



RHWYDWAITH IECHYD
CYHOEDDUS CYMRU
PUBLIC HEALTH
NETWORK CYMRU



July 2020

Digital Health

Welcome

Welcome to the July edition of the e-bulletin which this month has a focus on Digital Health.

In light of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, organisations across the public, private and third sectors have had to change not only to accommodate home working but also to adapt their way of working to provide services online.

This e-bulletin looks at how organisations are supporting the health and wellbeing of their staff and how services are adapting digitally to support service users.

Public Health Network Cymru is hosted by the Wider Determinants of Health Unit team and is part of the Health and Wellbeing Directorate of Public Health Wales. Since the start of the pandemic, the team have been working from home and embracing the use of digital platforms such as Skype and Microsoft Teams to keep in touch. We have weekly team catch ups which are an opportunity to check how everyone is doing in terms of their health and well-being as well as planning the work programme for the next few months. Recently we have had a few new team members so it has been even more important to communicate regularly so that everyone feels welcome and included.

A short biography and a photo of individual team members can be seen on our [website](#).

Due to COVID-19 we have put our annual seminar and conference series of events on hold. However we feel it is important to continue to share and learn during this unprecedented time. As part of Public Health Wales, our staff are continuing to support the COVID-19 response. This has included delivering a number of COVID-19 related webinars during the past month. These can be viewed on our [Past Events page](#). Over the coming months we will be delivering more webinars so watch this space for further details. In the meantime if there are any topic areas you would like to see covered related to COVID-19 please contact us.

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.



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Contact us

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Social media

twitter

@PHNetworkCymru

facebook

[Publichealthnetworkcymru](https://www.facebook.com/PublicHealthNetworkCymru)

Latest information on coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is a new disease that can affect your lungs and airways. It's caused by a virus called severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).

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.

Public Health Network Cymru - Coronavirus (COVID-19)

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.

COVID-19
INFORMATION
FOR
PROFESSIONALS



Welsh NHS Confederation

Assistant Director, Nesta Lloyd-Jones

The Coronavirus pandemic has seen the NHS in Wales transform at an unprecedented pace. Temporary hospitals sprouted up in a matter of weeks, while GP appointments moved from the surgery and into our homes through digital or phone consultations.

Both transformations were equally radical. While we longed to see the threat to public health subside enough to see the back of temporary hospitals, in the world of digital health, we have been able to move at pace towards a more promising future.

In the National Survey for Wales (2018-2019) 93% of people said they were satisfied with the care they received from their GP, but 40% of people said they found it difficult to make a convenient appointment at their GP surgery.

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the NHS in Wales brought forward their plans to launch a video consultation service to comply with the social distancing regulations.

Digital consultations have the potential to help increase access to care and reduce the difficulties people have in making an appointment.

While the Coronavirus pandemic has temporarily and inevitably reduced people's ability to see their GP face to face, virtual appointments and telephone consultations have enabled people to continue to see their doctor throughout the pandemic.

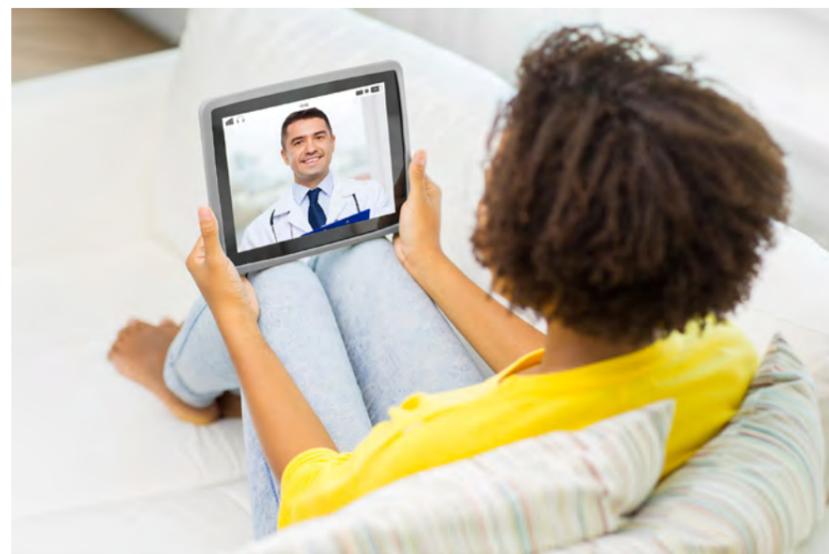
As well as helping people keep to the stay-at-home rules, the new system allows doctors and nurses who are self-isolating, but willing and able to work, to continue to serve their communities.

These system-wide transformations can also provide an insight into how we can combine traditional appointments with digital ones in the future.

An ageing population with more complex health conditions means the NHS will inevitably have to see more and more patients in the long term. It is therefore essential that we are able to find sustainable new models for care.

This includes basic things like improving our general public health by eating healthily, exercising regularly, but it also requires the NHS to adapt.

This type of activity can act as a preventative measure to stop people feeling lonely or socially isolated and stop people needing more acute services such as A&E. If we can harness digital technology to increase access to care and improve people's wellbeing, we should.



And, it is not just in Primary Care where we can see these benefits. Arts and health initiatives, as well as mental health support have also been delivered virtually throughout this difficult time. Span Arts, a community arts charity based in Narberth, Pembrokeshire, has been delivering a high quality and diverse range of music, theatre, comedy and voice events for over 30 years, alongside a wide range of arts and wellbeing projects, in an area where people otherwise do not have access to the arts. Throughout the pandemic they have moved all programmes online and are developing a series of unique projects to keep people singing.

The NHS is aware of the need to provide services based on individuals needs, which means that going forward we must take advantage of the opportunities presented to us from the use of technology. It also means we will need to deliver care traditionally for those who need that support, or for those that are not digitally enabled.

While the Coronavirus pandemic has tested the NHS's capacity, our workforce and our communities, there are bright sparks which point towards a more inclusive and positive future for everyone in Wales.

Darren Hughes is the Director at the Welsh NHS Confederation which represents all NHS organisations in Wales.

NHS Wales Informatics Service - Digital and COVID-19



From the outset, we knew that technology had a major role in NHS Wales' response to COVID-19. It has the potential to save lives, enable remote working and provide the information needed to deliver the best possible care. We acted swiftly and with an all-Wales technical platform already in place we had the integration and interoperability needed to introduce new digital services and data flows.

It quickly became apparent that testing, data, virtual consultations and remote working were key areas that would help ease the situation for health staff and for patients. So, this is where we focussed our attention and working very closely with Welsh Government, Public Health Wales and health boards we fast-tracked those developments that would make a difference.

And we made our website <https://nwis.nhs.wales> a focal point for information about digital services and the digital support available to NHS Wales care providers.

Continued...

NHS Wales Informatics Service - Digital and COVID-19

Digital support for the frontline

Initial challenges were to inform the NHS Wales response to COVID-19, which we achieved through rapid development of the NHS Wales COVID-19 data-hub. This gives decision-makers the tools to understand capacity and demand, with data available on GP appointments, bed and emergency department capacity, positive COVID-19 tests and calls to NHS 111.

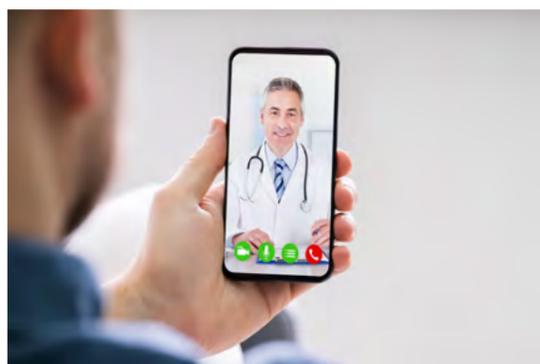
We also produced the lists needed for Shielding Letters, working with new methodology to produce this essential data within 48 hours.

The adoption and roll out of Microsoft Office 365 and Teams across NHS Wales has also kept information flowing, supporting collaboration and liaison.

Digital testing was high on our list of urgent developments. Our tech teams quickly added new COVID-19 testing functionality to the Welsh Clinical Portal (WCP) for use at Community Testing Units, with 95% of tests now sent electronically to Welsh labs.

Within 40 days we delivered an automated all-Wales system to help contact tracers monitor people who may have been close to an individual who has COVID-19.

As things progress, we are working closely with NHS England to integrate the testing process end-to-end.



In primary care, we gave GPs remote access to the clinical desktop so they can work from anywhere, and we enabled an email at home service – allowing practice staff to access their NHS email from any location.

We also put the Welsh Clinical Portal on the desktop so family doctors can view patients' hospital information such as discharge summaries and clinical letters.

Patients are now able to use video conferencing for remote non-contact consultations with their GP, community nurses and mental health teams. New systems are not only providing social distancing benefits but are contributing to the longer-term transformation of care.

Mark Allen, Practice Pharmacist at North Cardiff Medical Centre told us: *"You have changed the way we will work in the future and given us the ability to work from anywhere."*



In secondary care, we accelerated video conferencing for outpatients' clinics and added new features in the Welsh Clinical Portal to support the virtual consultation. This is giving doctors access to their clinic list and patient record wherever they are, and they can record details of the consultation and capture the decision.



And we added a COVID-19 death reporting function to the Welsh Clinical Portal so clinicians no longer have to phone Public Health Wales.

We accelerated implementation of the Fuji Mobility image viewing software, which means secondary care clinicians in Wales can now view images across health board boundaries.

We launched the Welsh Clinical Portal mobile app for hospital doctors to use on iOS and Android devices. It offers patient information on the go and at the bedside, including notifications, view and sign off test results, add and edit notes and tasks for patients.

To provide the capacity for high resolution remote and mobile services we doubled the capability of the NHS Wales network bandwidth from 5gb, with the capability to increase to 10gb as needed.

Moving ahead we will build on our existing technical platform to enhance existing digital-first capabilities, including the development of a national data resource for Wales.

Digital services introduced during the pandemic are here to stay.

Healthy Working Wales

Healthy Working Wales (HWW) is a Welsh Government programme delivered by Public Health Wales. We work with employers, individuals and a range of health professionals to:

- Develop policies and practices that support and improve the health and wellbeing of employees;
- Facilitate effective sickness absence management to provide supportive return to work for employees following a period of ill health to prevent people from falling out of work.

Over many years, HWW has run an awards scheme which provides a national quality mark to employers for workplace health and wellbeing. The awards support employers across Wales to improve the health and wellbeing of their staff, engage and communicate with employees more effectively, and help to achieve a range of business and organisational outcomes. With support from a team of Advisors, the award framework helps employers to address issues such as reducing sickness absence costs, improving productivity and staff engagement.



Continued...

Healthy Working Wales

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the HWW website contains a one stop shop of information and resources to employers via: <http://www.healthyworkingwales.wales.nhs.uk/home>

It can be difficult for employers to know where to go for guidance so the HWW website signposts to the most appropriate sources on trustworthy websites. It has sections on:

- Symptoms checking, self-isolation and testing
- Risk assessments and protecting vulnerable people
- Limiting the spread/ infection prevention and control advice
- Safe home and lone working, medical certification
- Pay and loss of earnings, business grants and funding schemes
- Close working with others, vehicles and travel to work, canteens and rest areas
- Critical workers including testing and PPE

The HWW website contains the sector specific guidance so far issued by Welsh Government:



- Offices and contact centres
- Retail
- Manufacturing
- Construction and outdoors working
- Hairdressing and barbers
- Sports and recreation
- Forestry businesses
- Animal businesses
- Creative industries
- Food and meat packing plants
- Tourism
- Culture and heritage destinations
- Laboratories and research facilities

The HWW website is regularly updated with latest guidelines and information.

The website also has a link to the new Public Health Wales health and wellbeing campaign 'How are you doing?' which supports people to look after their mental, physical and social wellbeing, with signposting to relevant services and resources:

<https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/how-are-you-doing/>

Working with employers who are award holders, the following provides a snapshot of the series of case studies HWW is compiling to demonstrate how employers in different sectors and of different sizes have responded to the pandemic and lockdown measures.

Swansea University: Adapting to the new normal

Despite lockdown, Swansea held a 100 year Centenary Wellbeing event in May through virtual means including Yammer, the workplace social media page where staff interact for their wellbeing and in support of others.

The event included more than 50 staff led wellbeing activities ranging from tutorials on growing veg at home to yoga, meditation, Zumba, staff choir, belly dancing, Zwift cycle challenges, reading and crafting clubs. The sessions were well attended and helped staff reconnect, try something new or continue with a healthy lifestyle. Since then, several of the sessions have been repeated. The event was a welcome distraction and respite for many staff, particularly for frontline staff supporting the NHS directly or indirectly through Swansea University Medical School.

The University has a staff sustainability and wellbeing app with over 50% staff (1654) signed up through which engagement is taking place under the theme of "Stay SWell together".



This is a campaign within the SWell employee engagement programme (which was the national runner up in the 2017 Guardian Sustainability Awards) that focuses on maintaining and improving physical and mental health during the lockdown. Activities include remote working checklists, keeping active at home, keep learning as well as promoting positive behaviours at home. Other activities such as keeping in touch and the setting up of the 'Staying SWell Together Virtual Café' focus on keeping staff connected and combatting isolation and loneliness. The campaign also responds to staff suggestions submitted as 'SWell Ideas'. This feeds into the wider programme with staff earning points and prizes for their actions.

Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) Wales (an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice): Home working and supporting health and wellbeing

Key to the health and wellbeing of staff during the pandemic has been how to connect and create an inclusive environment for work whether at home or on site.

- HMCTS "Together whilst apart" newsletter is a new communications channel for home workers focusing on isolation and sharing useful information.
- COVID-19 Keeping Well intranet page which broadens the focus from health to wellbeing and provides guidance and information on practical issues that people are facing from leading a team remotely to staying physically and emotionally healthy.
- Webinars run with a combination of professional content and volunteers from across the organisation sharing their experiences. Topics include resilience and isolation, keeping well remotely, mindfulness, and grief and loss.
- Digital support expanded to assist those working remotely enabling them to set up virtual meetings and hearings.
- Mental Health Allies offer virtual or face to face, confidential support to individuals, raise awareness of mental health and act as a vital source of information for all. Electronic thank yous acknowledging, via the intranet, the great work done in unprecedented times. Examples include setting up virtual training across the UK and

Healthy Working Wales

The Wallich: Moving frontline online

As Wales' leading homelessness and rough sleeping charity with 400 staff supporting people experiencing homelessness, all staff had to adapt in order to:

1. Keep people safe
2. Delay transmission within our The Wallich communities
3. Reassure staff and clients
4. Keep critical services running

- **Remote working:** The Wallich kept 24 critical services open during lockdown as many residential services required face-to-face support. Other employees worked from home and adapted to supporting people remotely, including use of tech for regular contact with staff and service users. In addition, 345 residents were connected to the internet who were previously digitally excluded.
- **Social distancing solutions:** guidance on stringent risk assessment of areas and cleaning procedures were issued to all services. PPE supply was rolled out working with Welsh Government and other partners to ensure distribution.
- **Flexible working:** All staff received full pay working from home or shielding with no loss of contractual sick pay if they needed to self-isolate. The charity issued working from home tools to support people to adjust to a different way of working. Flexible working hours were accommodated to enable parents to deliver home schooling, along with online resources to support service users and their children. During Carers Week, policies supporting individuals caring for family members and the PHW 'How Are You Doing' campaign were promoted.
- **Mental health & wellbeing:** Access to a comprehensive resource library supported mental wellbeing including advice on managing individual mental health, self-help guides and online resources such as podcasts and videos on mindfulness and reflexology and live group sessions.
- **Physical wellbeing:** The Wallich encouraged staff to participate in initiatives such as National Walking Month, #TRY20 challenge, scavenger hunt challenges and videos of strengthening and cardio online workouts. The Bridgend teams began a 10,000-step a day walking challenge.

Careers Wales: Enhancing staff communication and engagement

- Careers Wales uses a mix of email, video, e-bulletin, Microsoft Teams and Yammer (an internal social media platform) for communication. The CEO has made several videos and released a weekly e-bulletin throughout lockdown to share key messages. Line managers have been in regular contact with their teams via video conference.
- Almost all offices have a Wellbeing Champion and a Mental Health First Aider. These people play an important role in bringing colleagues together for events that promote health and wellbeing. Since lockdown, Wellbeing Champions have organised virtual coffee breaks, quizzes, yoga and mindfulness sessions using Teams as a platform.
- Yammer enables colleagues to connect around shared interests with Yammer groups for cookery, gardening, crafts, book club, TV/film, football and many more. This has helped people to make work connections, replacing the "kitchen conversations" that normally take place.
- There has been an upsurge in interest in training with most training continuing to run using digital platforms. Bitesize CPD ideas are also shared via Yammer.
- Since the lock-down, many staff have reported feeling much more connected to their colleagues because of the increased use of Teams Chat, virtual meetings and the wellbeing activities.

NHS Wales Informatics Service

Large scale shift to remote working in response to COVID-19

In a very short space of time the impact of COVID-19 resulted in a rapid transformation of the workplace, with 95% of our staff moving from office to home working, almost overnight.

As a digital organisation all our staff had laptops they could use at home, which meant the transition went very smoothly. Staff were also encouraged to take home core equipment from their office desk, such as monitors, keyboards, webcams and headsets. With flexible working policies already in place the enforced change due to COVID-19 workflow was largely unaffected.

Immediately, we adapted our communications and HR strategies to keep staff engaged and informed. Use of Microsoft Teams, with integrated video conferencing and document sharing platforms made collaboration easy and quickly became the norm. Teams also made it easier to connect on a personal level and supported informal communications through a virtual staff room.

We introduced online staff briefings, and a bi-weekly series of 10-minute live video talks to keep staff informed and connected.

While staff have faced new challenges when working from home, such as managing child-care while schools are closed, the outcome has been positive. Productivity has increased and sickness absence reduced compared to the same time last year.

Initial feedback is that staff have responded well to the new remote environment, with many enjoying the flexibility of home working and a stop to the daily commute.

A staff group has now been set-up to review new ways of working for the organisation as we recover from the pandemic. In the interim, and to ensure the health and well-being of staff, home working will continue until 30 September.

However, working from home can generate a sense of isolation. To help staff we have an online hub with access to health and well-being information and ideas, and best practice guidance when working remotely.

This has been a seismic shift in the workplace, and as such we are focussed on proactively supporting our staff through the provision of physical desktop resources and through workforce development and our well-being framework.



Flintshire Local Voluntary Council – Feeling well is conducive to working well

As the team at Flintshire Local Voluntary Council has adapted to supporting local voluntary, community and charitable groups and organisations from home, there has been a conscious and determined effort to remain mindful that feeling well and working well go hand-in-hand.

Chief Officer Ann Woods, explained “*We’re here to support, promote and develop the voluntary, community and charitable groups and organisations that make a positive difference to people, places and causes in our county. To a great extent, we’re successful in this thanks to the hard work, knowledge and experience held and shared by the individuals that make-up our small staff team and, at a time when new and existing third sector projects and initiatives are needed more than ever, enabling staff to feel well and, in turn, work well, is key to maximising our effectiveness.*”

In the very early stages of home working, these actions were prioritised:

- **Providing a constant.** Whilst organisations saw a shift in the needs within the communities they support, we have remained confident throughout that, in order to deliver the service Flintshire’s third sector expect from us, we need not move away from the four work streams common to all County Voluntary Councils in Wales, drawn together under the Third Sector Support Wales umbrella. With the potential for the imposition of government restrictions to make staff feel that drifting from their comfort zone was both inevitable and out of their control, we offered a constant, and in turn, some reassurance and stability, by stressing that what we deliver would not change.



- **The gift of time to adjust.** To help ease the transition, the management team and Trustees took the decision to offer each staff member a 30-minute paid break each day during the first four weeks of working from home. This gesture was greatly appreciated by staff who used the time to reflect and take stock, to tend to family, friends and neighbours and to ease children into home schooling. Beyond this four week period, this gift has continued to give by creating a habit-forming awareness that regular breaks are beneficial, and leading to some staff working more flexibly to make time for themselves.
- **Workstation assessment.** Completion of an assessment by every team member to identify any equipment needed to ensure work stations were comfortable. Equipment, for example lap-top raisers, were ordered and delivered directly to home addresses, and arrangements made for chairs and monitors to be transported from the office.
- **Enhancing self-confidence by enabling the dedicated team to remain a trusted source of information and guidance, albeit at a time when so much was uncertain.** At-least daily briefings from the Chief Officer to all staff and Trustees on the local response and the availability of resources to support the third sector.

- **Adopting software that allowed us to stay in touch with each other and the sector, access essential documents, and actively encouraging staff to take time to remain connected with each other.** The team derives job satisfaction from responding to the needs and wants of organisations and groups and so it was important that we continued to capture these by moving our Volunteer Organisers and North East Wale Well-being Networks online.
- **Forging a partnership with Warm Wales to prevent staff feeling stressed and overwhelmed.** There has been a 700 percent increase in calls to our two team members who work as Social Prescribers. As an integral part of the county’s single point of access service, these staff field calls from residents impacted most by the pandemic and associated restrictions. Regular team meetings, held via Zoom and Microsoft Teams, have been used to reiterate that well-being is paramount and to further embed a culture of looking out for ourselves and others, and taking time to maintain team bonds. Time devoted to day-to-day operations has equalled that spent on the things that support effective home-working, for example, sharing hints and tips on what each individual has found helpful (these have ranged from listening to recommended podcasts to working where there is natural light), fun activities and constant reminders about regular screen breaks.

Between meetings, remote responses to “question of the day” have served to ensure staff are laughing and learning more about each other which can only be good for team dynamics now and in the future.

The requirement to reclaim additional hours worked within two weeks of accrual has been introduced since staff began working from home. In part, this policy change is designed to further promote wellbeing by guarding against burn-out.

Speaking about another move that has proved conducive to staff wellbeing, Third Sector Development Manager for Health and Social Care Millie Boswell said “*We’re well placed to hear about training and resources designed to support staff in their third sector work, but also more generally, in working from home. All staff have been allowed time to attend courses, but equally importantly, they’ve had a say in what training we offer to the staff and volunteers from the groups and organisations we support. This stake in decision making has allowed staff to respond to the needs they’ve identified in the course of their work and the satisfaction this gives provides a real boost. Additional money we’ve received from Welsh Government has so far been used to fund training courses in, for example, moving and delivering services online, using PPE and infection control, and engaging teams using digital tools.*”

Regular supervision sessions between staff and their line manager have continued remotely, and been supplemented by regular one-to-one check-in calls from managers ensuring staff have opportunities to raise any issues outside of team get-togethers. All team members have been invited to complete an “Individual Wellbeing Action Plan” in advance of their supervision session. This gives managers an insight into work-place triggers for declining mental health, and how disciplined individuals are being about taking breaks and ensuring they are physically comfortable at their workspace.

Speaking of the experience of working from home, team member Mel Salisbury said “*Work changed from something I went to, to something that must happen whilst home life went on around me and it was difficult at first. By acknowledging that the adjustment to home working may not be easy and by recognising the need to offer support, my employer helped to alleviate the avoidable worries and stresses that make focussing on work more difficult. Working with colleagues remotely has become second nature and whilst I look forward to seeing them, I feel no less connected to them than before.*”

All team members now have the option to return to the office for their scheduled supervision session, observing social distancing and all other measures identified following a risk assessment. This is one way to help staff gradually reintroduce themselves to the environment, and prepare for the eventual return to “normal” working life.

Warm Wales

Kathy Harris, Community Worker, Warm Wales



Warm Wales is a Community Interest Company (CIC) on a mission! Our goal is to alleviate fuel poverty, thus positively impact the health and well-being of the people with whom we work. Fuel poverty does not come alone; those who struggle to keep warm are prone to a range of health conditions as a result of living in cold, damp conditions, so our work has far-reaching benefits for the people we are able to help.

In Wales, any household that spends over 10% of its income to maintain a comfortable level of warmth in their home is defined as 'fuel poor'. According to the most recent Government figures (2019), an estimated national average of 12% of Welsh households live in fuel poverty. One of the ways in which we are working to reduce this statistic is through our **'Healthy Homes Healthy People (HHHP) Project'**.

Sponsored by Wales & West Utilities (WWU), a core feature of the **HHHP Project** is to offer bespoke information, advice and direct help, tailored to each individual's circumstances. This can range from explaining energy bills and supporting a tariff-switch to sign-posting householders to organisations such as CAB, Age-Connect or Thrive (Womens' Aid).

We also connect eligible householders to practical and financial support available from a wide range of key organisations that we have forged working partnerships with (e.g. WWU, Local Authorities, the Welsh Government (Warm Homes Nest Scheme), Dŵr Cymru, Care & Repair and others), assisting with the referral and supporting the householder through the process.

Since its inception in 2017 the HHHP Project has enabled us to help 2132 households, providing £1,456,936 worth of savings and measures across Wales to date.

Pre COVID-19

Following initial contact or referrals, our **HHHP Project** Community Workers visited householders in targeted areas across Wales to assess support needs and eligibility before taking the required action. This proved to be an effective way of establishing a sound, working rapport with those who required help. Then in March 2020, the unthinkable happened, and everything changed! Covid-19 rendered home visits impossible and working from home became the only viable option. We needed to adapt if we were to continue to support householders through this unprecedented period.

We were already making use of technology to aid project delivery. We had digitised systems in place for inter-team communication, data collection and reporting. Our Community Workers used tablets and mobile phones to assist with home visits and we have a secure portal in place in order to receive personal referrals securely. Now we were remote working, we faced two immediate challenges.

Firstly, we needed a safe yet effective way to reach our householders. It was the humble telephone that came to the rescue, and fortunately, we were able to continue with 'home visits' over the phone. Whilst not as personal as a home visit, our Community Workers were pleasantly surprised to find how effective this was in most cases. We offered Zoom calls and facetime chats for those that wanted the face to face experience, and whilst we appreciate this was not available to all, we were able to offer support in how to use the technology for those that had access to it.

The telephone enabled us to work around our second challenge too. Sometimes, for security or process-related reasons, we would be required to speak with the householder and a representative from a partner or other organisation at the same time. For example, a high proportion of the people we supported through this time were concerned about energy bills and requested support when contacting their utility companies. This kind of support was easily undertaken during a home visit, the householder providing their account number and security information before the Community Worker activating the speaker-phone to enable a three-way conversation. With the three parties in different locations due to lockdown, we needed to find a different way forward.

Sometimes, it's the simplest things that make all the difference. The 3-way telephone call function enabled our Community Workers to speak with householders and outside agencies simultaneously. As a result, they were able to help with a variety of issues such as gaining clarity over bills, concerns over pre-payment meters,

Beyond COVID-19

In the past, we have been restricted to targeted areas due to resource limitations, but having experienced and overcome the challenges faced during lockdown, this is no longer the case, and now we are able to offer the vast majority of our **HHHP Project** to any region in Wales.

Warm Wales' Healthy Homes Healthy People Project

Some of the main services we provide

- **Energy:** Help and advice with understanding energy bills, support with fuel debt, tariff-switching, savings and discounts (e.g. Warm Home Discount)
- **Water:** Information, advice and support with tariff reductions and water meters
- **Heating & Insulation:** Support with applications to **Nest**, a Welsh Government-funded scheme, providing free replacement boilers/central heating systems to qualifying householders. Also support with referrals to **ECO** schemes for insulation measures
- **Income Maximisation:** Benefit checks and support with DWP and **Council Tax Reduction** applications
- **Home Adaptations:** Support accessing grab-rails, level access showers, stairlifts etc.
- **Priority Service Register:** Free registration for gas, electricity and water for vulnerable households
- **Home Safety Measures:** Carbon Monoxide/Smoke Alarm/Locking Cooker Valve information and advice for all and support for qualifying householders
- **Connection to Gas Network:** Applying and processing of gas connection vouchers where eligible
- **Whilst unable to visit in person, we can offer householders:**
 - Virtual 'home' visits via telephone/Zoom/Facetime)
 - 3-way telephone calls to help with referrals and support from providers

For further information, contact the HHHP team on 01656 747622 or email information@warmwales.org.uk

To book a call visit: <https://www.warmwales.org.uk/book-a-call>

To make a secure referral on behalf of a client visit: <https://www.warmwales.org.uk/partner-upload/>

www.warmwales.org.uk

www.facebook.com/WarmWalesCIC/

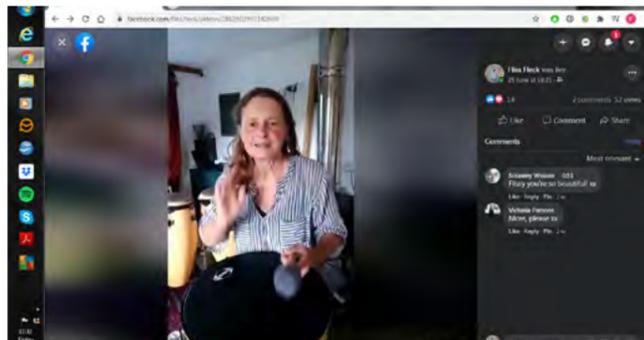
<https://twitter.com/WarmWales>

'Stress Busting for NHS Staff'

– Looking at Online Music Workshops for Wellbeing

Fliss Fleck, Community Music Tutor

As a Community Music Tutor my work has come to a halt, aware that other people have been working extra hard to keep our hospitals running, I am offering 2 free workshops for doctors, nurses and health care workers on Mondays at 6pm Stress-busting Drumming for staff. Email me flissfleck@gmail.com for a link.



Playing in a Samba Band I found that the focus on rhythms releases the mind like a meditation. Recently as a guest tutor I ran an online drum workshop for a local samba band, a funny experience talking and drumming to a screen instead of the usual room full of people. I enjoyed feedback on screen.



Many musicians have been creating wonderful work online, helping to maintain connectivity during lockdown.

Welsh musician [Josh Doughty](#) has taken his music into hospitals, care homes and schools. His performance in the care home was cancelled due to Covid 19 and with the help of 'Live Music Now' this video was made https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B_STYMOevLI. Projected on a large screen for the residents, the music is delicate and gently relaxing. He talks about the instrument he plays – the kora, a West African harp,

and answers the questions that he has most commonly been asked in the past.

Previously Josh played music in hospitals, in challenging situations it helped generate a calming effect in the ward and nurses thanked him. Although difficult he found this work a rewarding experience.

[Jack Salt](#) a beatboxer teaches online. For parents stuck at home working and trying to do childcare and schoolwork, accessing this creative input to their child can really create joy. For an active child or an adult the importance of having this connectivity to others has extra significance in maintaining mental and physical wellbeing and a sense of achievement and confidence accomplishing a new skill - <https://www.facebook.com/beatboxworkshopsbristol/>

[Turtle Key Arts](#) are involved in Singing and Songwriting working with people in the early stages of dementia <https://www.turtlekeyarts.org.uk/turtlesong>. They involve 2nd Year music graduates creating a pathway into arts and health students may not have previously considered. The workshops are full of song and laughter "very joyful". For participants it can have a profound effect in a 'medicalised' situation and also benefits family and professional carers <https://vimeo.com/163674967>

Through [Music and the Muse](#) <https://musicandthemuse.com/> I am working on a collaborative project with Heather Murray using Taiko and Samba Drumming to create A Topé, a womens' performance group. In March we had our first performance at the Muse in Brecon, with no idea that it would be our last meeting for months. Though physically isolated, connectivity of the WhatsApp group really helped to continue our interaction and boost spirits.

The high value of community music in these times is demonstrable, and the musicians' flexibility in creating new online resources is worth celebrating and using.

If you have created an online music resource please let me know by posting on <https://www.facebook.com/Fliss-Fleck-Collaborative-Arts-217772102434522/>

Dads and Football Project

Adrian Green, Project Manager, Mental Health Foundation

At the [Mental Health Foundation](#), despite COVID-19, we are still running our [Dads and Football Project](#), funded by the Wellcome Trust, with our partners Cardiff City FC. This started out as a Cardiff based research project exploring the life changing transition for men as they became dads; the highs, lows and everything they go through in the early years of parenting; from their feelings on being told that they are going to become a dad, through the pregnancy, birth and bringing up a young child, all the challenges that go with those life changing experiences and evolving responsibilities.

Before COVID-19 we ran 9 weeks of classroom peer support sessions, discussing topics chosen by the dads followed by 5-a-side football to help relieve stress supported by Cardiff City FC coaches, at locations across Cardiff. After lockdown and a slow re-start due to people getting used to the new way of working, to maintain momentum and services to those in need we decided to switch to online Zoom meetings. This was initially a challenge because some of our dads were either reluctant or unfamiliar with online working. Those who were familiar but nevertheless reluctant didn't always have the private space at home to participate in and disclose sensitive information. There was also a feeling of being more exposed using the video facility that Zoom provides. Fortunately, a member of the team with good IT and communication skills contacted each one of those dads by phone who needed that little bit of extra help and reassurance, and talked them through using Zoom including the ability to switch the video function off. We also found that having no more than 6 on a Zoom call was more conducive to engaging participants. We were delighted to discover that despite not being able to play football and some early hesitancy, several dads wanted to continue the group sessions and made themselves available weekly through Zoom.

We also found that with the support of our funder who extended our project for a further 6 months that lockdown and this sudden new way of working actually presented us with real opportunities for increased collaboration. We discovered that we were able to reach people who suddenly became available, when previously they were not, i.e., senior university researchers, key NHS contacts and other stakeholders including other dads' groups. With new introductions and successful online meetings that followed we are now extending our reach beyond Cardiff. Our dads willingness to stay onboard, as well as the potential to reach greater numbers of fathers beyond Cardiff has been hugely significant for this project.

We are now actively looking to reach our target of 50 dads in the programme by April next year. The project is scheduled to close in June 2021 so we are keen to hear from dads with young children who may wish to get involved.



Tan Y Maen Wellbeing Centre

Phil Griffiths, Chief Officer



Unprecedented just didn't do it justice. In the week before the 23rd March 2020 it was clear that there needed to be an urgent response. We watched for a few days to see what was coming in from our local council, the Health Board, the Welsh Government and others and it appeared that we were all standing, like a rabbit in the glare of a car headlights, unsure of the next step. Nothing for it but to take the initiative.

The problem was what should we do and how should we do it? How could we get our information out to let people know what we were doing or planning to do in response to this new situation and if we got the message out would there be any take up or were we all stuck, like the rabbit, waiting for the inevitable.

In times like these you have to use your existing strengths and resources. We looked at what we already had and at our

direction of travel, as we felt it was going to be easier to speed up rather than get the juggernaut moving in the first place.

- We had been using digital support for mental health for nearly 9 months. Having researched the market and having decided upon and widely tested an App which was freely available on all current platforms, we already had some of the knowledge, the systems in place and most of the infrastructure we needed to expand the programme.
- We had good community partnerships, with our local Health Board and with other organisations, including a long standing one in which we delivered CCBT through an online programme
- We had experienced and engaged staff who, from past experience in delivering new and innovative projects, we knew could change and adapt
- We had a Trustee group who were willing to try new things and support our work.

These were our Four Pillars. They are built on a foundation of trust and it takes time for that to be established. We finally realised we had been working for the past 8 years to this end.

The initial flow of information became part of the problem rather than a solution to it. We were bombarded by emails from groups telling us they were closed or closing, suspending operations, closing their premises and adapting their focus to deal with the pandemic. Mutual Aid groups were springing up everywhere, the government were recruiting volunteers for anything and everything and we gaped at the community response. Like many small to medium Charities in the health sector we often struggled to recruit good and reliable volunteers, and suddenly an army had appeared. So much so that it sometimes looked like the volunteers outweighed those in need of support.

And money. Once a major issue, how to fund the services we knew were needed in our diverse, widespread, often sparsely populated communities, suddenly it was being thrown at us. Get This In, New Money Available, COVID-19 Only, Take advantage of this Now, Doing nothing is Not An Option. Phew.

The real casualty was Actual Service Delivery, which got lost in the noise. We were so busy noting what we and others were no longer doing, and who was now available to try to step into our shoes, and the new money that was available to deliver it, that the danger was that we lost sight of the ball, the clients themselves, those in need of support. If we were having trouble keeping up, how must the clients be feeling. The result of lockdown, in our experience, was shutdown.

The clients withdrew into their bunkers and, from those who had previously been calling upon us on a regular basis, an eerie silence fell. Perhaps, and we hoped this was the case, everybody was coping, was sitting it out, staying at home both physically and emotionally, staying safe, even sometimes enjoying the break. Our calls were often met in those first few weeks with 'Actually I am OK, no need for anything at the moment, I will let you know when I need help. But we knew this was not likely to be the whole story and the longer this went on the worse it was going to get.

We developed a 'Strategic Offer', and we promoted it through our close community ties, GPs, The health Board, local groups. We knew that support had to be offered and available without a wait, so we set up online systems, a short and simple Google Form, incorporating a CORE 10 Questionnaire, which we could send through email, text and WhatsApp. We set up a fast track to delivery, whilst making sure that those with more complex needs were dealt with appropriately by telephone call and additional support.

WhatsApp. Let's sing the praises of this global messaging system. End to end encryption, millions of existing users. Integration with Facebook, Google and Adobe systems. Ability to track status and receipts. This service gave us the edge we needed. Thousands of messages later, we have not only maintained our links with our existing service users but have established new trusted relationships with hundreds of new ones, from across the spectrum of support needs, from the mild to the severe, in every community. It has massively expanded our reach, as far south as Swansea, from as far north as Holyhead, our speed of response and our quality of delivery. It has enabled us to maintain our supervision of staff and our regular reports to our trustees. It has given us, previously a small local charity, the potential to be a National Player.

Our 'Offer' has now expanded. We have developed a Virtual Support Hub. The basics are all still there, telephone, email, text but we have so much more too. The Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board have commissioned App Based Support and have given us Silvercloud access, we provide CCBT through the Parabl Talking Therapies Serenity Programme. An Art and Craft Club and the Eight Week Mindfulness on Zoom. We are film-makers too. A Mindfulness course on the Vimeo platform. We have more to come, FunFit, a pilates based functional fitness video course, an online course on Writing to Heal which includes a live Zoom session for sharing and feedback.

We hope we haven't left those without access to online resources or the hardware behind. We have used existing services, easy to access platforms, and through the Big Lottery Community Fund in Wales we can provide and set up hardware and give training in its use.

The support tsunami is building. Loss will be with us for a decade. Loss of health, financial loss, emotional loss, loss of business and jobs, loss of loved ones. We will be gearing our support to address these needs. Working with the ICAN Community Hubs in North Wales and Parabl Talking Therapies, as well as providing our own 'Life After Loss' support.

We won't be going back. We will be looking forward. The post COVID-19 world is very different to the one that existed on 23rd March 2020. The challenges are out there, so let's rise to them.

GO Digital – Stephen’s Story

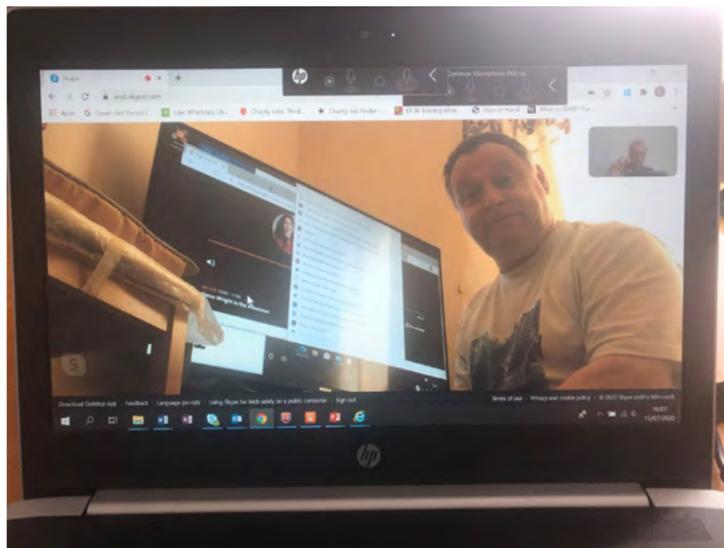
Stephen is partially sighted, lives independently in Wrexham, North Wales, and is in his mid-50s. Stephen first met with Go Digital towards the start of March shortly before lockdown measures due to COVID-19 were introduced.

Stephen says, “I was referred to Leonard Cheshire’s Go Digital programme by Centre of Sign, Sight, Sound in Wrexham to receive assistance and support with my digital skills and equipment. Before being referred I didn’t really use my computer as I didn’t really have a great deal of confidence. I had also connected my computer to my television screen this had helped a little, however this also meant that I was having to sit on the floor in front of the screen to use it which is not good for my back or posture as I still have to move from side to side on my knees.”

“I met with the Digital Inclusion Coordinator, who suggested that an iPad might be a little easier. Whilst the screen is smaller it was thought that the accessibility features would make using technology a little easier and I would be able to sit on the sofa in comfort. I also have an iPhone so we thought that many of the skills would be transferable and make things easier.”

“Unfortunately, lockdown happened shortly after our initial meeting and I wasn’t sure how I would get support during this time. The coordinator rang to complete the paperwork for my iPad and he explained that this was a very strange situation for all concerned, living so far away from me in South Wales he had hoped to recruit volunteers to support me but of course, face to face support this way would not be possible so it was agreed that we would try video calling on a weekly basis. Each session took place over a WhatsApp video call so we could see each other and so that the coordinator could see what I was seeing on my screen, guiding me to the different areas of the screen that were unfamiliar to me.”

“The COVID-19 pandemic helped me to realise very quickly that I needed to develop my digital skills in order for me to stay connected with the world, especially with food shopping. My coordinator was thrilled when he called for one of our sessions to find that I was in the middle of my weekly food shop. He was so pleased to see to me giving it a go that it was decided that he would leave me to it and would call back when it was completed. I also have a much better understanding of other online shops such as Amazon which I have used to purchase a new shaver.”



“Another way in which I feel connected with the world is through listening to the radio and finding out about the news. My coordinator supported me to set up a BBC account and help me to navigate around the iPlayer and BBC Sounds sites, this included finding the audio books that I was able to tell my sister all about. We then worked together to organise my favourites folder so that all my important websites, including online banking are easily found and in one place.”

“We managed to develop and tweak my accessibility features so that I can use my desktop with a lot more confidence. This also meant turning on the narration tool that can read different parts of the screen for me. I know where I can go to change this and other areas in the future.”

“With the iPad up and running we were able to change our sessions from the phone to the tablet using Skype, this was a big improvement being able to see a much bigger picture on the screen. Using the iPad for one of the calls meant that I could develop my knowledge of the phone. We worked through the features of the camera; I was amazed at the quality of the pictures that could be taken. I was then able to use pinch zoom to see much more detail. I also now know how to send the pictures on to people and also accessing those pictures on the iPad after syncing the devices together.”

“My confidence on using the computer has grown and grown and I’ve even found my own little ‘hacks’. Like when I do the weekly food shop online, I am finding that available delivery slots aren’t available for around 2 weeks. So, with this in mind, I complete my shopping and select a delivery date for a fortnight’s time. After a week I then go back to the online shop and add other things that I know I now need and this saves me from waiting another 2 weeks for that shopping.”

“I certainly feel that if a similar lockdown situation were to happen in the future I would feel much more confident to stay connected with the world.”

“As I am using the computer more and more I am looking into getting a good desk that will fit my TV, keyboard and mouse. This will give me somewhere to sit properly without any risk or discomfort rather than being on the floor.”

“I am also beginning to experiment further with Siri so that will certainly continue. Siri is already reading my texts back to me and if I wake up in the middle of the night I ask Siri for the time and this saves me scrabbling around in the dark.”

Sustrans Outside In - four weeks of fun activities delivered to your inbox



During the pandemic, Sustrans had to rethink how they were going to reach their school aged audience. A digital campaign was designed where families could sign up to four weeks of fun and educational resources and activities. Activities include videos, games, weekly challenges, themed activities and more.

Outside In is designed by our knowledgeable, experienced and fun-loving Schools Officers. All activities are bilingual.

The four-week activity pack is full of creative, active and interesting indoor and outdoor activities for the whole family.

[Subscribe to Sustrans Outside In](#)



Public Health Network Cymru Podcast

Latest Podcast

Welcome to our new PHNC Podcast Page of the Ebulletin. Here you can listen to the the previously released Podcasts.

The Latest Podcast in the series is on Learning Disabilities.

If you are interested in recording a podcast with us in the future, please contact us via email:

publichealth.network@wales.nhs.uk

Click to view the Sound
and Vision Pages



Learning Disabilities: Multi-Sport ▶

Arts and Health: Roadshow ▶

Health Impact Assessment: WHIASU ▶

Heart Health: BHF ▶

Nutrition: Early Years with Andrea Basu ▶

International Health: Migrant Health ▶

Community Care: OP who are Neurodiverse ▶

Dementia: World Toilet Day ▶

Sustainability: Sue Toner and Bronia Bendall ▶

Love Activity, Hate Excercise ▶

Sexual Health ▶

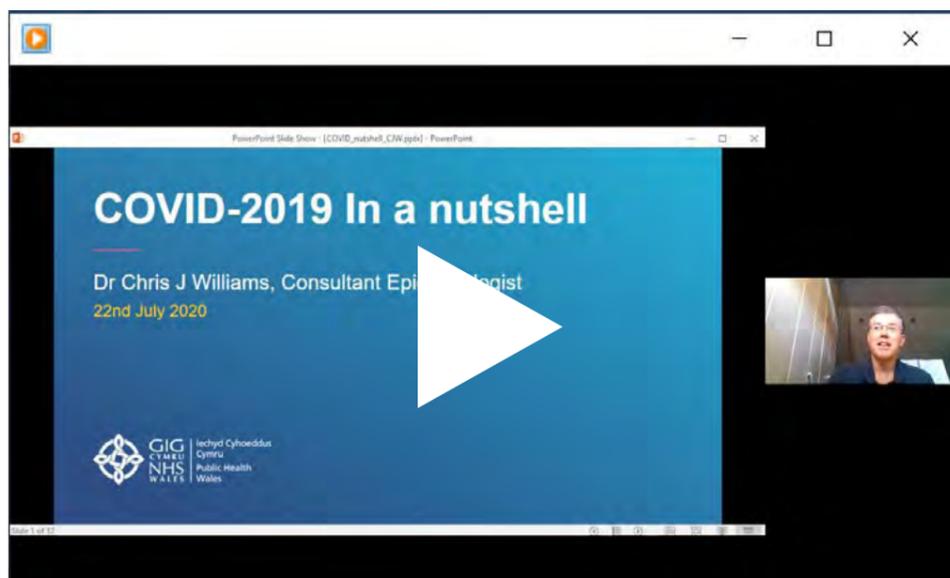
Alcohol: Drinkwise Age Well ▶

Sun Safety: Skin Cancer ▶

Gambling: The living room ▶

Public Health Network Cymru Press Play

Latest Video



Welcome to Press Play, here you can get the latest PHNC videos from youtube! Every month we will add new videos as they get uploaded. We have a number of events planned over the next few months so keep your eyes peeled for the latest streams on our twitter feed or come back and visit Press Play after the event!

Our latest video is the recording of the COVID-19 In a Nutshell Webinar held on 22nd July, hosted by PHNC, the presentation was given by Dr Chris J Williams, Consultant Epidemiologist from Public Health Wales.

Click to view the Sound
and Vision Pages



Beth Jones - Homelessness ▶

Dr Peter Mackie - Homelessness ▶

Emma Williams - Homelessness ▶

LD Seminar: Simon Rose and Karen Warner ▶

LD Seminar: Sam Dredge ▶

LD Seminar: Ruth Northway ▶

LD Seminar: Karen Everleigh and Hazel Powell ▶

Public Health Network Cymru in Numbers ▶

Shaping our Future: Cat Tully ▶

Shaping our Future: Sophie Howe ▶

Shaping our Future: Highlights ▶

Early Years Nutrition: Highlights ▶

Early Years Nutrition: Andrea Basu ▶

Early Years Nutrition: Judith John ▶

The Grapevine

Mums Matter

Mums matter started 3 yrs ago and was a pilot written by mums for mums and produced by Cardiff Mind. As the pilot was such a success helping over 100 women, peer support have been formed by the women that it is now available to all Minds to deliver. It has its own resources for the mums in a way of a folder which offers guidance on the way they feel and how to care for themselves as well as breathing techniques and meditations.

While the mums are on the course we go over the tools in the folder so they know how to use them successfully. When mums have finished the course they can attend their local peer support. There is also an online mums matter movement to help physically and an additional support group for the mums with children that have different needs. We also offer the mums a volunteer programme to help with Mums Matter once they have finished or on going one to one support or explain what else Mind has to offer.

For more information please email mums@mnpmind.org.uk or contact Tracy on 07960 271696.



Virtual or Telephone? That is the question.
How NHS Help Me Quit services are adapting to help smokers to quit during COVID-19



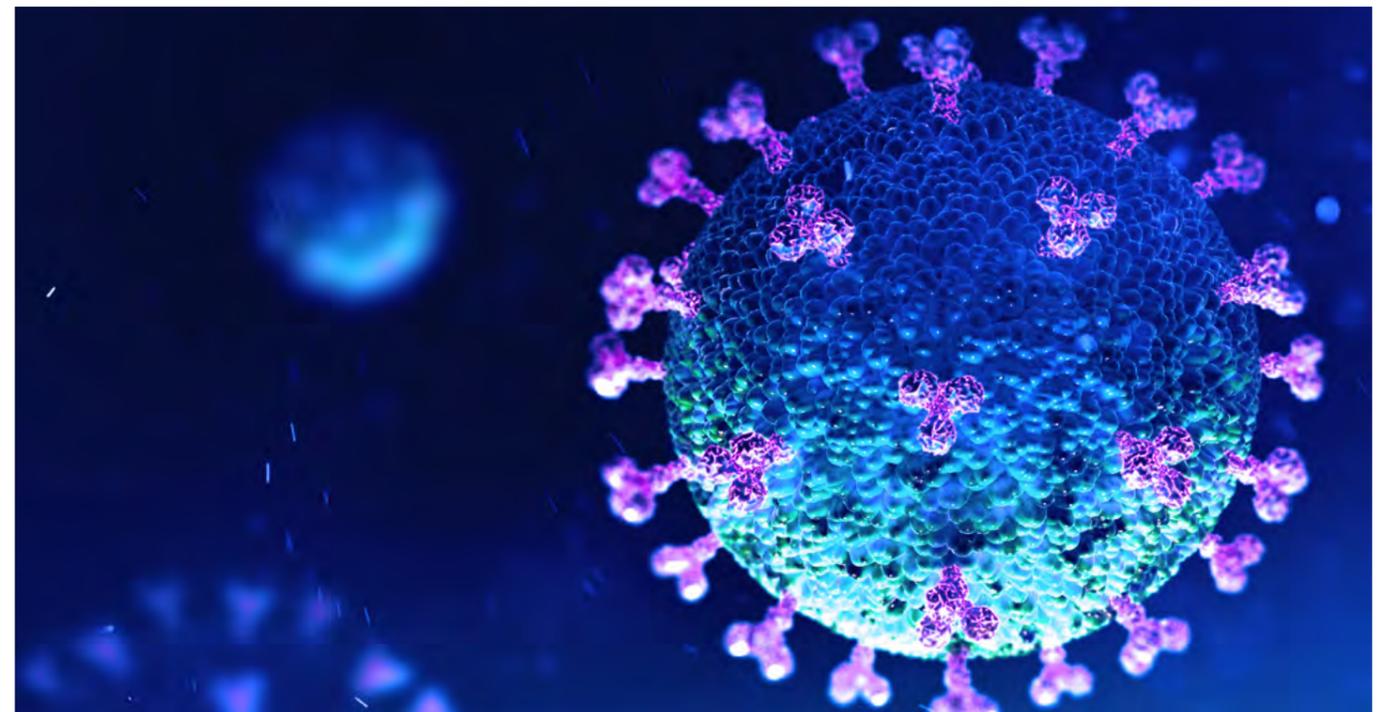
COVID-19 pandemic has encouraged some smokers to stop smoking. However face to face NHS Help Me Quit services in Wales have ceased, leaving smokers a telephone option only. In response to this, Swansea Bay University Health Board launched the virtual NHS Help Me Quit Service in July 2020. This service offers clients more choice and consistency. With the option of face to face (1:1 or group) sessions via video chat.

Developing the service relied upon good working relationships, collaborative curiosity and a quick response to COVID-19.

Good working relationships between Swansea Bay Public Health team, the local Health Board and Public Health Wales helped to co-ordinate efforts quickly. Work led by Swansea Bay Public Health Team involved scoping out client specification, reviewing technology choices, ensuring seamless transfer of clients and developing documentation to support the service.

Together, the steering group raised issues, solved problems and offered support. Applying innovation to an existing service, posed many challenges. Through a systematic and collaborative approach, each issue was tackled. Being curious, helped to test and refine the service before launch.

Swansea Bay University health board are early innovators of this service. The pace driven by the response to COVID-19 saw the service running in less than 4 months. As for the success of the service, it is still too early to tell. Swansea Bay Public Health Team will undertake a service evaluation. This evaluation will determine possible Wales wide implementation and improvement in the future.



Public Health Network

Cymru Headlines

Latest News

New guidance to support September schools return

The Welsh Government has published updated [guidance](#) to support schools prior to the return of all pupils in September.

The guidance will support schools, local authorities and settings to implement full operations in the autumn, including new guidance on contact groups.

The Welsh Government will make £29 million available to 'recruit, recover and raise standards', in response to the pandemic.

PrEP and Sexual Health in Wales

It has been two years since the Welsh Government took the decision to make [Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis \(PrEP\)](#) routinely available for people at risk of HIV through a three-year monitoring study.

In the two years following that decision the availability and use of PrEP has been closely monitored and it has now been fully embedded within and routinely available from sexual health services across Wales. Over 1,000 people have accessed PrEP since July 2017.

Click to view the News Pages



Education Minister announces 'back to school' plans for September



Sustrans Cymru awarded £1.1million to increase active travel in 400 schools across Wales



Victim Support: South Wales



£150,000 awarded for digital solutions in response to COVID-19



'Staying at Home' policy and the positive & negative impacts on the well-being of Welsh society



Welsh Government publishes first results from its major new COVID-19 survey



Public Health Network Cymru Calendar

3	4	5 Playday 2020: Everyday Freedom's Everyday Adventures National Event	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

Visit www.publichealthnetwork.cymru for more info on events

Topics

Accident and Injury Prevention ▶

Alcohol ▶

Arts and Health ▶

Brexit Health Hub ▶

Gambling ▶

Health and Social Care ▶

Human Rights ▶

International Health ▶

Mental Health ▶

Noncommunicable Diseases ▶

Nutrition ▶

Obesity ▶

Oral Health ▶

Physical Activity ▶

Policy ▶

Sexual Health ▶

Sleeping and Health ▶

Smoking ▶

Substance Misuse ▶

Sun Awareness ▶

Violence and Abuse ▶

Communities ▶

Education ▶

Environment ▶

Families and Social Care ▶

Health Inequalities ▶

Lifestyle ▶

Poverty ▶

Unemployment ▶

Work ▶

Early Years ▶

Maternal and New Born ▶

Working age adult ▶

Older People ▶

Children and Young People ▶

Asylum Seekers ▶

Carers ▶

Ethnic Groups ▶

Faith Groups ▶

Gender ▶

Gypsies ▶

Homelessness ▶

LGBT ▶

Migrants ▶

Parents ▶

Learning Disabilities ▶

Prisoners ▶

Veterans ▶

Next Issue...



Safe Return to Work