

Item: 04

Title: Chief Executive's report

Introduction

Since our last public board meeting, I have continued to work with key partners to talk about our role, inform our plans, ways of working, delivery on our commitments, tackle key issues in health and social care and identify how we can work together to strengthen the voice of people in health and social care services. Details of all these activities are available on request.

This report focuses on a few of the developments and activities I have been involved in since the last full public board meeting in May 2026. These key activities and developments have not been covered in more detail in other Board papers.

Strengthening people's voices

Care at what cost? The impact of waiting

In September we held *Care at what cost?* at the Senedd, bringing together over 90 people, including people with lived experience, carers, community organisations, policymakers and system leaders.

Waiting is usually discussed in terms of numbers, targets and lists. Those measures matter, but the event showed how far the effects of waiting reach: into people's health and wellbeing, their families, their finances and their futures. Delays can deepen existing inequalities, and for children and young people they can fall at stages of life that cannot be revisited.

People were clear that shorter waits are only part of the answer. They also need clear communication, support while they wait, and confidence that they have not been forgotten. This matches what people tell us across our wider work, and we are using it to make sure people's experiences are considered alongside the performance measures used to judge how services are doing.

Corridor care, urgent and emergency care, and winter

We continue to raise concerns about people receiving care in corridors and other spaces not designed for treatment. This builds on our all-Wales work on urgent and emergency care, which was prompted by concerns from local communities and partners.

We have joined the call to end corridor care and are a member of the working group developing a national definition of corridor care. As Welsh Government and NHS Wales work to reduce and ultimately eliminate it,

our focus is on what it means for people: whether they receive care safely, with dignity and privacy, whether they are kept informed, and whether the environment can properly meet their needs.

This is central to our approach to winter. We are reviewing health board winter plans from the perspective of people using services, including plans to reduce corridor care and improve ambulance handovers. We also briefed Members of the Senedd ahead of the Minister's oral statement on winter preparedness on 13 October. We will listen to people throughout the winter to understand how these plans are working in practice.

Speaking up for people in Powys

Our work in Powys has increased significantly in recent months, particularly in response to the Better Together programme and proposed changes to local health services.

We have called publicly for greater clarity about the proposals affecting hospital services. Alongside this, our regional team is running a substantial engagement programme so that people can understand the proposals, ask questions and share their views.

This includes taking part in the planned Better Together round-tables as well as wider community engagement. We are bringing together what we hear across these conversations and making representations where appropriate, so that we can give a clear picture of what communities are saying.

Our role is not to tell services what decision to reach. It is to make sure people understand what is being proposed, have a meaningful opportunity to influence decisions before they are made, and can see how their views have been taken into account.

For the Board's awareness: this work, alongside a number of other planned and urgent service changes across Wales, is placing significant demand on our regional and national teams. We are managing this by reaffirming our role and responsibilities within service change processes, communicating clearly, transparently and proactively, and supporting teams to review their workplans so that they remain achievable alongside these additional duties.

Bringing people's voices into national scrutiny

Llais submitted written evidence and gave oral evidence in October to the Senedd's Health and Social Care Committee on the Legislative Consent Memorandum for the UK Health Bill.

Our evidence focused on what the proposed changes could mean for people in Wales, particularly those who use specialist or cross-border services. Drawing on our existing work on cross-border healthcare, we highlighted information sharing, the proposed single patient record, clarity for people moving between services, and the need for the Bill to properly consider Wales and Welsh patients.

This is a good example of how what people tell us through engagement, complaints advocacy and regional work can inform national scrutiny of future health services.

Community by Design

Llais continues to be represented in the reference and advisory arrangements for Community by Design, the NHS Wales programme looking at how more care can be planned and delivered closer to home.

We have been represented at important development meetings and workshops around community by design, and have been approached, and agreed to, provide a critical friend role to the team developing the approach to public engagement on Community by Design across the autumn and winter.

At the October Reference and Advisory Group, Llais was specifically asked to share key messages from the feedback we continually collect from people. This is a welcome opportunity to put people's experience at the centre of the programme's thinking.

We will continue to act as an independent critical friend to NHS Wales Performance and Improvement, supporting the programme to involve people meaningfully as it develops.

Women's health

Over the summer, Llais took part in the Welsh Government's Women's Health Summit. The Summit focused on the challenges facing women's health in Wales, including the importance of listening to women and addressing longstanding cultural issues that have left women feeling unheard about their health and care.

These themes echo what women and families tell us elsewhere in our work, including about maternity and neonatal services: the importance of dignity, being listened to, clear communication and fair access to care.

We will bring these into the next stage of national work through attendance at the all-Wales oversight group for Women Health.

Rural health and care

At the Royal Welsh Show in July, we focused on rural health and care. Alongside conversations with people attending the show, we held a roundtable with the Cabinet Minister for Health and Social Care and a range of partners on the barriers people in rural communities face in accessing health and social care.

Following those discussions, I agreed to explore how we could work with partners who are also gathering the experiences of people living in rural communities. This links directly with our work in Powys, West Wales, and

North Wales, and our wider focus on access, transport and cross-border services.

Engagement across Wales

I and other members of the Executive Team have continued to represent Llais at national, regional and community events, including the National Eisteddfod, and with older people and the organisations that support them, veterans and Armed Forces communities, social care partners and health professionals.

In June our North Wales colleagues took part in the North Wales Veteran Health and Wellbeing Event alongside Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and organisations working with veterans.

These events help us strengthen relationships with partners, hear from a wider range of communities, and make sure more people know about Llais and how to share their experiences with us.

Developing ourselves to deliver for people

Welsh Language Standards Annual Report,

In September, we completed and published our second Welsh Language Standards Annual Report, setting out our progress during 2025–2026 in meeting the requirements of our Welsh Language Standards.

The report reflects a range of work across Llais to continue strengthening how we use and support the Welsh language. This includes improving our systems so colleagues can more easily access and record people’s language preferences, monitoring Welsh-language telephone calls for the first time, increasing the number of roles where Welsh-language skills are required, and continuing to support colleagues to develop and use their Welsh-language skills.

The report was considered by our Audit and Risk Assurance Committee before approval via Chair’s Action and publication in Welsh and English. It also sets out the actions we intend to take during 2026–2027, with progress continuing to be monitored through our wider arrangements for Welsh-language compliance.

Our work on the Welsh language goes beyond compliance with the Standards. We will continue to use what Welsh-speaking people and communities tell us about their experiences of health and social care, alongside what we learn from our own services, to improve the way we work and make it easier for people to engage with us and access our support in Welsh.