

RHWYDWAITH IECHYD
CYHOEDDUS CYMRU
PUBLIC HEALTH
NETWORK CYMRU



**COVID-19 and the
Opportunities to Accelerate
Green Recovery
February 2021**

Welcome

Welcome to the February e-bulletin which this month focuses on COVID-19 and the opportunities to accelerate green recovery. In January 2021 we held our first webinar of the year entitled 'Green Recovery Delivery Partnership – Priorities for action' which was delivered by Dr Sarah Williams from Natural Resources Wales. As usual the recording of the webinar can be viewed on the past events page of our [website](#).

We have also recently recorded a new Podcast with Dr Claire Thomas, Designated Doctor for the National Safeguarding Team at NHS Wales, and Pediatric Lead for the Child Death Review Programme. The Podcast discusses what impact the COVID-19 pandemic is having on children in Wales and is available to listen to on [SoundCloud](#).

We would love to hear about any additional information, case studies or tips to share with the wider public health community in Wales in future e-bulletins and our website so please get in touch with us at: publichealth.network@wales.nhs.uk

Contact us

You can contact Public Health Network Cymru in a variety of ways

Email us
publichealth.network@wales.nhs.uk

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COVID-19 INFORMATION FOR PROFESSIONALS

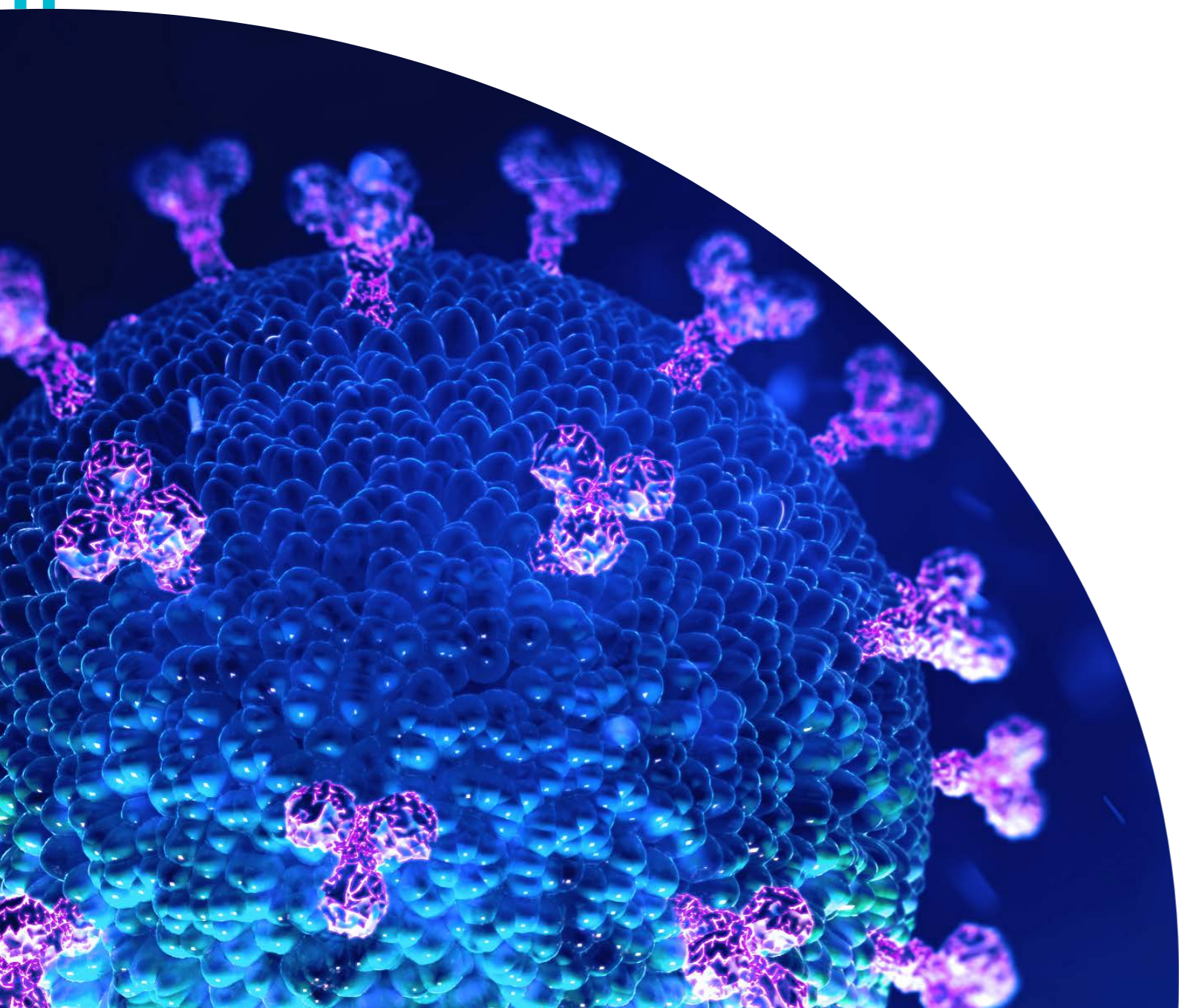
Latest information on Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

Public Health Wales is working closely with the Welsh Government and the other UK public health agencies to carefully monitor the situation and implement our planned response, with measures in place to protect the health of the public.

The guidance on the measures needed in response to Coronavirus changes rapidly. It's worth always checking the [latest information from Public Health Wales](#). The pages include a wide range of comprehensive information for public and professionals.

You can find links to a wide range of sources on Public Health Network Cymru's Coronavirus (COVID-19) page [here](#).

Public Health Network Cymru welcomes feedback on this selection, and suggestions for additional sources that may be of interest to the public health community in Wales.



Headlines

Social prescribing of wellbeing services using the forest as a resource

Golygfa Gwydyr have received funding through the Welsh Government Rural Development Programme to develop a wellbeing service offer using the forest as a resource. After almost a year of social distancing, the natural environment can offer a safer space in which to connect with others, improving wellbeing and health at the same time. For many of us the value that we place on the nature on our doorsteps has increased during the restrictions and getting into our local greenspace has provided solace. For others, making the move to leave the house again will be a big step and many months of staying at home will have meant increased mental health challenges and sedentary behaviour and decreased confidence about socialising.

It is into this space that [Golygfa Gwydyr](#) are stepping with a feasibility study into the Social Prescribing of wellbeing services using the forest as a resource. Based in the Gwydyr Forest, activities will include conservation projects where participants can learn or develop woodland skills, such as the restoration of an old plum orchard, creating glades and paths in a conifer arboretum and thinning and felling of conifers to replace with deciduous species. They will also be trialling mindfulness walks and other nature-based activities. Golygfa Gwydyr are a social enterprise based in Llanrwst and have been working with rural communities since 2005. They currently manage local woodlands and run social activities such as a Men's Shed, a friendship group and a food bank. Golygfa Gwydyr will be working in partnership with [Coed Lleol](#) and networking with other wellbeing services and health providers.

Despite the known benefits of spending time in nature, not everyone gains access to this pathway to health and wellbeing. There is a

rather stubborn pattern of certain groups being under-represented in visitor figures for natural landscapes, observed for example in Julian Glover's 2019 review of National Parks. This is particularly the case for people from lower socio-economic groups, with a disability, from non-white ethnic groups or older age groups. This matters, because spatial studies have shown that access to the natural environment has the potential to moderate socio-economic health inequalities, a vital opportunity given equally stubborn differences in both reduced life expectancy and reduced healthy life expectancy for lower income groups.

Nature-based initiatives (NBIs) can provide a solution by acting as a bridge for people who may not easily find their own way to the natural environment. An NBI can be defined as structured or guided activities in nature where there is a direct aim to use nature to improve health and wellbeing. Projects such as Coed Lleol's Actif Woods Wales have been doing just this for over 10 years. A recent study on the service showed positive change on a range of measures - mental wellbeing, social trust, self-reported health, self-efficacy, self-esteem and physical activity. Research shows that if children do not visit the natural environment when young, then they are much less likely to in later years. However, the Actif Woods study showed how taking part in their supported woodland activity programme could act as a 'greenspace turning or re-turning point' whereby having a positive experience such as this in nature could break down psychological, emotional and socio-cultural access barriers. This then gave confidence to new users and re-connected those who had lost touch with the habit of visiting the natural environment through mental or physical ill health or a lack

In this way, nature-based solutions for a green recovery from Covid 19 combine, taking care of nature whilst promoting health and wellbeing. Golygfa Gwydyr now need service providers to let them know what is needed so they can contribute to health provision in North Wales. By partnering with a range of health and social care organisations, both statutory and third sector, the intention is to make contact with and support those who could benefit. The project is in the process of establishing networks and are open to suggestions for co-creating programmes so do get in touch if you have an idea to discuss or would like to be kept informed of activities in the woods.

Contact details:

Heli Gittins helig@golygfa-gwydyr.org

or Roger Davies rogerd@golygfa-gwydyr.org

www.golygfa-gwydyr.org



Rooftop solar panels installed on the Geraint Thomas National Velodrome in Newport

A new film has been launched to celebrate the completion of the largest rooftop solar installation in Wales on the Geraint Thomas National Velodrome in Newport, with over 2,000 solar panels. The installation is part of Egni's solar across Wales which has seen over 2MW of rooftop solar installed on schools, community buildings and businesses.

to install 6,000 solar panels on 21 council owned buildings across the city, with a target of becoming a carbon neutral organisation. The solar panels will generate a combined total of 1,973,000 units of clean renewable electricity per year with most of the electricity generated being used on site.

Working in collaboration with Egni Co-op, the projects at the Geraint Thomas Velodrome is

[Read more](#)

Welcoming and enterprising parks and green/blue spaces

This series of [webinars](#) hosted by the Sports Marketing Network will introduce participants to the many opportunities that exist for developing more innovative and enterprising ways of attracting more people, from all parts of society to access and enjoy the outdoors.

Natalie Ganpatsingh and Svend Elkjaer will draw upon their considerable experience and expertise in developing and delivering programmes and initiatives which can make a real difference for our green/blue places.

NHS Wales- Moving towards net zero for health

Gemma Johns, Research & Evaluation Lead, Technology Enabled Care (TEC) Cymru
Prof Alka S Ahuja, National Clinical Lead, Technology Enabled Care (TEC) Cymru

The National Health Service in Wales changed the way it delivered care significantly in March 2020, when the COVID-19 crisis emerged. The Welsh Government issued an emergency response to this by offering all primary, secondary and community care NHS services unlimited use of a new Video Consulting Service across all of Wales, which was implemented and robustly evaluated by Technology Enabled Care Cymru.

The National Video Consulting (VC) Service went live 16th March, and to date has delivered more than 100,000 video consultations across more than 50 different specialities. From over 33,000 research participants involved in the National VC Service, huge benefits to patient, professionals and the environment have been reported. For example, 10,951 hours of patient and clinician travel has been saved, along with 139 tonnes of CO2. In terms of staff wellbeing and work life balance, the National VC service found that now almost 40% of clinicians are opting to work from home and would prefer doing this in the future. On average, a patient

saved 53 mins of travel per NHS appointment a contribution towards a carbon neutral healthcare. Other benefits and savings have included saved clinical and patient time, space and preparation, and other savings such as less paper waste, less need for room bookings/ costs and savings on childcare, time off work and school.

For Wales, the National Video Consulting Service was rolled out as a response to the COVID-19 emergency, but like other countries, Wales has seen significant improvements using digital for the delivery of healthcare, that now the Welsh Government Health Minister has issued a 'digital is here to stay' statement supporting the use of technology to deliver healthcare as the way forward to improve patient care, the NHS and the environment.

[Health Minister Welsh Government statement](#)

[TEC Cymru Video Consulting Service](#)

Sustrans Cymru recently launched their 2021 Manifesto: Tomorrow's Wales, for Everyone

Imagine a society in which everyone is able to walk or cycle in their neighbourhoods. Schools, shops and workplaces are within easy reach, and our towns are accessible, green and vibrant.

Our vision for Tomorrow's Wales has never been more relevant, with the 2021 Senedd Election being crucial in securing a sustainable



and fair future for Wales.

Since the 1950s we've designed Wales around motor vehicles. Designing our communities on the assumption that people will drive prevents a significant percentage of people from accessing services and facilities that they need to live well. Put simply, we need to stop building things that people cannot get to and work to reduce the ever-widening access gap.

In 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic hit and Wales went into lockdown, we were asked to stay at home, avoid public transport and only make essential journeys. This highlighted how important good connections within our communities are and how much we rely on easy access to essential shops and services - things we previously took for granted.

Whilst we saw many people adapt their living, working and travel patterns in a way that would have previously been unimaginable, many others were disproportionately impacted by this crisis.

This comes within the context of Wales already facing a multitude of other challenges - the climate and ecological emergency, rising levels of poverty and ill-health. These issues

Green Opportunities

The Health and Sustainability Hub within Public Health Wales published the first Green Opportunities e-brief to support Wales' COVID-19 green recovery by identifying opportunities to support population health through sustainable means.

The e-brief includes a guest foreword from Cynnal Cymru and covers a breadth of topics including the World Health Organization manifesto for a healthy recovery from COVID-19, actions to support biodiversity, the importance of nature for health and well-being and initiatives in Wales to support vulnerable groups during the pandemic.

Green Opportunities is a new e-briefing from the Health & Sustainability Hub. The quarterly updates capture learning to aid Wales' green

often have the greatest impact on the most vulnerable in our society.

At the centre of the upcoming elections will be the question of how we are able to recover from the Covid-19 crisis. This presents a unique opportunity for the next Welsh Government to focus their efforts on delivering a green recovery.

One way of doing this will be to ensure walking, cycling and public transport services serve all users equitably, creating a world-class legacy for future generations.

We need walking, cycling and public transport to be made more attractive to people than driving. To make this happen, we need significant investment in sustainable transport modes, designing communities with people in mind and inspiring future generations to travel sustainably.

In our [2021 Manifesto: Tomorrow's Wales, for Everyone](#), we map out a series of actions that, if adopted, would help make Wales a sustainable, fair and resilient nation.



recovery from COVID-19, identifying sustainable opportunities to support population health.

The next e-briefing, Spring 2021 will focus on energy and water.

If you would like to be added to the Green Opportunities distribution list, please email publichealth.sustainability@wales.nhs.uk



Canolbwynt Iechyd
a Chynladwyedd
Health and
Sustainability Hub



Podcasts

Welcome to our new Public Health Network Cymru Podcast Page of the Ebulletin. Here you can listen to the the previously released Podcasts.

We have recently published a new Podcast with Dr Claire Thomas, Designated Doctor for the National Safeguarding Team at NHS Wales, and Pediatric Lead for the Child Death Review Programme. The Podcast discusses what impact the COVID-19 pandemic is having on children in Wales

If you are interested in recording a podcast with us in the future, please contact us via email: publichealth.network@wales.nhs.uk

The Impact of COVID-19 on Children



More Podcasts

Arts and Health: Roadshow



Nutrition: Early Years with Andrea Basu



International Health: Migrant Health



View our full list of Podcasts on our website

[Visit our webiste](#)

Videos

Welcome to Press Play, here you can get the latest PHNC videos from youtube!



Green Recovery Delivery Partnership – Priorities for action

A new report by Natural Resources Wales has identified a sustainable pathway for Wales out of the Coronavirus pandemic that respond to the climate emergency and the need for job creation.

Press play to watch the video on the Public Health Network Cymru YouTube channel.

More Videos



The Unequal Pandemic: COVID-19 and Health Inequalities

Professor Clare Bambra of Newcastle University outlines how inequalities in COVID-19 are related to existing inequalities in chronic diseases and the social determinants of health.



COVID-19 and BAME Communities – the Welsh Government Response

Describing the work of the First Minister's Advisory Group on health inequalities due to COVID-19 in Black Asian Minority Ethnic #communities and the Welsh Government response, with Dr Heather Payne.

Watch our full COVID-19 Webinar series on YouTube

[Watch on YouTube](#)

Enjoyed watching a webinar? We would appreciate your feedback in this [short survey](#).

The Grapevine

Can you play a part in helping to shape smoking cessation support in Wales?

The Covid-19 pandemic has transformed the way many healthcare services are delivered, with telephone and virtual appointments rapidly replacing face-to-face interaction.

While the pandemic has accelerated this move, the technology that enabled it to take place was already well developed, with many having long predicted the rise of digital healthcare solutions.

Smoking cessation services in Wales have up until now, followed a traditional model, with smokers primarily seen at face-to-face appointments with a pharmacist or smoking cessation practitioner.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, support has been provided by telephone and face-to-face interactions with pharmacists have been limited.

The latest smoking cessation statistics for Wales show a thousand less smokers accessed the services in a 6mth period last year – with 7,410 smokers seeking help compared to 8,366 the previous year .

Pharmacy support was the most severely impacted with 1,700 less smokers accessing support up to September 2020 (3,014 compared to 4,749 in the same period the previous year).

The pandemic meant NHS providers of stop smoking support have been unable to offer face-to-face cessation support. Community-based services did pick up some of the demand with an increase of 500 service users, however, overall, there was still a significant decline.

With 18% of the adult population in Wales continuing to smoke and rates highest in the most deprived areas of Wales, reducing smoking prevalence remains an urgent public health priority. In order to achieve change

and to adapt to the changing landscape of healthcare, innovative digital solutions are needed to reach smokers and provide them with the support they need to quit.

One solution proposed by ASH Wales is an online system which would enable healthcare professionals to support clients who want to quit smoking. This website, or app, would enable health professionals to manage stop smoking appointments and access clients' details. It would also allow clients to book appointments and enter data about their smoking addiction.

We need to know what healthcare professionals think about this idea and which features they would like the system to include. To gather this information, we have created a survey for you to fill in if you work with smokers. We would really appreciate your feedback as we can use your ideas to shape any future digital solution.

Please click on this link to take part in our survey: [SurveyMonkey](#)

[Read more](#)



The Mentor Ring

The Mentor Ring is a registered mentoring charity based in Cardiff, Wales. The charity focuses on providing bespoke mentoring support and guidance to people of all ages and backgrounds, helping them to overcome significant barriers to social inclusion.

We help individuals and communities to tackle their personal challenges – whether it is health & wellbeing, education, training, employment or settling in the UK. We offer workshops on parenting, bereavement, youth offending, mental health, diversity and share cultures. Various group activities such as sewing classes, health and wellbeing, mums and children' s groups and coffee morning sessions are being offered via group mentoring. Over the past ten years we have helped over 480 people directly and indirectly.

Due to COVID-19, the Mentor Ring' s volunteers / facilitators / coordinators are delivering mentoring to individuals through video conferencing software like Zoom, Skype and WhatsApp.

Our slogan is 'no one must feel alone and isolated' . We want to ensure that individuals do not feel isolated. We are engaging our service users via online yoga, dance sessions (Salsa, Indian, Classical), arts and crafts, and we are involving them in various activities. In addition, our volunteers are also running errands for vulnerable isolated persons. Health and wellbeing will be our main priority this year.

The children are engaged with Arts and Music sessions online and supervised by parents. We also make sure that the yoga and salsa sessions are very light and suitable for beginners, adhering to health and safety protocols. Furthermore, we are making face masks and our volunteers are distributing facemasks to the community members.

Further information is available on www.MentorRing.org.uk

Do you have a story to tell?

Would you be interested in sharing your story/experience with the Welsh Ambulance Service Patient Experience and Community Involvement (PECI) Team of when you, or a family member, has used any of our services during the pandemic?

Our services include 999, Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service (NEPTS), Volunteer Car Driver scheme, 111/0845 46 47 service or accessed the NHS 111 Wales website?

To help us understand what's important to you, what we do well and what we could do better, please get in touch.

You can contact us by visiting our 'Have your say' section at www.ambulance.nhs.uk

email: Peci.team@wales.nhs.uk
Twitter @WelshAmbPIH
or call us on 01792 311773

The Mentor Ring

TMR supporting communities with mentoring services via Online

YOGA & Coffee Morning
Monday to Friday
9:45 to 10:30 am

SALSA DANCE
Monday
12:30 to 1 pm

BOLLYWOOD FITNESS
Tuesday
2 to 3 pm

CHILDREN'S SESSION
Wednesday
4:30 to 5:15 pm

EMBROIDERY/SEWING
Wednesday
12:30 to 1:15 pm

HEALTHY EATING
Thursday
10:30 to 11:30 am

CREATIVE SESSION
Thursday
1:30 to 2:30 pm

INDIAN CLASSICAL DANCE
Friday
3 to 4 pm

YOGA FOR PEOPLE WITH DIABETES
Saturday: 11 to 12 pm

In addition to regular sessions, we also provide Bespoke Mentoring to individuals, Employment support, Beauty sessions, Personal development, Career/Professional development, CV/Interview skills, Footcare education workshops.

Logos: Gwynedd Irfon School, Bawso, Comishen Eirian Commission, Gwynedd Irfon Community Partnership, Community Foundation Wales, GIG, Diabetes UK, WcVA CoGC.

For more information, please follow us on Twitter @TheMentorRing, Instagram: thementoringwales, Facebook: @thementoringcardiff, Website: www.MentorRing.org.uk Registered Charity: 1149400

Infographic highlights the health and financial costs of Adverse Childhood Experiences to Wales

The financial cost of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) in Wales has been estimated to be equivalent to £2.2 billion a year.

ACEs are stressful experiences occurring during childhood that directly harm a child (e.g. sexual or physical abuse) or affect them through the environment in which they live (e.g. growing up in a house with domestic violence). Children who experience ACEs are more likely to adopt health-harming behaviours as teenagers and adults and are at greater risk of poor health throughout their life - including having higher risks of developing diseases such as cancer, heart disease and respiratory diseases. They may also have greater needs for support from healthcare and other public services. Nearly half of all adults in Wales have experienced at least one ACE as a child and more than one in ten have experienced four or more ACEs.

A new infographic published following research by Public Health Wales and Bangor University shows the impact ACEs have on four health risk behaviours and nine health conditions in Wales. The research found ACEs were likely to be responsible for 59% of drug use, associated with a cost equivalent to £263 million per year. Around a third of anxiety and depression and half of other mental illnesses were also associated with exposure to ACEs, carrying a combined annual cost of £466 million. Further, 13% of cancers were attributable to ACEs, with an annual cost to Wales of £476 million. Two thirds (64%) of the costs of ACEs were accounted for by those who were exposed to four or more ACEs. The study estimated that a 10% reduction in ACEs in Wales would result in an annual saving of £161 million.

The full findings are published in the new infographic The annual costs of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) in Wales and are based on figures originally published in *Health and financial burden of adverse childhood experiences in England and Wales: a combined primary data study of five surveys*. *BMJ Open*

2020 (Hughes K, Ford K, Kadel R, Sharp C A, Bellis M A). The infographic is being launched on Tuesday 9th February at the National Four Nations Webinar Series 2021: Public health approaches in policing and serious violence across the UK: the learning so far.

Professor Mark Bellis, Director of the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre on Investment for Health and Well-being, Public Health Wales, said:

All children deserve a safe and nurturing childhood. However, many still grow up suffering child maltreatment or exposed to issues such as domestic violence in their home. The damage suffered by many of those children can affect their health and well-being even when they are adults and have left abusive homes. Preventing ACEs protects children and can help them adopt healthier, more social and economically more prosperous life courses.

Wales is an international leader in preventing ACEs as well as supporting those who have suffered them and has set up a national ACE Support Hub. However, it is especially important during the COVID pandemic that we all consider those children who may be trapped in abusive households, unable to interact with friends and cut off from support services. The COVID pandemic is a testing time for everyone but the repercussions for those currently unable to escape abuse and neglect may haunt and hurt some children for many years to come.

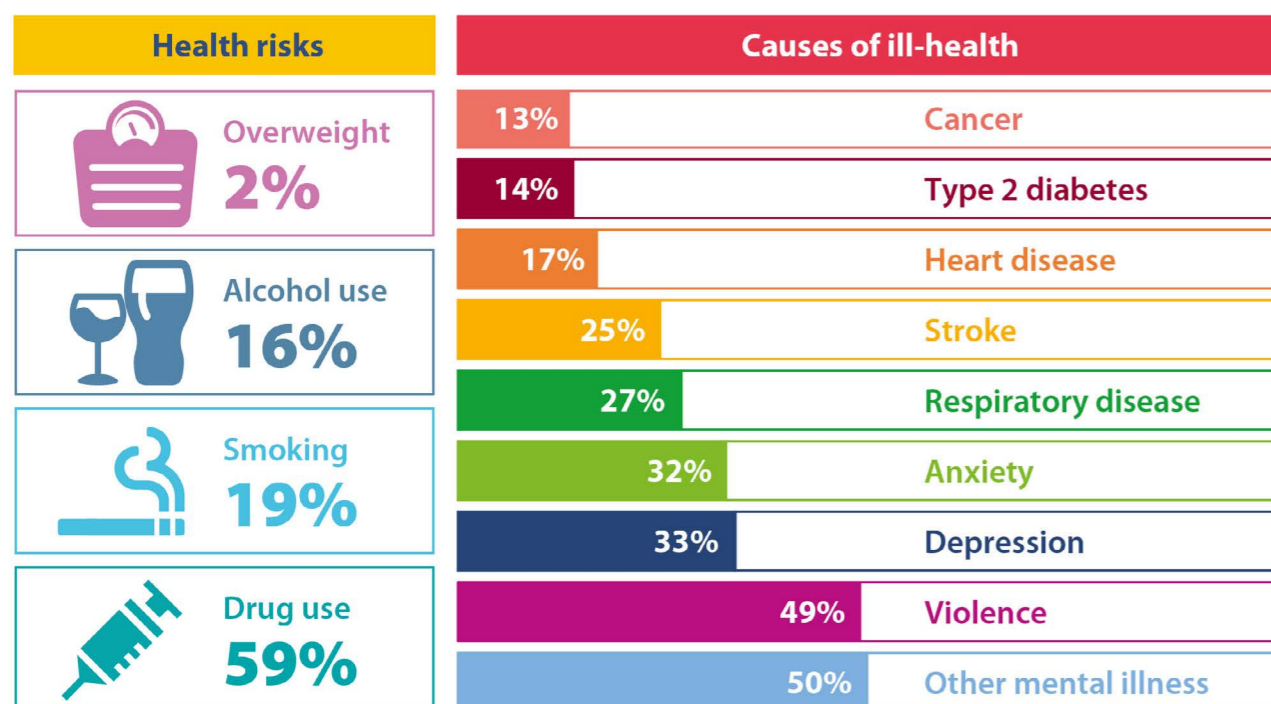
You can read more about the research here.

[Read more](#)

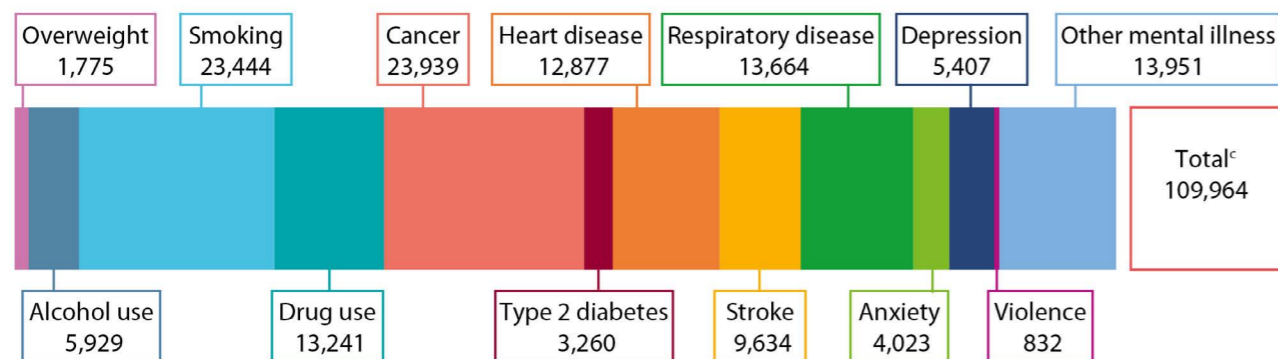
The annual costs of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) in Wales

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) increase individuals' risks of adopting health-harming behaviours and developing ill health. ACE survey data was used to calculate the proportion of key health risk behaviours and health conditions attributable to ACEs and estimate the associated annual costs to Wales.^a

What proportion of health risks and causes of ill-health are attributable to ACEs in Wales?

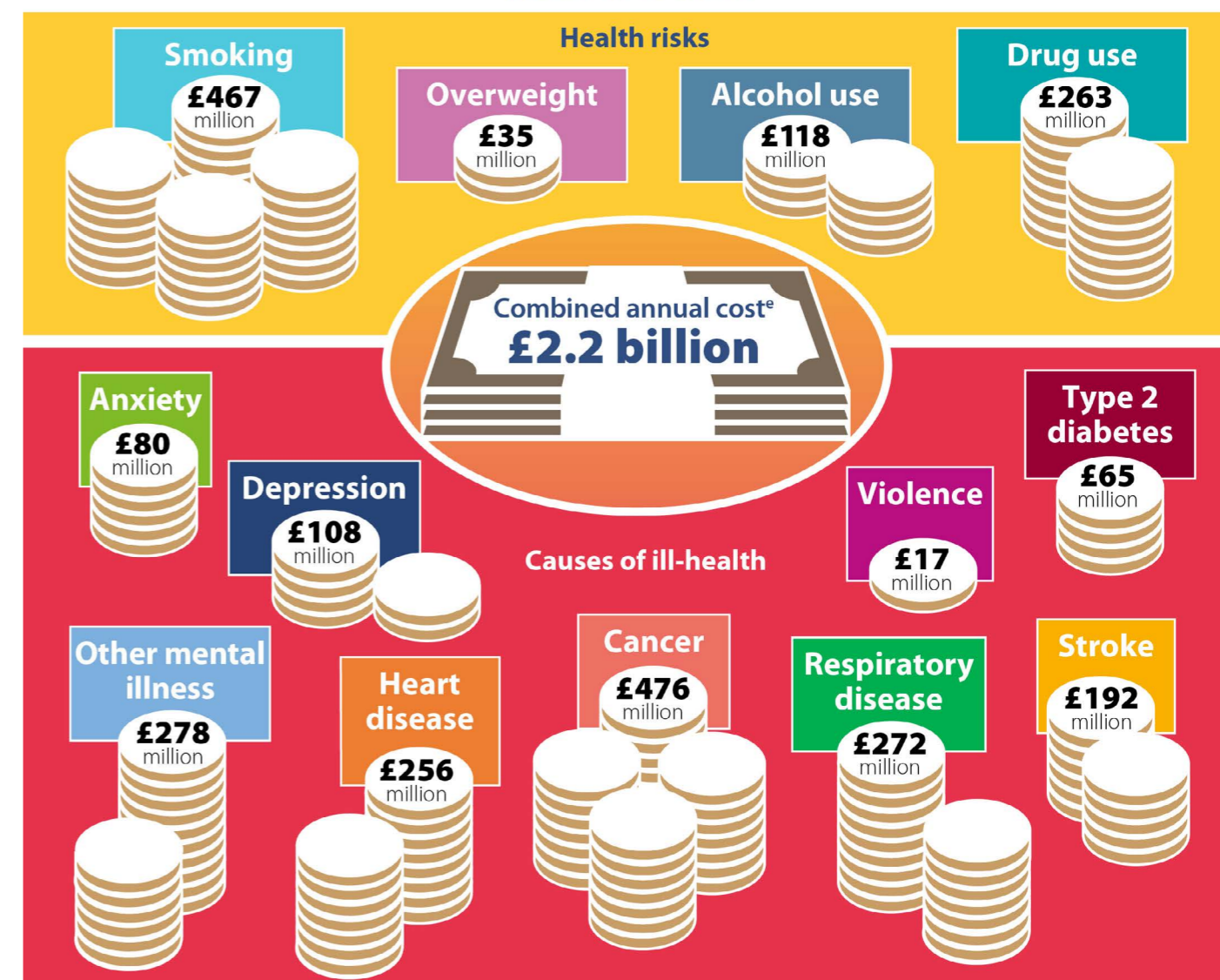


How many years of healthy life lost^b does this account for annually?

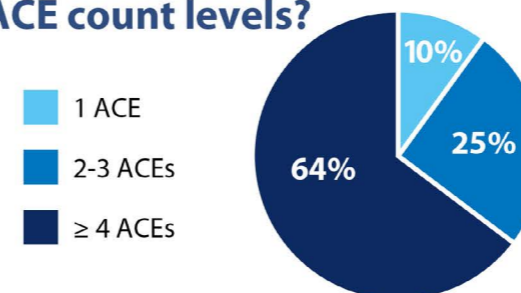


^aFull methodology is published in Hughes K, Ford K, Kadel R, Sharp C A, Bellis M A. Health and financial burden of adverse childhood experiences in England and Wales: a combined primary data study of five surveys. *BMJ Open* 2020. Population attributable fractions were calculated using Welsh ACE prevalence data and relative risks calculated from five UK ACE studies; ^bDisability Adjusted Life Years (DALYs) lost, 2017 Global Burden of Disease Study; ^cExcluding DALYs for health risks linked to included causes of ill health.

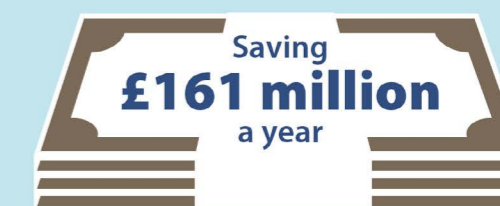
What are the estimated annual financial costs^d attributable to ACEs in Wales?



What proportion of these costs are accounted for by different ACE count levels?



A **10%** reduction in ACE prevalence^f in Wales would reduce their combined annual cost by **7%**



^dCosts calculated for 2017; ^eExcludes costs for health risks linked to included causes of ill health; ^f10% reduction applied to each ACE count category, calculated for year 2017.

Policy and International Health, WHO Collaborating Centre on Investment for Health & Well-being, Public Health Wales, Clwydian House, Wrexham, LL13 7YP.

phwwhocc.co.uk

News

Public Health Wales report analyses inequalities in COVID-19 vaccination uptake in Wales

Public Health Wales has produced a report analysing inequalities in coverage of COVID-19 vaccination by sex, socioeconomic deprivation and ethnic group.

[Read more](#)

Innovative projects helping people adapt their lives around coronavirus

A new suite of apps is helping vulnerable adults and individuals with special educational needs and disabilities to adapt their lives to meet the challenges posed by coronavirus.

[Read more](#)

On 1 March 2021, the law around smoking in certain settings in Wales will change

The new legislation will mean that hospital grounds, schools grounds and public playgrounds, as well as outdoor day care and child-minding settings will be required to be smoke-free.

[Read more](#)

New online portal for resources and information on health inequalities

A new online portal for information and resources on health inequalities in Europe has been launched by EuroHealthNet.

[Read more](#)

First major vaccination programme milestone

First Minister Mark Drakeford today praised the thousands of NHS staff and volunteers vaccinating people for their phenomenal effort as the first milestone in Wales' vaccination programme was reached.

[Read more](#)

Events

National Parks: places to walk? Places to conserve? Places to research?

Thursday 4 March

Online

What do Britain's National Parks mean to most people? In our post-Brexit, post-COVID, nature and climate emergencies era, are there lessons to be learnt and understood from how National Parks are managed and the roles they can play?

[Read more](#)

Teenage Development and how to Engage them and their Brains

Thursday 18 March

Online

This course examines the teenage years in terms of physical, psychological, emotional and social development. Examining the issues and looking at how that understanding can help with engaging with and affectively supporting young people.

[Read more](#)

Making Information Easy to Read and Understand

Thursday 11 March

Online

This session will introduce you to the basics of making information easy to read and understand for people with a learning disability. This course is suitable for anyone who wants to make their written information more accessible, especially for people with a learning disability

[Read more](#)

3 one-hour Welcoming and enterprising parks and green/blue spaces webinars

Friday 19 March

Online

These webinars will introduce the participants to the many opportunities that exist for developing more innovative and enterprising ways of attracting more people, from all parts of society to access and enjoy the outdoors.

[Read more](#)

View the full list of events on our website

[Visit our website](#)

Topics

Accident and Injury Prevention

Alcohol

Arts and Health

Gambling

Health and Social Care

Human Rights

International Health Development

Mental Health

Noncommunicable Diseases

Nutrition

Obesity

Oral Health

Physical Activity

Policy

Sexual Health

Sleep and Health

Smoking

Substance Misuse

Sun Awareness

Violence and Abuse

Next Issue

COVID-19: COMMUNITY ASSETS AND RECOVERY

