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INSIGHTS REPORT

WOMEN'S HEALTH PUBLIC FORUM

Summary of Cardiff and Vale University
Health Board's Response to Llais

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About Llais

Llais is an independent public body established by the Welsh Government to ensure that the voices of people across Wales are heard in the planning and delivery of health and social care services at local, regional, and national levels.

About this report

On **Wednesday 11 March 2026**, the Cardiff and Vale regional Llais team hosted a public forum focused on gathering views and experiences relating to **women's health**. The insights collected during this event were shared with Cardiff and Vale University Health Board.

This report outlines the local health board's response to feedback received from the public, detailing the changes it will implement based on what Llais has heard. The feedback we received has been framed around our people's principles, find out more [here](#).

For further information on all feedback provided to the health board and their full response, please contact the Cardiff and Vale Llais team on cardiffandvaleenquiries@llaiscymru.org.

What we raised with the Health Board

Access for everyone, clear and honest communication and inclusive, accessible, and fair services for all

- Overreliance on digital technology creates barriers for people; people want more face-to-face and printed information.
- There is a need for better staff training on women's health particularly conditions like endometriosis, fibromyalgia and menopause.
- **Menopause:** Limited access to clear information (especially hormone treatments), gaps in support for younger/ older patients and those with surgical menopause, and a need for accessible information for those with learning disabilities. Lack of menopause support in the vale.
- **Gynaecology:** More accessible education and improved communication for people with learning disabilities.
- **Cancer:** Low awareness of pain management courses, especially among non-digital users. Call for increased bowel screening provision especially for younger women.
- **Fertility Care:** Perception that services are overly focused on financial aspects (e.g. IVF and surrogacy).
- **Maternity Care:** Preference for face-to-face interpreters and increased managerial support for staff to prevent burnout.



Timely care and support while waiting

- Patients reported long waiting lists for specialist care, including endometriosis, pain management, menopause and fertility treatment.
- Some patients reported seeking private care due to delays in being seen and treatment.
- For gynaecology, many patients reported limited communication about their position on waiting lists for diagnosis.
- Long waiting times for endometriosis care in particular, significantly affected people's health and day-to-day life.



Dignity and respect every time



- Patients reported feeling dismissed or unsupported when raising concerns about menopause, gynaecological health, and fertility.
- Experiences of limited empathy from healthcare professionals were highlighted.
- Some patients felt the need to strongly advocate for themselves to receive appropriate care.
- Others reported feeling discouraged from seeking further support due to negative experiences.

Care should recognise and respond to the whole person



- Concerns were raised about feeling judged in relation to personal choice, including decisions about fertility, sexual orientation, and choosing not to have children.
- People wanted fewer assumptions about reproductive intentions and a broader focus on women's overall health rather than solely their reproductive system, including for contraception and fertility treatment.
- Some women would have valued a personalised menopause plan outlining available support and treatment options.
- People described a lack of patient-centred care, with some feeling that GPs focused more on their computer than on them.

Joined-up care that feels seamless



- Some patients felt that GP processes acted as a barrier to accessing specialist services, including cancer care.
- One individual praised the care received during pregnancy, particularly through specialist pathways such as neurology and antenatal care.
- It was suggested that hiring more Health Care Assistants could support day-to-day care, with the option to refer to midwives if needed.
- Individuals reported a lack of wraparound and follow up support after endometriosis surgery, especially psychological support.

Representations made to the health board

We asked the health board a series of questions based on the feedback we received on the following themes:

- **Timely care and support whilst waiting:** For women's health services including primary care referrals for diagnostic and cancer pathways.
- **Training:** Current available training on women's health conditions and equality and diversity;
- **Dignity and respect and person-centered care:** Current measures in place to ensure people feel listened to, heard and taken seriously and a holistic approach that avoids assumptions about reproductive intentions;
- **Expansion of services:** Plans to expand women's support services across the region and their eligibility criteria including for cancer screening;
- **Access for everyone:** Accessible, accurate, and evidence-based information on women's health;
- **Joined-up care:** Process for joint speciality approach or pathways for pregnancy.

Agreed changes

The health board has responded to all of the queries we sent them. We have highlighted the key changes the health board has agreed to make following our representation below.

1) Timely care and support whilst waiting



We highlighted long waiting times and poor communication about waiting list updates for gynaecology, menopause, pain management, and fertility services.

Cardiff and Value University Health Board have confirmed they will:

- Update the website to show patient waiting times;
- Increase outpatient clinic capacity where possible;
- Review staff skills and expand advanced practitioner roles;
- Use targeted waiting list initiatives where funded and improve patient pathways.

The health board have confirmed that they will reduce waiting times for gynaecological services by:

- Reducing the rates of patients who 'Did not attend' their appointments;
- Maximising the number of patients in theatres;
- Promoting the use of 'See on Symptoms' and 'Patient Initiated Follow-Up' pathways which put the patient in control of when they are seen by healthcare services.

We also asked the health board what guidance is currently available on managing symptoms effectively for those who are waiting for gynaecology, menopause, pain management, and fertility services.

Cardiff and Value University Health Board have recognised:

- The need to develop clearer, condition specific support packs for those waiting longer than expected.

2) Dignity and respect every time



We highlighted that some people feel dismissed and unsupported when raising concerns about menopause, fertility, and gynecological symptoms. Feedback also pointed to limited staff awareness of menopause and wider women's health issues. In response, we asked the health board how they will improve awareness, understanding, and training across primary and secondary care.

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board have confirmed they will aim to:

- Strengthen awareness and understanding of women's health through identifying 'Primary Care Champions' across the region with a specific interest in and passion for women's health who will be able to spread and disseminate information;
- Use data from the Women's Health Education Evaluation and Training Needs Analyses, as well as learning needs from the Cardiff and Vale's GP Medical Appraisal and Revalidation System (MARS) and other avenues to inform future training across Primary and Community Care.

3) Care should recognise and respond to the whole person



Based on people's feedback we asked the health board how they will promote a holistic approach to women's health that avoids assumptions about reproductive intentions, particularly for LGBT+ women and others accessing contraception for reasons unrelated to fertility.

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board said that their services will:

- Actively challenge assumptions about sexuality, gender identity, family structures, and life trajectories;
- Promote inclusive communication and respectful documentation practices;
- Ensure access to contraception and gynecological care without framing these services solely through a fertility or motherhood lens.

Next steps

Share findings

We will share this report with key stakeholders and people within Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan to highlight the work we have undertaken.

Engagement and advocacy

We will continue to gather views and experiences around health and care services, through both our engagement and advocacy function.

Staying connected

We encourage people to continue to get involved in future engagement opportunities and welcome feedback year-round through our website and regional team.

To stay connected with us, you can:

- Visit www.llaiswales.org for updates and reports
- Find us on Facebook: [LlaisCarddiffandVale](#)
- Contact your local Llais team at: cardiffandvaleenquiries@llaicyru.org
- Sign up for our newsletter: <https://www.llaiswales.org/news-and-reports/llais-impact-newsletter>