

Llais Gwent Region – Report for Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Public Board Meeting.

November 2025



To inform Aneurin Bevan University Health Board of current issues of concern, and positive observations, or public feedback being addressed by Llais Gwent Region in relation to the planning and delivery of health and social care services.

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.

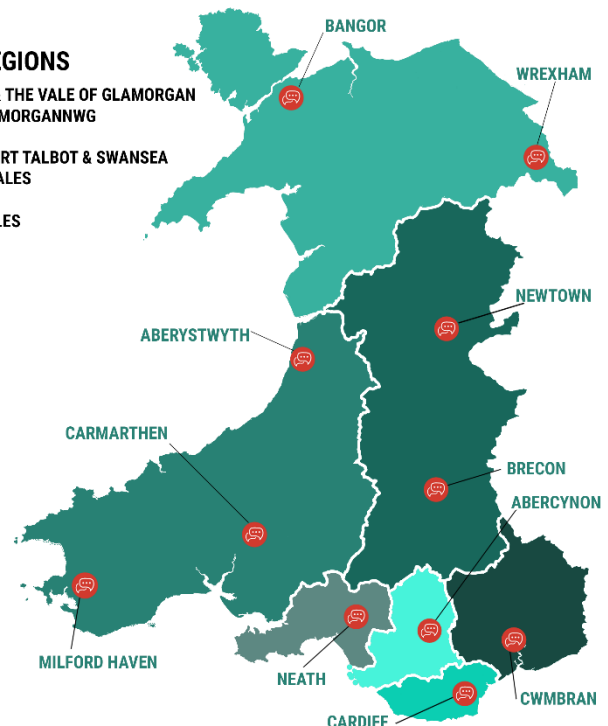
We also work with community and interested groups and in line with national initiatives to gather people's views.

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.

LLAIS REGIONS

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



Introduction



The purpose of this report is to inform Aneurin Bevan University Health Board of current issues of concern and positive observations, and public feedback being addressed by Llais Gwent Region in relation to the planning and delivery of health and social care services.

Llais continues to work in respect of engaging with the population, scrutinising, and offering independent challenge to the NHS and social care, to monitor and consider routine and urgent service changes. We also continue to provide independent Complaints Advocacy Service.

A National Conversation: Llais Strategic Plan 2024-2027



We now have our first national strategic plan. This plan has been created using what we have been told by the people of Wales, by our staff and volunteers and other bodies and groups we work with.

When this plan was being created, we thought about our legal duties and responsibilities such as the Quality and Engagement Act 2020, Equality Act 2010, The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015, The Welsh Language Standards 2016, The Socio-Economic Duty, the Public Sector Duty, and national plans and commitments such as the LGBTQ+ and the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan, as well as our remit letter.

Building on what we have learned in our first year, we have grouped things into five main priorities:¹

- 1) Drive a national conversation about the future of health and social care services
- 2) Push for services that meet everyone's needs.
- 3) Work together better.
- 4) Help people and services to use technology in ways that work for them.
- 5) Grow and improve as an organisation.

¹ <https://www.llaiswales.org/about-us/national-conversation-llais-strategic-plan-2024-2027>

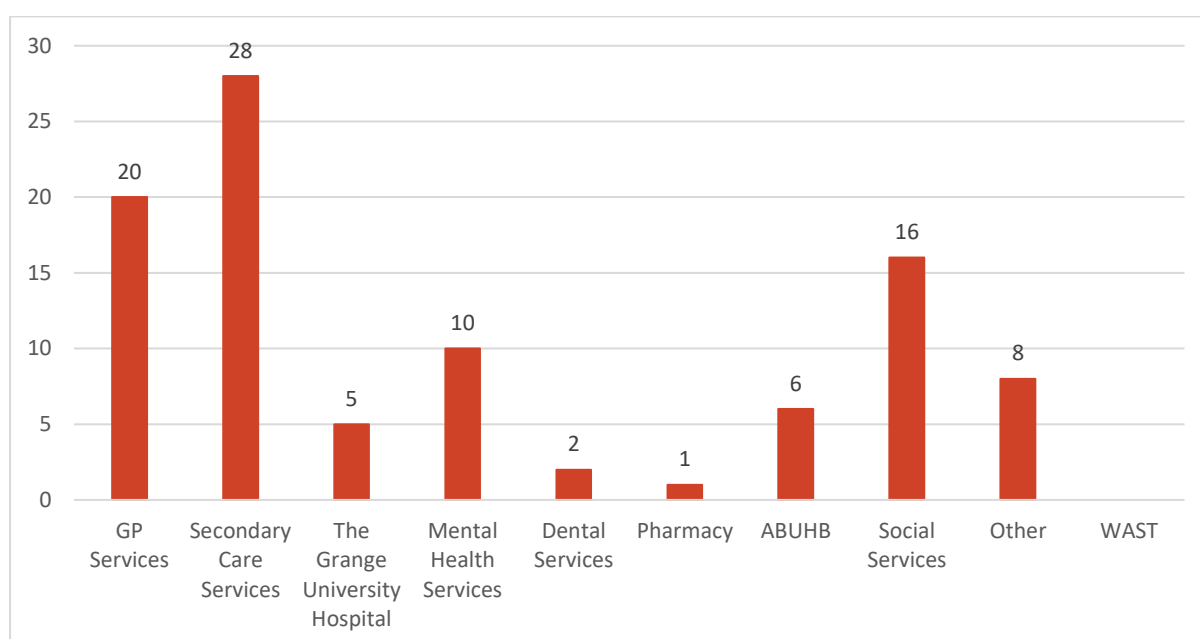


Local activities and feedback:

1. Gwent Advocacy Service

There were 96 contacts between September and October. 25 were formal concerns and 71 were enquiries that required early resolution or where we are awaiting consent.

Of the 96 contacts, 38 have now been resolved and 58 are still active.



Key Observations:

- **Secondary Care Services** received the highest number of contacts (28), with concerns including operation cancellations, excessive waiting times, unclear communication and failure to diagnose.
- **GP Services** accounted for 20 complaints, with recurring issues such as referrals not being sent, failure to diagnose, prescriptions not being actioned, and staff conduct concerns.
- **Mental Health Services** (10) received complaints related to, lack of care and support following discharge, delays in accessing assessments, and inadequate crisis response.
- **Social Care Services** (16) included concerns about care home standards of care, safeguarding, social worker conduct, and lack of discharge care packages.

2. Engagement in Gwent (September – October)

Throughout September and October, Llais focused its engagement on gaining people's insights for our national project, The Health and Social Care We Want. During this time, we spoke with 366 people through community outreach, public forum events, and Llais Local, ensuring we were present in the community and actively listening to their experiences of health and social care.

Community Insights... what we heard and what we did:

Public Forum

Llais facilitated a public forum focussed around ABUHB future plans for estates and capital developments of which St Woolos and Nevill Hall Hospitals featured as key topics of interest by people and communities in Gwent - building on the Health Board's earlier 12-week engagement on enhanced local general hospitals.

This forum demonstrated the value of continued community involvement in shaping local health services. By providing a platform for people to share their views and ask questions directly, it ensured that the voices of people and communities remain central to decisions about the future of their hospitals and healthcare infrastructure.

Social Care – Individuals and families living with dementia

Llais teamed up with the Royal Voluntary Service in Blaina to talk to people living with dementia and their carers and families to listen and hear what care and support looks and feels like for them and what would better care and support would look and feel like.

It was clear from these conversations that more support is needed, many near breaking point. Carers shared they often feel invisible, lonely and lost and unsure about what help is available. Many don't want to burden others, even when they're finding things difficult. These insights show how important it is to improve access to care and provide better emotional and practical support.

*"My husband was diagnosed with dementia. For two years, I felt **angry—not at him, but at the diagnosis**. I'm still trying to come to terms with it. **I don't want his life to stop because of dementia**. If you seem to be coping, services assume you don't need help."*

Our recent engagement with carers and individuals aligns closely with the national picture highlighted in Carers UK's State of Caring [report](#). The voices we've gathered locally in Gwent reflect many of the same concerns raised nationally.

Mrs A Story

My husband had a stroke a year ago, and I feel like he's been let down. He had a speech and language therapist who came weekly, but once that ended, we've had no further support or follow-up. I help him with his speech at home, but I think he'd benefit from more therapy. I don't know where to go for help. My family visits, but I don't want to burden them—they have their own lives.

Our recent [response](#) to the Senedd inquiry into improving access to support for unpaid carers echoes many of the report's key themes:

- **Financial strain:** Carers cutting back on essentials like food and heating, with many falling into debt or poverty.
- **Mental health and wellbeing:** Carers report high levels of stress, anxiety, and isolation. Llais has heard from carers who feel “invisible” and “at breaking point.”
- **Access to support:** Long waits for assessments, inconsistent respite care, and poor communication from services are common barriers.
- **Recognition and voice:** Carers want to be seen as partners in care, involved in decisions, and supported in ways that reflect their real needs.

We will continue to broaden our conversations by continuing to engage with carers in Gwent. We'll keep listening to carers and those accessing social care to better understand their challenges, particularly around emotional support, service access, and communication. Feedback will help us explore what support is currently available and where improvements are needed.

Llais will...

Continue to amplify voices, work with partners to address the gaps identified, and push for more accessible, compassionate, and coordinated support for carers across Gwent.

Talking to Gwent Care Home Providers

Gwent care home providers, owners, managers and stakeholders took part in our national project, *The Health and Social Care We Want*. Key themes and insights shared included:

Everyone deserves...

To have dignity; to feel valued and to feel the life they have led, means something.

Choice – The right to play an active role in all decisions.

To feel loved, respected and safe... Joy, and to be listened to.

To be treated as an individual with kindness, care and compassion.

A great care experiences looks like...

Easy to talk to, smiles, peaceful, trust, respect, safe, happiness, warm, knowing their rights

What needs to change across health and social care...

It needs to feel and be their home.

Having a voice and being part of designing their own care package.

It works for the population and no competition for resources.

Communication of care around hospital discharge.

Llais will...

Partner with care homes to amplify the voices of residents, families, and staff – shaping health and social care services across Gwent.

Insights from Young people

As part of our wider engagement work, we attended Coleg Gwent Freshers' Fairs where young people shared their views on what matters most to them when accessing NHS and social care services. Their insights are helping us understand the priorities and challenges younger people face and will inform how we shape future conversations.

"To be listened to, understood and respected"

"To feel as though you have a voice or a place to say something without feeling judged"

"Someone should be there to help you and tell you it's ok 😊"

Llais will...

Gain deeper insight to understand what matters to young people, what good care looks like and how their voices can shape future services.

3. Service Change Spotlight – Reconfiguration of Stroke Services

Llais is pleased to see support for the proposed principles in the recent engagement on future for Nevill Hall and enhanced local general hospitals. We recognise and recommend that more in-depth engagement for a period of 12 weeks will be important for major service changes, such as stroke rehabilitation. We look forward to working closely with ABUHB to ensure that individuals and communities continue to have a meaningful voice in shaping future developments across local hospital services.

4. Upcoming Activities: November and December

Roundtable discussion:

Llais is bringing key voices together for a roundtable discussion to explore the barriers people experiencing homelessness face when accessing health and social care. It's a chance to hear lived experiences, share insights, highlight good practice, and work together

to drive real change. Our aim is to build stronger, more inclusive services that meet the needs of everyone in our communities.

Please contact gwentenquiries@llaiscymru.org for more information or to get involved.

Llais Local:

Between 3rd and 28th November, Llais will be focusing engagement activities across Caerphilly, planning to meet people where they live, work, and spend time. By listening to real experiences of accessing health and social care, we aim to build a clearer picture of what matters most. This approach brings us closer to communities and helps shape services that truly reflect their needs. To be part of our Llais Local Journey follow us on Facebook @gwentllais.

Joint working with the Welsh Blood Service:

Llais is teaming up with the Welsh Blood Service to connect with donors during upcoming blood donation sessions. These informal, face-to-face conversations are a powerful way to hear real stories and honest views about health and social care.

We'll be at:

- Trecenydd on 4th & 25th November
- Parkway Hotel, Cwmbran on 20th November



Same Day Urgent Care

Last autumn, Llais visited same day urgent care units across Wales to hear directly from people about their experiences—and what we heard revealed serious gaps in care.

We shared these [findings](#) with Welsh Government and Health Boards, calling for action. They responded with updates on work to improve access and quality.

Between 20 October and 17 November this year, we returned to communities to ask: has anything changed?

People took part through surveys, one-to-one conversations, and online sessions. Their voices will help us continue working with services to drive meaningful change and ensure urgent care truly meets the needs of those who rely on it.

Thanks



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

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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