

Rhwydwaith Iechyd
Cyhoeddus Cymru
Public Health
Network Cymru



**COVID-19 and the
importance of food
and nutrition**
August 2021

Welcome

A new look!

Welcome to the August edition of the e-bulletin which has a new look to coincide with the launch of our [new website](#) – we hope you like it as much as we do! We have refreshed the look and feel of website to improve access to resources that help your work, to make it easier to book on to events and to give our members a direct point of contact if they want to share their work with more than 1700 members across Wales.

Members who want to write for our e-bulletin, discuss their work on a podcast or deliver a presentation in a webinar can submit their ideas for consideration in the new members' area. In this area, members can now store their saved items in one place, making the resources that you want to use for your work accessible whenever you need them.

All visitors to the website can take advantage of an improved search facility and over the coming weeks we will be adding more resources on policy, research and practice. It's an exciting new era for Public Health Network Cymru and there has never been a better time to join us so please share this e-bulletin with your colleagues.

Contact us

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

Email us
publichealth.network@wales.nhs.uk

Write to us
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Tyndall Street, Cardiff, CF10 4BZ

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Twitter: [@PHNetworkCymru](#)
Facebook: [Publichealthnetworkcymru](#)



Contents

Click the heading to go to the page

COVID-19 Information

4

Headlines

6

Podcasts

14

Videos

15

News

16

Calendar

17

List of PHNC Topics

18

Next Issue

19

This month's e-bulletin focuses on COVID-19 and the importance of food and nutrition for health. A healthy diet along with being physically active is important particularly at times when the immune system might need to fight infections and diseases such as COVID-19. This edition highlights initiatives which have improved access to good affordable food and provided cooking and nutrition skills during and following the recent pandemic.

Our most recent webinar was entitled Basic Income, Health and Wales which explored the notion of a basic income to improve health in Wales. The live recording and presentations can be viewed on our website. We have two further webinars coming up in September. The first one is COVID-19 and the Wider Impacts on Our Children and Young People and Our Families, which will be held on the 8 September at 2pm. The second webinar will be held on the 15 September at 2pm and will focus on Social Prescribing. Further information can be found on our website.

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.

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.



Links to the latest information

[Public Health Wales](#)

[Senedd Research](#)

[Welsh Government](#)

[Welsh Government: Looking out for Each Other Campaign](#)

[Public Health Wales: 'How are you doing?' Campaign](#)

[Public Health Wales: COVID-19 information and campaigns](#)

[UK Government](#)

[WHO Coronavirus](#)

COVID-19 Vaccination Information

[Public Health Wales](#)

[Public Health Wales Accessible Information](#)

[Public Health Wales: COVID-19 Vaccination Campaign Materials](#)

[Welsh Government](#)

Headlines

FareShare Cymru

FareShare Cymru works to fight hunger by tackling food waste. They take edible surplus food from the food industry (food that would otherwise be wasted) and redistribute this to charities and community organisations throughout South East Wales.

The project redistributes food to its 'Community Food Members', organisations that feed people in need, including homeless hostels, day centres, community cafés, refugee centres, women's refuge, a cookery project for young people and luncheon clubs.

FareShare Cymru currently serves 136 frontline charities and projects across South Wales. The warehouse team is now delivering enough vital food supplies to create 50,000 meals a week for people facing hardship through COVID-19 crisis – double the amount of food they

were distributing before lockdown measures came into place.

One of the projects receiving food is the Innovate Trust which provides support for adults with learning and physical disabilities in Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan and Rhondda Cynon Taff.

Their primary focus is managing supported accommodation housing, enabling their service users to live more independently in the community. They also run skills and wellbeing projects which encourage their service users to learn new skills, volunteer in their community, make social connections, and live healthy lives.

During the peak of the pandemic they had to put all of their in-person activities on hold, with a lot of their office-based staff



working from home, as well as shutting their social enterprise cafes. To deal with this, they decided to offer online social and educational activities for their service users, in order to keep them safe, engaged, and entertained during a difficult time. And they have repurposed one of their cafes into a food delivery hub, with their staff working hard to make food parcels and delivering them to their service users' homes.

For further information please go to fareshare.cymru



Eat Smart Save Better

Eat Smart Save Better! is a one hour session exploring ways to eat healthily, use store cupboard ingredients and provide tips for saving money whilst food shopping.

'Eat Smart Save Better' was originally developed within the Public Health Dietetics team at Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board as a face-to-face engagement session for members of the public wanting to find out more about how to incorporate nutritious foods into their families diets without breaking the bank.

The sessions were well attended and positively evaluated, with a high demand to run more prior to lockdown and the Covid-19 restrictions. To maintain the level of interest and engagement we had achieved, we adapted our delivery model to run as an interactive on-line option. This enabled us to sustain delivery and continue to promote practical food and nutrition messages to key groups in the community

The digital sessions have proved to be popular with groups such as 'Carers Wales', 'Flying Start', 'AVOW' and youth charity group 'We Mind the Gap' all-reporting via evaluation feedback that they enjoy the sessions.

Course Overview

- A one hour fun and informal session run either face-to-face or digitally



- Explore how to eat healthily whilst shopping on a budget by eating smart and saving better
- Shopping bag activity, looking at simple key ingredients, the nutrients they provide and how to incorporate them into everyday meals without breaking the bank.

The digital sessions also ran in partnership with the local Foodbank. Participants

attended the on-line session then collected a bag of shopping, which contained all the ingredients needed to make the ten healthy and nutritious recipes included in the Eat Smart Save Better recipe book. As well as picking up helpful nutritional information and tips, the participants were able to cook simple sustainable meals for their families at home.

'The session was great as it gave me some new meal ideas I have used most of the ingredients, and will use the recipes again'

'I was amazed at how much food was in the shopping bag, I thought it would have cost a lot more'

Sarah Powell-Jones, Dietetic Assistant Practitioner created the 'Eat Smart Save Better' session and resources. She tells us that 'initially it was daunting to run the sessions digitally, however they proved to be extremely popular and of benefit to people at a time when face-to-face sessions just weren't an option'.

Eat Smart Save Better complements and supports our range of Nutrition Skills for Life courses. Its ideal for giving families

a taste of the knowledge and skills they can go onto develop if they join one of our accredited courses such as Prepare a Healthy Meal or Come and Cook courses.

For further information contact Sarah: sarah.powell-jones@wales.nhs.uk



One of our clients was a mother with a disabled child who found gardening fascinating. The child is always happy being in the garden, and our client is happy that they are able to spend their time together learning about healthy foods. Another client is an older gentleman who had to relocate and lives in a block of flats without access to a garden. Being a keen gardener in his previous residence, this project brought him enormous joy.

The allotment provides free fruit and vegetables to its participants, helps them learn about gardening, and allows them to socialise and make new friends. We are extremely lucky with members of the local community who donated several plants and are very interested in engaging with our clients, getting to know them, and helping them learn about gardening, and healthy eating.

For further information please visit the Hafan Cymru website or email anna.przybylska@hafancymru.co.uk



Hafan Cymru Allotment Project

Hafan Cymru support people who find themselves in situations that mean they can't, or don't know how, to live safely. We help them find their feet, reach goals, and find independence, sometimes it's about sharing a new approach, sometimes it's by finding somewhere safe to live and often it's through the development of a range of services which tailor to each individual needs. We've been doing this for over thirty years: helping men, women and families to build their confidence to make the changes they need to, so that they can lead the positive life everyone has a right to hope for.

Like many services during lockdown, we were unable to run our normal indoor activities for our clients. Therefore, we adopted a different approach by moving

our support outdoors by setting up an Allotment Project in Rhondda Cynon Taff so that we could continue to deliver high quality support, focused on improving our client's health and wellbeing.

With support from Torfaen Council, we were able to provide our clients the space to plant and harvest their own fruits and vegetables, free of charge. We also allocate spades, rakes, watering cans, and gardening gloves for everyone who participates. We also started them off with their own fruits and vegetable seeds. They planned their own arrangements, chose what they want to plant, did their own planting, de-weeding, and watering of the plants. It gave our clients the opportunity to learn about gardening, and it helped them become independent



Minority Ethnic Communities Health Fair

Minority Ethnic Communities (MEC) Health Fair takes place every year to educate people from minority communities on how they can look after their health and wellbeing. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, this time we are holding the fair virtually via Zoom on Wednesday, 20th October 2021 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

This year's theme is "Live Well", there will be a breakout room with many workshops on a range of health topics like Eating Well on a Budget, Gut Health, Importance of Exercise, Mindfulness, Nutrition, Self-care.

The free event will be opened by Jane Hutt

AM, Minister of Social Justice.

Whilst the MEC Fair is aimed at BAME people, all are welcome to attend. Please publicise widely.

Book your place via [Eventbrite](#) after which you will receive a joining link via email and pop in at any time between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

For more information: Sujatha Thaladi, CEO of The Mentor Ring (who is chairing the event) - sujatha.thaladi@mentoring.org.uk

Here at BHF Cymru we know that a healthy diet can help reduce the risk of developing coronary heart disease and stop individuals gaining weight, reducing their risk of diabetes and high blood pressure.

It can also help lower [cholesterol](#) levels and reduce the risk of some cancers.

Even if someone already has a [heart condition](#), a healthy diet can benefit your heart.

We recognise this may be a worrying time for lots of people and we know that people tend turn to food as a way of coping with stress or other emotions. This is common, but when individuals are feeling down it's even more important for them to fuel their body and mind with nutritious, feel-good food. This isn't always the easiest or most attractive option, but it will make them feel much better in the long run.

BHF have excellent resources to support everyone with healthy eating and these range from:

- Menus through our [recipe finder](#)
- Information on [emotional support](#)
- Advice about reducing [fat](#) and [salt](#), choosing [the right type of fats](#)
- Buying healthy recipe books [from our online shop](#).

For individuals looking for straightforward information about weight loss, then we are encouraging visits to our new hub of information about living a healthy lifestyle - [Taking control of your weight](#). Here we give top tips for weight loss, accessing our recipe finder and the pages are packed with tasty recipes, our popular 10 minute workout and much more [VISIT THE HUB](#).

All Welcome
Join us on Zoom for our free

Minority Ethnic Communities Health Fair

Wednesday 20 October 2021, 10 am – 2 pm

Workshops

- Eating well on a budget
- Gut health
- Importance of exercise
- Mindfulness
- Nutrition
- Self-care

Guest Speaker

Jane Hutt MS
Minister for
Social Justice



Question and Answer Panel

How to live well

- Looking after your eyes, heart, lungs and mental health
- Cancer screening
- Immunisation
- Long Covid



Book your place via [Eventbrite](#), <https://tinyurl.com/2zbenk6e>

Find out more:

esther.weller@sightcymru.org.uk T: 01495 763650,
sujatha.thaladi@MentorRing.org.uk M: 07790 900263



Improving access to good affordable food – changing the system around us, serving the nation

Public Health Wales' Health Improvement Division and Local Public Health Teams are beginning an exciting 'systems-working' approach to support the nation to access healthy and affordable food and be a healthy weight. This is thanks to funding from the Welsh Government as part of its Healthy Weight: Healthy Wales 2019 Strategy.

There are many contributing factors to accessing healthy and affordable food, being physically active, and maintaining a healthy weight. For example, the jobs we do, the places we live, and the advertising and media we view can all have an impact on the choices we make and the way we behave. The choices and actions of many organizations, collectively known as 'the system', influence and shape these factors.

Rather than being focused on the changes that individuals can make, a 'systems-working' approach focuses on helping people identify opportunities and make effective changes at the organisational and system level. For example, looking at planning requests within the local context so that fast food outlets are not built up in one area or near school buildings, or building in bus routes, footpaths, and cycle paths when new roads are being planned.

The investment from Welsh Government will mean that local and national workers will be able to engage with communities and organisations with a role to play in food, health and promoting a healthy weight. They will:

- Bring people together to share an understanding of the local situation
- Rally organisations to work together, align priorities and identify changes they can make in the area to help people eat well
- Develop and use a range of tools and strategies to take full advantage of these opportunities. For example, the changes identified will consider the intended and unintended consequences that might occur across different parts of the system.

There is growing recognition from the national and international research that this way of working can show benefits. Therefore, we will be evaluating this systems programme so that we can learn what works to improve access to good, affordable food across the nation.

For further information, contact sophia.bird@wales.nhs.uk

Podcasts

Listen to our latest podcast

Basic Income, Health and Wales

Where has basic income been introduced and for whom, and what can we learn from these experiences? What health impacts can we anticipate, and how will basic income impact upon the wider determinants of health?

[Listen](#)

More Podcasts

Valleys Regional Park

[Listen](#)

Vaccine Hesitancy in Wales

[Listen](#)

The Impact of COVID-19 on Children

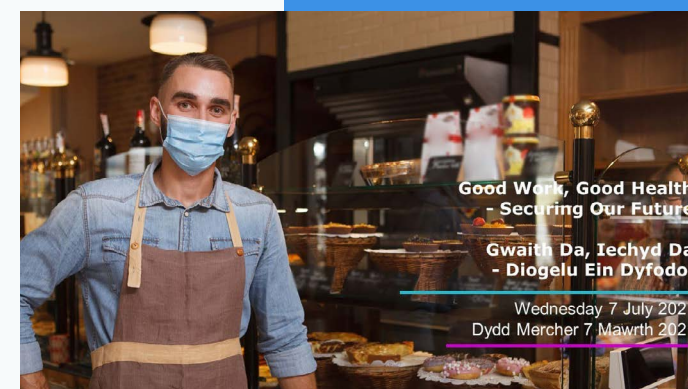
[Listen](#)

Contribute to our Podcast

If you are interested in recording a podcast with us, get in touch via email: publichealth.network@wales.nhs.uk

Videos

Watch our latest video

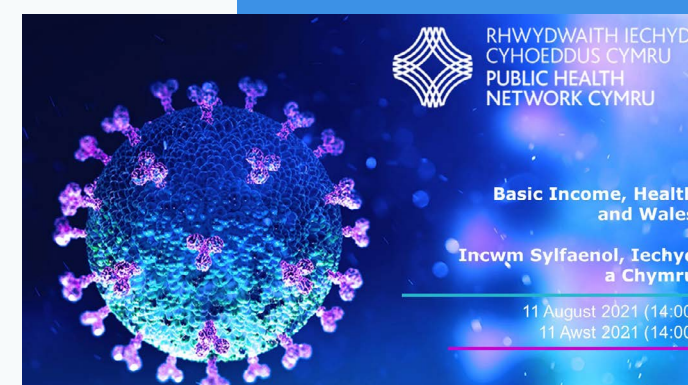


Good Work, Good Health - Securing Our Future

The impact of COVID-19 on working lives in Wales has been immense, with a heavy legacy expected on health. Join us to find out about the changes that have happened and insights into solutions to improve health and equity.

[Watch](#)

More Videos

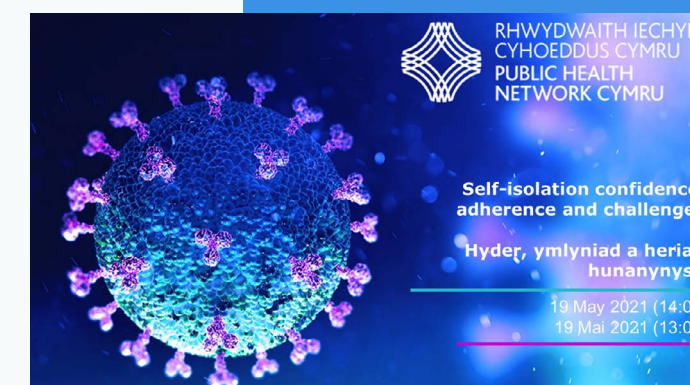


Basic Income, Health and Wales

Where has basic income been introduced and for whom, and what can we learn from these experiences? What health impacts can we anticipate, and how will basic income impact upon the wider determinants of

[Watch](#)

[See all videos](#)



Self-isolation confidence, adherence and challenges

Behavioural insights from contacts of cases of COVID-19 starting and completing self-isolation in Wales. Self-isolation is a key intervention to stop the spread of Covid-19, but can be challenging for those asked to self-isolate.

[Watch](#)

News

26-08-2021

Children and young people to be removed from shielding list

[Read](#)

25-08-2021

The Healthy Working Wales Podcast

[Read](#)

10-08-2021

Climate change: Welsh majority say lifestyle changes needed in new survey

[Read](#)

06-08-2021

Wales moves to alert level zero

[Read](#)

01-08-2021

New guide helps communicators tackle Coronavirus misinformation

[Read](#)

30-07-2021

Shielding experienced decline in health care use, and at higher risk of poor mental health, during pandemic

[Read](#)

[See all news](#)

Events



08-09-2021
2pm - 3pm

[Register](#)

COVID-19: Wider Impacts on Our Children and Young People and Our Families



EXTERNAL

Events
Digwyddiadau

22-09-2021
9.30am - 3.45pm

[More](#)

**Rebuild and Recover:
Reducing alcohol harm and
remaking connections in
the post-pandemic world**

[See all events](#)



EXTERNAL

Events
Digwyddiadau

09-09-2021
9.30am - 2:30pm

[More](#)

Child Development



EXTERNAL

Events
Digwyddiadau

23-09-2021
9am - 4pm

[More](#)

**Research in action:
COVID-19 and beyond**

Topics

[See all topics](#)

- A** Accidents and injury prevention
Adverse Childhood Experiences
Air Quality
Alcohol and substance use and misuse
Approaches and methods in public health practice
Arts and health
- B** Behaviour change
Biodiversity and greenspace
Built environment
Cancers
Cardiovascular conditions
Carers
Children and young people
Climate change
Communicable diseases
Community
Community assets
COVID-19
- D** Debt and benefits
Diabetes
Diet and nutrition

Early Years
Education and training
Employment
Environment
Ethnicity
Evaluation
- F** Foodborne communicable diseases
Fuel Poverty
Further, higher and tertiary education
- G** Good, fair work
- H** Health in all policies
Health inequalities
Health related behaviours
Homelessness
Housing
Housing quality
Human rights and social justice
- I** Income and resources
Influenza
- L** Learning difficulties
LGBTQ+
- M** Maternal and new born health
Men
Mental health conditions
Mental ill-health
Mental wellbeing
- N** Natural environment
Non-communicable diseases
- O** Offenders
Older adults
Oral health
- P** People
Physical activity
Planning
Poverty
Precarious work
Preschool (including WNHPSS)
Prevention in healthcare
- R** Respiratory conditions
- S** School (Including WNHPSS)
Sexual health
Sexually Transmitted Infections
Smoking and vaping
Social capital
Spirituality
Stress, coping and resilience
Suicide and suicide prevention
Sustainable development
Systems thinking in public health
- T** Transport
- U** Unemployment
- W** Water and sanitation
Wellbeing of Future Generations
Wider determinants of health
Women
Working age adults

Next Issue

COVID-19: Maximising income for health, well-being and equity in Wales

