



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



"A good discharge
can change
everything. A bad
one can undo
everything"

Hospital Discharge

People's
experiences of
leaving hospital
in Neath, Port
Talbot &
Swansea

February 2026

Accessible formats

This document is also available in Welsh.

If you would like this publication in an alternative format and/or language, please contact us at NPTandSwansea.enquiries@llaiscymru.org

You can download it from our website or ask for a copy by contacting our office.

Our contact information can be found at the end of this report.

Introduction

Llais listened to patients, carers, families and people with learning disabilities to hear about their experiences of leaving hospital. People told us what went well for them and what they found difficult.

Across Wales, people regularly report challenges with hospital discharge, including delays, communication issues and gaps in community support. These concerns shaped the focus of our engagement.

This report shares what people told us at our 'Leaving Hospital Event', through our online survey, and in conversations in the community.

Our aim is to present people's voices clearly and help support improvements in how hospital discharge is planned, communicated and carried out.



LET'S TALK ABOUT LEAVING HOSPITAL

TALK TO LLAIS ABOUT YOUR HOSPITAL
DISCHARGE EXPERIENCE

 **HEAR FROM LOCAL
SERVICES AND ASK YOUR QUESTIONS.**

SCAN THE QR CODE TO BOOK

YOUR PLACE:



TUESDAY 27 JANUARY 2026

11:00 AM – 2:30 PM

**DEMENTIA HWB, ABERAFAN
SHOPPING CENTRE, PORT TALBOT**

SA13 1PB

 01639 683490

 NPTANDSWANSEA.ENQUIRIES@LLAISCYMRU.ORG

 LLAIS NEATH PORT TALBOT AND SWANSEA



How We Listened

- We held a community event on 27 January 2026 at the Dementia Hwb, located inside Aberavon Shopping Centre in Port Talbot.
- We also collected feedback through a survey so that people who could not attend the event were still able to share their experiences.
- We looked at everything people told us and grouped the issues and experiences into themes.

Who We Heard From

We listened to people with a wide range of experiences of leaving hospital. This included:

- Patients recently discharged from hospital
- Family members and unpaid carers
- People with learning disabilities
- Older people and people living with dementia
- Individuals with complex health needs
- People from different cultures, backgrounds and religions
- Advocacy groups and organisations supporting vulnerable people



Our Leaving Hospital Event

Our event brought people together to talk about their experiences of leaving hospital.

It was a friendly, open conversation with a panel at the front of the room, giving people a safe space to share their experiences.

54 people attended, including community members, unpaid carers, charities and staff from local services.

There were opportunities for questions, personal stories, advocacy support and informal chats.



Who Was on the Panel

Our panel included representatives from:

- Swansea Council
- African Community Centre
- Community Lives Consortium
- Swansea Bay University Health Board
- Swansea Council for Voluntary Service (SCVS)
- Swansea Disability Forum



Working together to break down barriers



These are the key issues people raised with us.

The next few pages look deeper into each of these themes.



Key Themes

Communication & involving people in their care

People's experiences of care in hospital

Support for adults with learning disabilities

Leaving hospital safely and smoothly

Support after leaving hospital

People working together (coproduction)

Communication Problems – What We Heard

- People often didn't know what was happening or what the plan was
- Information was inconsistent between different staff and teams
- Families and carers were not always kept informed or involved
- Adults with learning disabilities needed clearer explanations and more time
- Important details were sometimes missed or not passed on
- Poor communication made discharge feel rushed, confusing or unsafe



"Total and absolute absence of discussion about care and discharge for the entire time my mother was in hospital"

ACCIDENT & EMERGENCY

"I have only ever experienced conditions that overcrowded... in a Government hospital in India 15 years ago."

The Hospital Environment – What We Heard

- Wards and A&E were often noisy, busy and overwhelming
- Long waits in A&E caused stress, confusion and discomfort
- Some people felt unsafe or unsupported in crowded or chaotic areas
- People with learning disabilities found the environment especially challenging without reasonable adjustments
- Lack of privacy and quiet spaces affected people's dignity and wellbeing
- The environment sometimes made communication and decision-making harder
- People from different cultures and religions sometimes felt uncomfortable or unsupported

Dignity & Basic Care Concerns

- Some people did not get the basic personal care they needed, such as help with washing or hygiene.
- Equipment was sometimes missing or used incorrectly, causing discomfort or risk.
- Long waits for support left people feeling neglected or unsafe.
- Older people often became weaker or “deconditioned” during long hospital stays.
- These issues affected people’s dignity and overall experience of care.



‘Dad left bedridden as a result of poor community support’

“He was kept 36hrs on a chair”

Cultural and Language Barriers – What We Heard

- Interpreters not always provided when needed
- Some people discharged without information in a language they understood
- Families filling in background information due to communication gaps
- Language barriers affecting understanding, consent and safe discharge
- Some experiences described as discriminatory, though many issues linked to wider system communication problems
- Language and cultural barriers seen as patient safety issues



Staff Attitudes & Understanding

- Experiences varied depending on which staff people met
- Some staff communicated well, but others seemed rushed or unsure how to support people with different needs
- Adults with learning disabilities sometimes felt staff didn't understand how to communicate with them
- Families and carers often stepped in to explain needs or calm situations
- People wanted staff to have more time, training and confidence to offer person-centred care



Support for Learning Disabilities (LD)

- Care for adults with learning disabilities wasn't consistent — it changed depending on the ward and the staff involved.
- Some staff understood people's learning disability needs well, but others were unsure what changes or support to give.
- LD nurses were not always available or involved early enough
- Important information was sometimes missed, and support was not always consistent.
- This made care feel less safe and less able to meet a person's individual needs.



"The noise, chaos and frenetic nature of the department were overwhelming and unsuitable."

LD Passports & Communication

- LD passports were not always read, used or kept with the person
- Important information from passports was sometimes missed or not acted on
- People often had to repeat the same information to different staff
- Some staff were unsure how to communicate clearly with adults with learning disabilities
- Families and carers often stepped in to explain needs, preferences and risks
- When passports were used well, communication was clearer and care felt safer

Rights & Reasonable Adjustments / Staff Training – What We Heard

- People were not always told about their rights or what support they could ask for
- People didn't always receive the reasonable adjustments they are legally entitled to.
- Support for adults with learning disabilities varied between wards and teams
- Some people told us they were unsure whether staff are now receiving more Paul Ridd Foundation training.
- Families often had to request adjustments or explain why they were needed
- When adjustments and trained staff were available, people felt safer and better supported



Discharge Planning

- People often didn't know what the discharge plan was or who to speak to
- Families and carers were not always involved early enough
- Some people were discharged before they felt ready or safe
- Information about medication, follow-up and support was sometimes unclear
- Adults with learning disabilities often needed more time, clearer explanations and reasonable adjustments
- People wanted a simple checklist, clear timelines and a named contact to guide the process



"Involving family and support network is crucial for the best care & smoother discharge"



Support after leaving hospital

- Many people left hospital without clear information about what would happen next.
- Follow-up appointments, new medicines and support at home were not always explained.
- Families and carers often did not know who to contact if there was a problem.
- People with learning disabilities needed clearer, simpler explanations and easy-read information.
- Poor information after leaving hospital made people feel unsure, unsafe or unprepared at home.

Working together (coproduction) – What we heard

- People want to help design clearer and safer ways for people to leave hospital.
- Lived experience – especially from adults with learning disabilities, families and carers – is vital for improving communication and planning.
- Many adults with learning disabilities cannot speak up for themselves, so family and advocacy support is essential.
- Staff, families and community groups were keen to work together to “listen, learn and do better”.
- Working together through co-production can help fix gaps in the system and make discharge more consistent and reliable.



Positive Experiences People Shared

Good communication and clear information

- Staff communicated well and took time to explain things
- Clear medication information
- Safety checks before discharge

Support that made a difference

- Positive experiences with Learning Disability Nurses
- Families and carers involved in decisions
- Well-planned discharge with clear follow-up

Kindness and quality of care

- Positive inpatient care
- Staff kindness and compassion
- Calm and supportive ward environments



"The medication list really helped us manage care at home"

What we will do with your feedback

- We listen to what people tell us and speak up on their behalf when needed.
- We look at everything people shared with us during our engagement work.
- If needed, we raise concerns with NHS services or local councils.
- These concerns are called **representations**.
- A representation means we pass on what people have told us to the people who make decisions.
- This helps services understand what matters to people and make improvements.



**BE HEARD.
BE LISTENED TO.**

GET INVOLVED AT WWW.LLAISWALES.ORG

Based on what people told us, here are the key ideas for improving services.

Ideas and opportunities for improvement

Early involvement of learning Disability nurses	Safer, more joined-up discharge planning
Learning-disability-friendly or quiet sensory spaces	Clearer communication and information
Learning Disability Passports used consistently	Better use of virtual wards and community support
More LD nurse capacity, including out-of-hours cover	Clear, consistent Learning Disability standards across the region.
Better staff training and a more supportive culture	Working together with people and families

What Happens next?



If we make a representation, the service must reply.

They will either explain what they will do or give a reason if they cannot make changes.

We will share any updates or replies with the people we spoke to and keep the conversation going.

Find out more:

You can read more about how Llais represents your views on our website:
llaiswales.org/representation

What people told us about our Leaving Hospital event

"Just to say thank you for today's discussion, which I personally found to be very useful. It was good to meet you and the team and all people involved. Onwards and upwards we shall continue to improve all aspects of care and discharges from the hospital setting"

"I believe the event was engaging and everyone appreciated the importance of such forums and welcomed the opportunity to be heard and contribute to this important work"

THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who took part in our engagement activities. Your experiences and insights have helped us understand what matters to people when leaving hospital.

We are also grateful to the Dementia Hwb and the Aberavon Shopping Centre for supporting our engagement work and welcoming us into their spaces.

Llais will continue listening and sharing your views to help improve hospital discharge experiences for everyone.



If you would like to give us feedback on this publication or wish to receive this information in an alternative format or language, please contact us on the details below.

We welcome telephone calls in Welsh. If you write to us in Welsh, we will answer in Welsh.

This will not lead to a delay in responding to your correspondence.

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