
26	55	1	8

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	
17	74	3	

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

Yes	No	Prefer not to say	
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	84	1	
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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			All CHC surveys are available in a different format upon request.
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			

Risk Assessment

<p>Are there any risks arising from the implementation of this policy?</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>What measures are in place to manage or remove these risks?</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>Welsh Language</p> <p>This document/policy has been assessed in line with our Welsh language requirements for standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) 37,38 ii) 69,70,71 <p>In coming to our impact determination, we sought advice/reviewed the evidence of/considered:</p>

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.