



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

# Llais West Wales Region Engagement Report



South Pembrokeshire Hospital Visit October  
2023

# 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.

# Contents

About Llais .....	4
Background.....	5
What we did .....	6
What's working well?.....	7
What's working not so well? .....	10
In summary.....	13
Our Recommendations .....	13
Thanks .....	14
Feedback.....	14
Contact details .....	14

# 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.

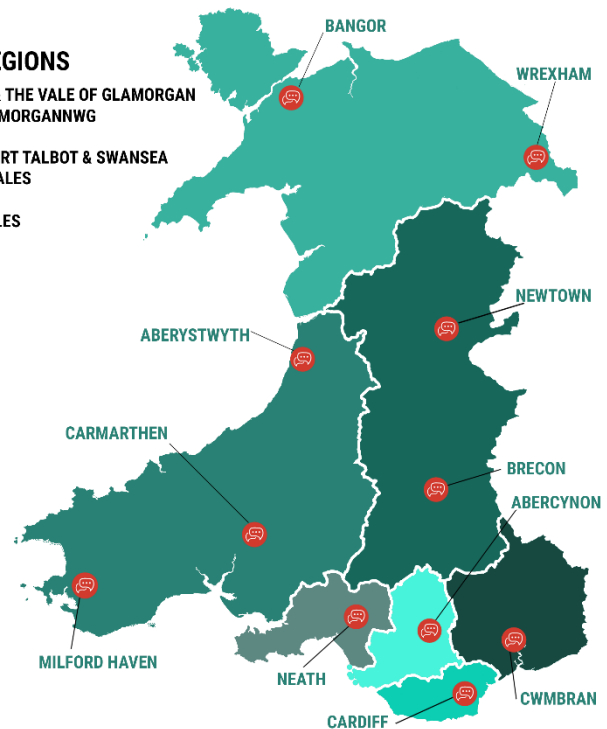
We also work with community and interested groups and in line with national initiatives to gather people's views.

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



## BACKGROUND

In August 2023 Hywel Dda University Health Board (HDdUHB) announced that Withybush General Hospital would be partially closed for the rest of 2023 and much of 2024 after the discovery of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC), otherwise known as crumbling concrete, was found in some areas of the hospital. Closing part of Withybush Hospital would allow the health board time to seek out which areas are affected by RAAC and address the safety issues.

RAAC is a material that was often used for building between the 1960s and 1990s. RAAC has been found in some areas of Withybush Hospital and at a small section of Bronglais Hospital.

To ensure patient and staff safety 50% of Withybush Hospital in-patient beds were moved to South Pembrokeshire Community Hospital.

The Health Board created a new 30-bedded ward in South Pembrokeshire Hospital in Pembroke Dock. The new ward provides extra beds for palliative and rehabilitation care for patients from Withybush Hospital and directly from the community.

**South Pembrokeshire Hospital has increased its bed number to 70 (this number includes the existing 40-bedded Sunderland Ward) to support the local communities.**

The new Cleddau Ward is GP-led and staffed by experienced nursing staff, physiotherapists and occupational therapists. Additional medical and support worker roles have been appointed to support the existing staff.

## WHAT WE DID

In October 2023, staff and volunteers of Llais visited the hospital to speak with in-patients at South Pembrokeshire Hospital.

Four teams of two people spoke with in-patients to ask about the care they are receiving.

As well as speaking to in-patients, we also posted a survey on social media, this included Facebook and Twitter.



### Our Survey

In our conversations with people we asked only three questions, these were :

**What's working well?**

**What's not working so well?**

**What do you think could be done better?**

## WHAT'S WORKING WELL?

On the whole patients were happy with the move from Withybush Hospital to South Pembrokeshire Hospital, they felt that communication between staff, patients and visitors was good.

People felt that the atmosphere was more relaxed at South Pembrokeshire than at either Withybush or Glangwili Hospitals, they said that having views over the surrounding countryside, with outside seating for use in good weather helped people feel better

People told us that wards were quiet during the night. This meant that lack of sleep was not a problem.

We heard positive comments about the food:

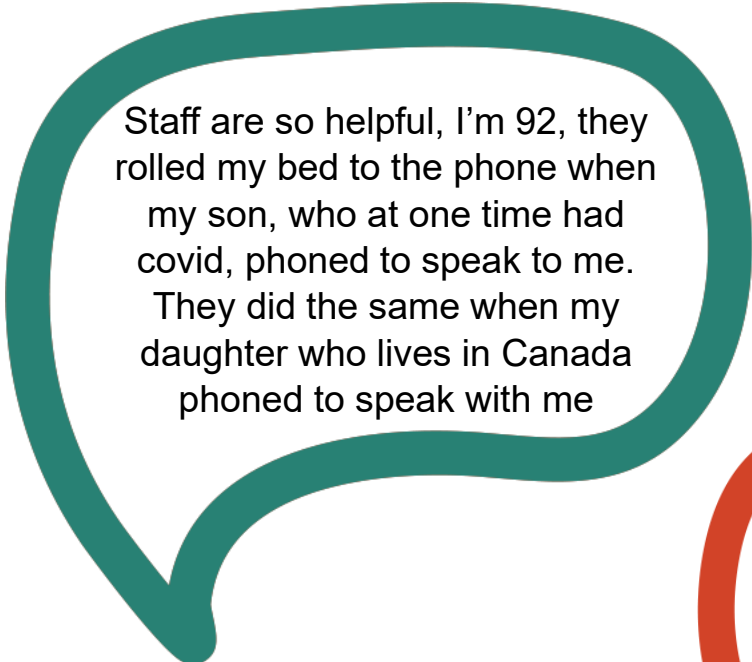


Many said that they felt looked after, 'staff are approachable and helpful';


People told us that there were no problems accessing toilets day or night and staff answered call bells promptly;

There were also positive comments regarding physiotherapy;

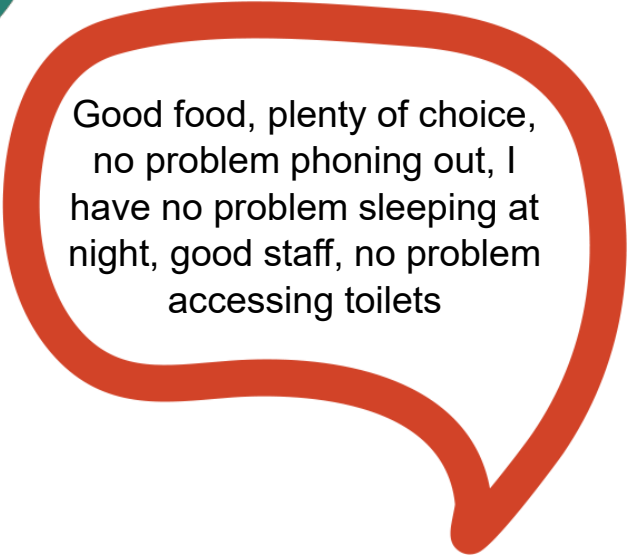
Physio is supportive and 'on top of treatment'.



Staff are so helpful, I'm 92, they rolled my bed to the phone when my son, who at one time had covid, phoned to speak to me. They did the same when my daughter who lives in Canada phoned to speak with me



Good view,  
good food,  
surroundings  
good



Good food, plenty of choice,  
no problem phoning out, I  
have no problem sleeping at  
night, good staff, no problem  
accessing toilets



Staff try and do the best they can, I don't have to wait too long for help. Food is nice, and water always to hand. Staff are attentive to my needs and check in regularly. The Physio is supportive too and 'on top' of my treatment. The ward is quiet, and we have visitors twice a day. No problem with communication and the transfer from Withybush went well

I have no problems with the food and good to have a TV, able to get to toilet, I had no problems moving from Withybush



## WHAT'S WORKING NOT SO WELL?

Some patients felt that they needed more to occupy their time as the day often felt long without much to do. Many of the patients on Sunderland ward had use of own TV but this was not the same in all wards, some had to share a television or could not see it very easily.

Patients (Cleddau north ward) told us they had little to do, some were sitting at their beds, one had an I-pad but wasn't a confident user of technology, another had a smartphone. Access to a newspaper trolley would have helped. One said that he would spend 2 hours or more on a newspaper but wasn't much of 'a reader of books'. A once-a-day visit from a trolley service could have helped people get magazines, papers, sweets, drinks etc.



Although there was access to TV and games on Cleddau (south) ward, some people did not find this helpful because it added to background noise.

There were few chairs readily available for use by visitors. However, during our visit to Cleddau ward (south) we were able to move chairs from the central 'office station' but it wasn't always easy to find chairs without having to ask staff.

People who had recently had a stroke and who were now disabled told us that they needed more support. They wanted to be able to get practical advice about benefits, how to adjust to a new life, adaptations for living at home, legal rights etc. People felt that not everything should focus on physical issues and they needed more information about living a different kind of life when they got home. They were worried about this whilst they were in hospital.

Not all patients felt the move from Withybush Hospital to South Pembrokeshire Hospital had gone so well. Some had only been told just before they moved, and this meant that they had to pack quickly. Others still had to go back to Withybush Hospital for some of their tests and treatment.



Shortage of staff. I get disturbed from noises outside the ward. My hospital stay is longer than it should be as health board can't find staff to care for me when I get home, and I can't afford to pay for care

No one told me about the move

Sometimes the TV and people playing games it gets too noisy'. After my treatment at Withybush I had to wait outside for my transport back, it was cold and there was a long queue, luckily someone gave me a blanket to keep me warm

I'd really like a daily newspaper, shame there's no trolley. Not enough to occupy me. I like to do word puzzles

I want to go home but I'm waiting for social care to sort out support before I can. It's taking a while

## IN SUMMARY

The RAAC situation has had a major impact on people in Withybush Hospital. Patients in general are positive about the change although there are some changes needed. Many of the staff who were working in Withybush Hospital moved to South Pembrokeshire Hospital so that they could continue to care for their patients.

Llais is aware that ongoing repair work has caused disruption to both staff and patients. We understand that creating new wards and moving people has involved a lot of hard work over the past months.

From our discussions with patients and from our survey results it was good to hear that so many patients had positive overall experience. However, patients' concerns and suggestions on how to make their experience better could not be ignored.

## OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Health Board must continue to provide a high standard of care following the 100% increase in bed number following the transfer of patients from Withybush Hospital to South Pembrokeshire
2. Health Board to look into working with organisations such as Friends of Pembrokeshire Hospital to provide daily newspaper trolley / book exchange to help lessen boredom
3. Health Board to provide chairs for visitors to the wards or signage for places where chairs are kept. Settee in the TV area (Cleddau Ward) was too low, patients have difficulty rising from the settee
4. Health Board to strengthen links with social care services, to raise awareness of patients who may have no family/extended family to help with basic needs such as providing clean nightwear/daywear and toiletries
5. Health Board to look into working with organisations to provide support and advice for patients with disability issues especially after a stroke. In addition to physical aspects of a stroke, support with house adaptations, benefits and patient rights

## 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.

## CONTACT DETAILS

LLAIS WEST WALES,  
SUITE 5, 1ST FLOOR,  
TY MYRDDIN,  
OLD STATION ROAD,  
CARMARTHEN,  
SA31 1LP.

TELEPHONE: 01646 697610  
EMAIL: WESTWALESENQUIRIES@LLAISCYMRU.ORG  
WEBSITE: WWW.LLAISCYMRU.ORG  
FACEBOOK: @LLAISWESTWALES  
TWITTER: LLAIS\_WALES