



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

Llais Gwent Region – Report for Gwent Regional Partnership Board.

May 2026



To inform Gwent Regional Partnership 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.

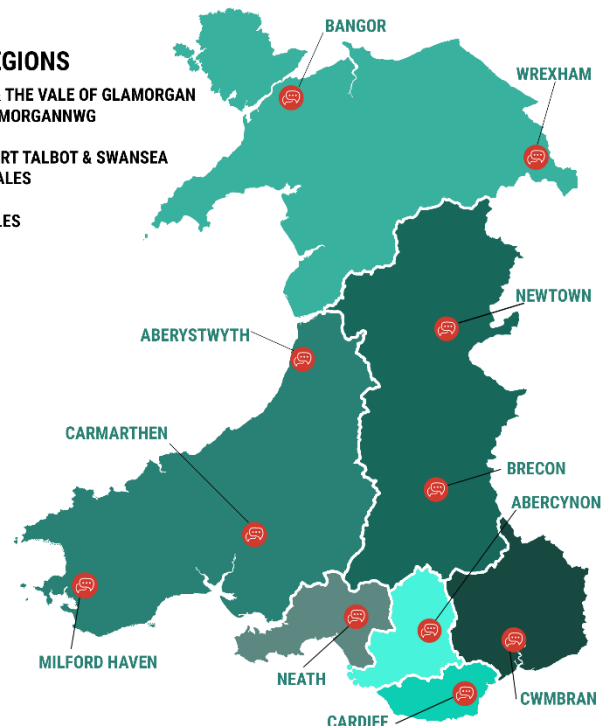
We also work with community and interested groups and in line with national initiatives to gather people's views.

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 Gwent Regional Partnership 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.

Our Strategic Focus 2026-27



We will continue to work to deliver the 5 priorities set out in our Strategic Plan:

- 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.

This year, we will focus on¹:

- Engaging effectively with people in communities with poorer health and wellbeing, and children and young people.
- Learning from complaints and lived experience, to make meaningful representations that lead to positive change.
- Demonstrating change through follow-up and reporting.
- Embedding the [People's Principles](#) as a public accountability standard that's used to frame the way services are planned, designed and delivered.

Alongside these priorities, we will continue to deliver our core statutory functions and day-to day work, listening to people across Wales. This includes supporting people to have their voices heard through our enquiries and complaints advocacy services, gathering insight through engagement and lived experience, and working with partners and communities to ensure that people's views inform decisions about health and social care.

Equity, diversity and inclusion will continue to underpin all of our work. We will deliver the commitments set out in our Strategic Equality Plan so that no one is left behind, and that the voices of people whose experiences are often heard less are reflected in our engagement, insight and influence.

¹ <https://www.llaiswales.org/news-and-reports/reports/llais-annual-plan-2026-2027>

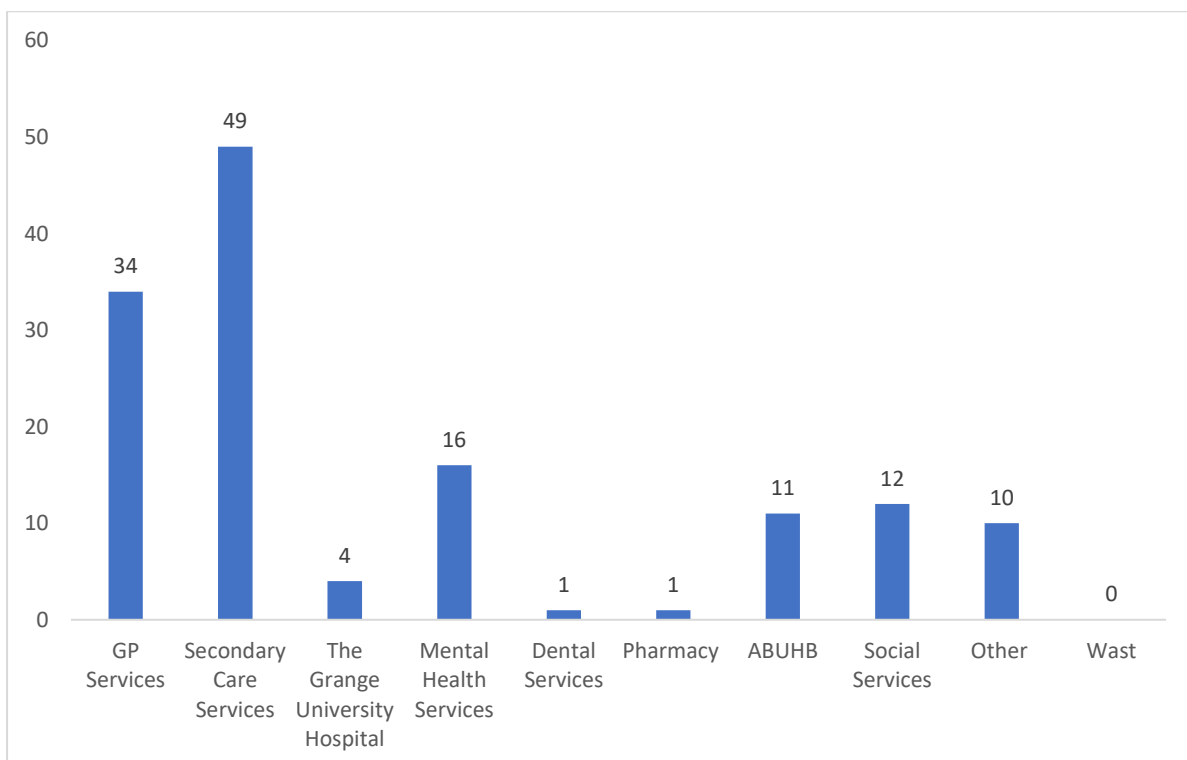


Local insights and engagement:

Gwent Advocacy Service

There were 138 contacts between March and April. 63 were formal concerns and 75 were enquiries that required early resolution or where we are awaiting consent.

Of the 138 contacts, 31 have now been resolved and 107 are still active.



Key Observations:

- **GP Services:** 34 contacts highlighting concerns such as missed or unsent referrals, failure to diagnose, staff and GP conduct, lack of care and support and limited appointment availability.
- **Secondary Care Services:** 49 contacts raising issues including failure to diagnose, long waiting times, wrongly being removed from waiting lists, lack of follow up, referrals not being sent, availability of beds and appointments being cancelled.

- **Mental Health:** 16 contacts raising concerns about long delays to get a diagnosis, referrals not being sent, access to ADHD medication and unable to access help and support.

- Implementation of “Listening to People” Regulations

Since the introduction of the Listening to People (LTP) regulations on 1st April 2026, Llais have established a positive and open working relationship, to share early learning, clarify expectations, and ensure patients have an early offer of advocacy support.

There is a clear, mutual commitment to keeping the person at the centre ensuring individuals feel heard, supported, and able to explore their concerns in a way that meets their needs.

Llais has raised concerns Nationally regarding engagement and implementation of LTP across Primary Care providers.

Engagement and Insights:

Same Day Urgent Care

Following our March 2026 report and subsequent escalation, a formal update is pending from the health board on their Urgent and Emergency Care Plan, including workstreams reviewing the Older Persons Pathway and the Acute Medical model.

Responses to Llais’ Spotlight on Rural Health & Social Care

Llais has recently published a spotlight on rural health and social care, based on what we’ve heard through our engagement with people in rural areas of Wales. You can read the [report](#) in full.

As part of this work, formal representations were submitted to ABUHB and the Gwent Local Authorities, and the following section outlines their response.

- 1. People want successful rural approaches from across Wales to be scaled up, ensuring support is flexible, locally rooted and community-driven.**

Across Gwent (Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen), best practice is already shared through regional forums including the Gwent Regional Partnership Board (RPB), Public Service

Board, and Neighbourhood Care Networks. National learning is also exchanged through Welsh Government Communities of Practice.

ABUHB and Local Authorities will continue to expand integrated, place-based models that are working well - such as Integrated Community Hubs, Home First and strengthened health and social care pathways.

2. People want prevention-focused, local services shaped in partnership with communities.

Gwent partners continue to improve information-sharing through newsletters, events, forums and digital platforms, ensuring citizen voice is central to planning. The Gwent RPB uses a co-production model, supported by the Gwent Citizen Network, to ensure lived experience informs service development. The network is currently under review to strengthen its effectiveness.

Engagement across the region uses mixed methods; community sessions, surveys, online and in-person forums to reach diverse groups.

Partners will ensure rural needs remain central to planning and will strengthen collaboration with local rural networks, third sector organisations and Llais to maintain inclusive, representative engagement.

3. People want joined-up services

Gwent partners are committed to strengthening integration through regional boards, aligning key strategic planning documents such as the Population Needs Assessment, Area Plan and Market Stability Report.

National work on the Integrated Community Care System (ICCS), led by Welsh Government's "A Healthier Wales," aims to support more joined-up, place-based care. Local models such as Integrated Wellbeing Networks, Community Connectors and link workers complement this approach.

Digital transformation remains a key enabler, with work underway to enhance data-sharing and streamline processes across the region.

ABUHB and Local Authorities will continue scaling up proven integrated models and ensure support remains flexible and accessible, including for rural communities.

4. People want more support for community organisations that play a crucial role but face instability due to short-term funding.

Gwent partners value the sector's contribution and continue to raise funding concerns at local and national levels. Work is underway to strengthen the Gwent RPB Third Sector Forum and expand the sector's role in early intervention, prevention and community-based support.

A comprehensive mapping exercise is ongoing to understand the full range of third sector provision, whether RIF-funded, contracted or spot-purchased, to inform future planning.

The Llais report is welcomed as a timely reminder of the needs of rural communities in Gwent to support future Health and Social Care Planning.

5. People shared language matters, particularly in mental health and dementia care, and people want services in the language they feel most comfortable with.

Local Authorities across Gwent actively promote bilingual services through the Active Offer, including correspondence, telephone services, early years support and Welsh-medium materials. New policies require commissioned care providers to offer services in Welsh and English. Compliance is monitored through regular audits and collaboration with Welsh-language organisations.

ABUHB also provides an Active Offer, with staff displaying "Working Welsh" badges and prioritising Welsh-medium care where language is a clinical need, such as in mental health, dementia and stroke services.

Health and Local Authorities will continue promoting Welsh-language capability as part of regional workforce planning..

- Children and Young People



Criw Llais is part of the wider Llais brand family, designed specifically to connect with children and young people through vibrant and visually engaging communications. This new approach strengthens how we reach and involve younger audiences, ensuring they feel recognised, included and empowered to share their experiences.

During April, we brought this approach to life through continued engagement activity across Gwent, with a particular focus on hearing directly from young people about their experiences of accessing health and social care services. As part of this work, we attended five college health and wellbeing events, speaking with 675 young people.

This engagement reflects our ongoing commitment to ensuring that the views of children and young people - particularly those whose voices are less often heard, are captured, understood and used to inform service planning, improvement and decision-making.

Key Themes from Young People:

Access to services

- Long waiting times for GP appointments
- Difficulty understanding what health and care services exist and how to access them when they need them
- There was a call for simpler, more flexible health care access, including online booking, same-day options, text services, and clear signposting.
- Dental care access

Wider health determinants

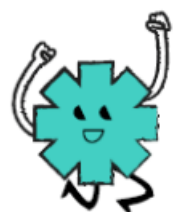
- Worry about money pressures
- Anxiety about the health and care of family members.

GOFALGAR



CARING

CEFNOGOL



SUPPORTING



Feeling listened to

A recurring message was the importance of being believed, listened to, and respected. Young people shared that when concerns are dismissed or delayed, they may disengage from services altogether.

Mental health and wellbeing

- Long waits for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Challenges navigating mental health support



Llais will...

Pilot a whole-school approach to hear louder and stronger voices from children and young people.

- Holding It Together: Carers Speak About Their Journey

We engaged with carers across Gwent to understand their experiences of supporting family members and loved ones to access health and social care services, particularly in relation to dementia, stroke, and long-term conditions.

The findings from this engagement are set out in our [report](#).

What We Did

We engaged with carers over several months through community-based conversations, including visits to local groups and discussions with carers and families living with dementia. We also listened to carers' experiences following diagnosis, hospital discharge, and changes in service provision. This approach enabled open discussion in familiar settings and reduced barriers to participation, allowing us to hear directly from carers with lived experience, alongside insights from organisations supporting carers across Gwent.

Alongside this local work, we contributed at a national level by responding to the Welsh Government's Draft National Strategy for Unpaid Carers 2026. Our [response](#) drew on what carers told us locally

and nationally through engagement activity and complaints advocacy, ensuring lived experience directly informed national policy development.

Good Practice Identified

Carers shared examples of positive practice where services were proactive, compassionate, and communicative. Some described supportive relationships with memory clinics, therapy services, and community-based teams, particularly where carers were included in discussions and felt listened to.

Where follow-up contact was offered, such as clear points of contact or check-in calls, carers felt more reassured and less isolated. Partnership working with voluntary and community organisations was also recognised as an important source of emotional and practical support.

Key Themes

Carers frequently described feeling overwhelmed, invisible, and close to breaking point, often reluctant to seek help due to uncertainty about what support is available or not wanting to burden others.

Many shared that receiving large volumes of information at the point of diagnosis felt overwhelming, with a clear need for staged information and structured follow-up once there had been time to process what was happening.

A strong theme was the importance of carers being listened to and recognised as partners in care, particularly during appointments, transitions, and discharge planning. Difficulties accessing respite, day services, and practical support were also raised, with carers highlighting inconsistencies across areas and the cumulative impact of caring on their own health and wellbeing.

Llais will...

Continue to amplify carers' voices locally and nationally, ensuring their experiences inform policy and service delivery. We will build on the responses received from Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and local authority partners and continue to use engagement and collaboration to promote more consistent and accessible support for unpaid carers across Gwent.

- **Breaking Barriers: Continuing to Learn from Deaf Voices**

Llais has continued to work closely with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB), RNID, the British Deaf Association, Action Deafness Cymru, and SENSE to ensure this programme of work remains informed by Deaf lived experience and specialist expertise.

Concerns raised through engagement and the Patient Participation Panel (PPP) - including lack of access to interpreters at critical points in care, families being asked to interpret, exclusion from key clinical discussions, and inaccessible appointment letters have been escalated and formally requested to be recognised as safeguarding triggers within relevant Health Board processes.

Llais has supported members of the Deaf community to provide direct feedback on Health Board appointment letters. This feedback has identified specific barriers within written communications and has informed improvements to wording, format, and overall accessibility, helping to ensure communications better meet the needs of Deaf BSL users.

Overall, this work demonstrates a continued shift from listening to action and reflects progress towards a more consistent, inclusive, and person-centred approach to care for Deaf BSL users across Gwent.

Thanks



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