

# Bay Health

Staff newspaper of Swansea Bay University Health Board



## Swans helping charity appeal hit target



Swansea City stars Lawrence Vigouroux, Harry Darling and Ollie Cooper took time out of their busy soccer schedules recently to show their support for our health board charity's Cwtsh Clos Appeal.

The appeal is aiming to raise £160,000 to pay for the refurbishment of five houses used as temporary homes by

families who have babies in Singleton Hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. The Swans are backing the appeal this season, with their recent Championship match against Blackburn dedicated to Cwtsh Clos. You can read more about the Swans' support for this appeal, plus why it matters so much to one particular Swans star on **Page 8**.

SCAN BARCODE FOR A SELECTION OF BAY HEALTH STORIES ONLINE



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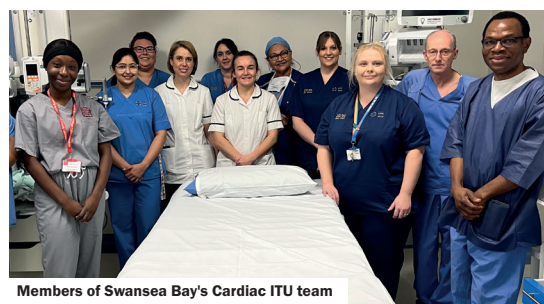
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# New approach to cardiac surgery recovery is big boost for patients

Cardiac patients will spend less time recovering in hospital following elective surgery thanks to a new system that could reduce overall bed days by more than 1,600 a year.

A change in the procedure in Swansea Bay aims to cut the time spent in hospital post-surgery from seven days to five. The change will also reduce the risk of catching infections commonly associated with hospital stays, and lower the chances of delirium, particularly in older patients.

New methods around hydration, movement and the use of spirometers, which measure the amount of air breathed in and out, are also helping patients



Members of Swansea Bay's Cardiac ITU team

to recover quicker. If the new system had been in place during 2024, it's predicted that patients would have spent 1,638 fewer days in beds in the Cardiac Intensive Therapy Unit (CITU), High Dependency Unit (HDU) and on wards. Reducing bed days is forecast to save the health board more than £2million. It will also benefit the environment, with savings of 204,750kg of CO2 the equivalent of 38 trips around the world in an average petrol vehicle.

Staff nurse Kaylee Marson and consultant anaesthetist Dr Sameena Ahmed are leading the project along with colleagues in the Enhance Recovery After Cardiac Surgery (ERACS) team.

Kaylee said: "From the data we studied, we believe we can save two bed days per patient, which is split into one day in either CITU or HDU and then another day on a ward.

"We have implemented a new pathway which outlines the targets for patients, initially hour by hour when they arrive on Cardiac ITU.

"The aim is to get them off using a ventilator less than four hours from when they were admitted into the unit, and, if successful, the patient will be encouraged to restart eating and drinking which obviously contributes to their recovery.

"Patients are also walking to theatre, when possible."

"It's been a real success in terms of how we work as we're helping patients recover in the comfort of their own home rather than on a ward or unit in hospital."

## Editorial



Abi Harris, Swansea Bay University Health Board's Chief Executive

Welcome to the latest edition of our staff newspaper, Bay Health. It's landing as we come to the end of financial year and look ahead to 2025/26 and the opportunities we have to continue to improve the care we provide to our patients and communities. As the clocks go forward, I'd like to begin by saying a big thank you to team colleagues across our organisation who were at the sharp end of caring for our patients over a particularly challenging winter. And while I'm glad to say spring is now upon us, we're very aware that pressure on our urgent and emergency care system hasn't stopped with the arrival of lighter nights.

As you may be aware, a great deal of work has been going on during the past weeks to identify short and longer-term actions that will help to alleviate many of the unacceptable issues faced by our patients colleagues in urgent and emergency care.

We know very well that delays in patient flow and patient discharge through our health and care system has a significant impact on our Emergency Department front doors. If there's no room up stream on our wards and patients who are clinically optimised are delayed leaving hospital, it is clear our Emergency Department (ED) at Morriston is likely to remain crowded at peak times.

A couple of months ago, we invited colleagues who work in ED to relate their experiences to our Board while we also allowed BBC Wales to film (under careful supervision) in ED.

Colleagues will also be aware Healthcare Inspectorate Wales carried out an inspection in November, with the results published last month. The inspection report praised colleagues for treating patients politely and in a professional and dignified manner. But we were not surprised that the report highlighted where improvements are needed and described the unacceptable environment in which

we are delivering care to patients during peak times of demand. We are tackling this challenge on three fronts. We're looking at staffing levels, the ED building and also the ways that we work across the health board to provide patients with the right care in the right place.

We have already submitted a detailed action plan which has been accepted by HIW, and many of these measures have already been completed or are due to be actioned shortly. But while these steps will help, we know they are not the full answer.

At the time of writing, we have commissioned an assessment of our workforce to identify changes to help relieve the pressure. We're also aware our existing ED is too small and badly designed. We are talking to Welsh Government about both short-term and long-term capital investment and we hope to have a temporary, modular building in place as quickly as possible that will give the ED some much needed breathing space to reduce overcrowding. Proposals are also being developed for a purpose-built new facility - subject to planning permission and funding being agreed.

We know that home is best for care and recovery and where most people want to be. We are continuing to strengthen services in the community, delivering some of the things traditionally done in hospital, in order to keep patients safe at home for as long as possible.

If patients need to come to hospital, we work closely with GPs and the Welsh Ambulance Service to make sure they are seen in the right place to meet their needs, which may not be the ED. Our Older Persons Assessment Unit (OPAU) is a great example of this and we are pleased HIW noted this improvement as a step in the right direction.

Elsewhere in our system, the heartening news is we are making sustained progress regarding planned care and are currently performing better than most health boards, although we fully appreciate there is more required of us. We know it can be a worrying time for patients as they wait for their treatment, which is why timely access to planned care remains a key priority for us. We are also doing more to support patients while they wait for their surgery and more information about this is available on our website.

We continue to deliver on our 52-week maximum wait for patients to have a first outpatient appointment. And as I write, we were on track to

eradicate patients waiting over two years for surgical intervention by the end of March. This step will be very significant for us but we want to maintain this and reduce waiting times further. We're also looking to put additional focus into our paediatric services. We are also working hard to continue to improve our maternity and neonatal services which support over 3,000 babies being born each year. As well as proving care for women from the Swansea and Neath Port Talbot areas, as a tertiary level 3 neonatal centre we provide services to women and their families from much further afield. This is where the accommodation we have for families on the Singleton Hospital site, Cwtch Clos, really comes into its own. We know we have more to do to ensure that we meet the needs of all women and their families, and ensure we always act of the feedback we receive from listening to the women who use our services. Our aim is to provide the best possible care we can, every day, for every woman and her family. The Independent Review commissioned to review the safety of our maternity and neonatal services continues to make good progress - as an Independent Review, there is a separate website which can be accessed at [www.nicheconsult.co.uk/swansea-maternity-and-neonatal-review/](http://www.nicheconsult.co.uk/swansea-maternity-and-neonatal-review/).

We have also started a programme of work to accelerate our plans to improve our mental health services so that we are able to provide the best possible care for patients, their families and carers.

The other crucial part of the picture is, of course, our finances. We've been working hard to assemble a realistic and sustainable plan that focuses on our service and financial priorities and challenges. The context for this is we are on a journey towards a balanced budget over a three-year period. We know that along the way, tough decisions have already been taken while others will follow. Above all, we must be focused on spending every single penny wisely, getting the very best value we can from the public funding provided to us - irrespective of our financial position, our communities expect this. This is clearly a significant challenge but as an organisation, we are rich in talent and commitment so I'm confident we will overcome our challenges and be stronger for it. Our focus will remain on delivering the best care we can for our patients - care that is safe and provides the best possible experience - and working with partners and local communities to enable everyone to live well and to lead a healthy life.

## New portal to revolutionise how patients can manage their care

Clever use of technology is a major driver for improving patient care and support, and in Swansea Bay we now have one particular key online system in place which can make a big difference.

The Swansea Bay Patient Portal (powered by Patient Knows Best) helps patients better manage their overall care and be more in control.

Among its benefits, it allows patients to safely have electronic copies of their blood results, appointment letters and clinical documents on their phones or PCs, and patients can also upload any information they want relating to their health, including symptom trackers. If they choose to, patients can share this information with relatives, carers and other health and social care providers.

The Patient Portal was introduced in 2018 (Swansea

Bay was the first in Wales to introduce this) and already has over 8,700 Swansea Bay patients registered on it. It has been shown to reduce the need for face-to-face appointments and telephone queries, along with clinical and admin time. Until now patients have had to be manually added to the Patient Portal, making it too slow to roll out at pace.

The great news is that's changing, as patients can now use their national NHS log in sign up. This is the same account many of us used to get proof of vaccination during the pandemic. It's taken a while to get this agreement, but we haven't wasted that time. We've been automatically setting up records for well over 240,000 patients in readiness, so their information is waiting for them if they want to sign up. And as the Patient Portal offers patients their appointment letters in a digital format, it is poised to

be the key mechanism for rolling out another great game-changer, hybrid mail. Hybrid mail offers a digital alternative to paper letters. Digital appointments are sent out to registered patients, with a hard copy only posted if the electronic version isn't opened and read within 48 hours.

This not only has the potential to save thousands of pounds a year in postage costs, but patients will get their digital letters much more quickly than through the post and they can safely store them in one place on their own devices.

But patients must sign up to the Patient Portal first (those who aren't registered will continue to get paper letters) so this is why the Portal will play such an important part. Find the Swansea Bay Patient Portal Sharepoint site under 'Digital' and 'Apps' on the homepage of our health board intranet.



## Planned Care Academy to provide the right skills

In the last edition of Bay Health, we told you about the new Patient Access Management Support Team (PAMS) which aims to help staff deliver well-structured, seamless patient access into our services. Now PAMS is proud to announce its first major project, the launch of the new Swansea Bay Planned Care Academy.

The Planned Care Academy is a comprehensive training programme for all staff whose role involves supporting patients to access planned care.

It will ensure staff have the right skills and training to apply Referral to Treatment (RTT) rules in their day to day work. Applied well, these rules can have a really positive impact on a patient's journey through our services, ensuring it's as smooth and timely as possible.

But we recognise that as an organisation, we can't expect our staff to apply the RTT rules consistently if we haven't provided the right training.

So no matter your role, if you help patients be seen in planned care – from booking appointments to reducing and managing waiting lists - there's a place for you at the academy.

There are three modules available now or very soon,

on ESR, with even more to come in the months ahead. Module One, which explains the RTT rules is available now on ESR.

Everyone will need to complete this before moving on to other modules. Module Two, which at the time of writing was due to launch in February, teaches staff how to use WPAS in an outpatient setting, and Module Three, also available from February on ESR, explains how to apply the RTT rules in an outpatient setting.



We are now asking you to find protected time to complete the first three training modules.

As staff complete their training, we will begin to measure how this is making improvements to the ways that patients access our planned care services.

Throughout the year we will continue to develop further RTT training for Inpatients, Diagnostics, Complex Pathways, Clinical Staff, and Dashboards.

Information regarding the Planned Care Academy is available on the PAMS SharePoint site.

You can find this on the intranet by looking under 'Hub sites' and then 'Key Pages' where PAMS is listed.

If you have any questions, head to the PAMS FAQs page, or contact us at SBU Patient Access Management SBU.PatientAccessManagement@wales.nhs.uk.

## Paul Ridd training now mandatory

As from the start of February, we are asking everyone in the health board to complete the Paul Ridd Learning Disability Awareness Training which will be available as part of the suite of ESR training modules. The training has been accessible via the ESR course catalogue for some time, but it is now mandatory and this will be reflected in your ESR My Compliance Portal.

For those of you not aware of the background to this training, Paul Ridd was a fun-loving character who lived his life to the full and had a learning disability. In 2009, he died while he was a patient at Morriston Hospital.

One of the main findings regarding his care was a communications breakdown which meant his clinical needs were not being properly met before his death. Following his death, Paul's family have actively supported the development of awareness training designed for all staff caring for patients with a learning disability.

The training takes approximately 20-30 minutes to complete and is a once only undertaking, which does not need to be repeated. So next time you're on ESR, please try and find the time to complete this training in Paul's memory.

## Brilliant new platform a boost for managers

A new digital platform which offers managers bite-size learning and information whenever they need it has been launched. Brilliant Basics provides quick and easy access to information, toolkits and user guides on key topic areas including, Finance Basics, Managing Attendance at Work, PADR, Leadership Toolkits, ESR and Recruitment, to name just a few.

Managers can also access policies and documentation as and when they need to.

The platform was developed based on employee feedback and with the user in mind.

Brilliant Basics launched on the staff intranet in mid-January but further work is due to take place to develop the platform further.

Feedback can be provided by accessing the 'Please Give Us Feedback' link at the bottom of the Brilliant Basics homepage.

## Book up now for life support courses

Details of Basic Life Support (BLS), Paediatric Basic Life Support (PBLs), Immediate Life Support Course (eILS) and Paediatric Immediate Life Support (ePILS) have been announced for the spring.

Please note that all of the sessions are now combined adult and paediatric.

The training is for clinical staff only. Each session will last one and a half hours.

To find out more about venues and to book, log on to ESR and look for the following: **130 e-Immediate Life Support (eILS) and 130 e-Paediatric Immediate Life Support (ePILS).**

## Maternity news

### News in BRIEF



Swansea Bay UHB Chair Jan Williams during a visit to Cae Felin

### Health board Chair digs deep for agriculture project

Swansea Bay UHB Chair Jan Williams made a special visit to the award-winning Cae Felin Community Supported Agriculture project near Morriston Hospital.

Cae Felin, a not-for-profit organisation, is based on land owned by the health board, with staff and the public giving up their time to grow crops and plant trees along with creating a space for nature and wildlife to flourish. Jan visited Cae Felin to find out more about the project.

Patients and health board staff have also benefited from Cae Felin, with the brain injury service utilising the site as part of a patient's rehabilitation and staff groups using it for wellbeing.

Jan said: "I was delighted to visit Cae Felin and see first-hand the benefits of this evolving project.

"It has a range of benefits for our staff, patients and community, and hearing the stories of those involved in the project's success so far was very inspiring."

### Not to be sniffed at... grass pollen immunotherapy first

The paediatric allergy team are excited to have initiated grass pollen immunotherapy for their first patient.

The treatment is administered in tablet form under the tongue daily to help improve symptoms of hayfever in patients with severe symptoms despite optimal pharmacotherapy.

The first dose is administered under medical supervision with subsequent doses taken daily at home for a period of three years. The treatment can now be initiated in Swansea, and patients and families will no longer need to travel further afield for this.

The initiation of this service will help to address the treatment gap for children and young people suffering with severe hayfever symptoms which impact on their quality of life and school attainment.

### Enjoy your retirement, Alan

Alan Williams, a shift mechanical-craftsperson, has said a fond farewell to our Estates Department at Morriston Hospital after retiring earlier this year. Alan officially retired in 2022, but returned on a part-time basis to support the work of the department and pass on the benefit of his considerable experience. His knowledge and work ethic have all proved invaluable over his 42 years with the NHS.

Everyone in Estates would like to wish Alan all the best for the future, and his well-deserved retirement. Thank you Alan!



Members of the team at Neath Port Talbot's Birth Centre standing in front of an example of the artwork which now adorns the walls. Consultant Midwife Victoria Owens is pictured fourth from right

## Art project is picture perfect for birth centre

A £15,000 project which has seen the walls of Neath Port Talbot Hospital's Birth Centre decorated with beautiful artwork has been given a big thumbs-up by mums-to-be and midwives.

The project, funded by the Arts Council of Wales, involved commissioning an artist to work closely with midwives to create a calming environment, using images of the natural world, muted colours and inspiring messages.

Work began in 2023 when artists were invited to submit proposals. Dr Tracy Breathnach from Wales Arts Health and Wellbeing Network led the project, speaking to 25 midwives to gain a better understanding of their work and what ideas they had to adorn the space.

Once the successful artist was identified in March last year, the work was completed in time for the reopening of the birth centre last autumn.

Services at the centre were suspended in September 2021 due to the challenges of the pandemic and staffing pressures, leaving women without the option of giving birth in a freestanding, midwife-led unit.

But following a £750,000 health board investment the birth centre is now as busy as ever again and the artwork has really helped make the reopening even more special.

After reopening, 70 women had given birth in the birth centre by mid-February.

Dr Sarah Norris, Swansea Bay's workforce transformation midwife, said: "During the time I had to think about birth again in a midwifery-led setting, I considered all the evidence around what the environment means and how it impacts women having their babies.

"It is well documented that a quiet and a very relaxing space, supported by colours and suitable lighting, can really enhance a woman's birth experience, not just psychologically but in terms of outcomes."

One of the key hormones involved in labour is oxytocin, and the body is known to be more likely to produce oxytocin in dark, quiet and reassuring environments.

"So the right setting has a really positive impact on outcomes and a woman's ability to birth," added Dr Norris.

Bill Taylor-Beales, a professional artist for more than 30 years who has worked on numerous social engagement projects around the world, won the commission despite stiff competition after submitting ideas that really struck a chord with Swansea Bay midwives.

Bill then held a series of workshops and planning sessions before final images were agreed upon.

Consultant midwife Victoria Owens said: "The Arts Council approved our application for a grant and then we put the project out to tender.

"We had lots of applications but decided on the one artist who we felt really captured the essence of midwifery, the environment and the experiences of women.

"This was Bill Taylor-Beales. Bill then ran the workshops with the midwives, and I think they found it quite cathartic to be able to help to prepare the centre and our teams to welcome women and their families back. Having the birth centre open again is a really great thing for our community. We are lucky to have the facilities to offer truly family-centred care, including private postnatal rooms with double beds, where families can remain together during their stay."



# Emotional homecoming as Liz aims to make experience count

Swansea Bay's new Executive Director of Nursing, Professor Liz Rix, is hoping to use a wealth of experience gained from 43 years' work in the NHS to benefit both patients and colleagues.

Liz, who was raised in Swansea and has kept a family home in Mumbles despite spending 16 years working in England, was due to take up her new post at the end of March.

It's sure to be an emotional return to her roots, with Liz having begun her nursing journey in 1982 at the West Glamorgan School of Nursing, training at Singleton and Morriston hospitals.

She is saying goodbye to Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust, where she's worked as Chief Nurse since 2019, commuting back home to south west Wales most weekends.

But returning to work in Swansea is not just a matter of consigning her long commutes to the rear view mirror - she's absolutely thrilled to be handed an opportunity to help make a real difference to the care needs of her home community.

Liz (pictured right) said: "I spent the first 18 years of my career in Wales and I'm passionate about my heritage and where I am from. The thought of coming home is amazing. It's not just about the difference it will make to me and the time I will be able to spend with family and friends but the feeling of coming back into my community to serve people in the best way I can. That's a privilege.

"I am proud, first and foremost, to be a nurse, to be part of a profession that can offer so much to so many.

"It's a job I love. There are times when it can be extremely challenging, but I love it.

"I've been able to learn and develop in different environments away from home - I can now go back and serve the population I've always been part of and continue to learn and grow because I know Swansea Bay has changed so much.

"I'm looking forward to being able to look at the organisation with fresh eyes and what it has become and then thinking about my learning from elsewhere and what I may be able to bring now.

"I'm also looking forward to re-engaging with the community and playing our part as an anchor organisation, the influence we can have now and in the future.

"We employ so many people. How do we develop that future and the opportunity the NHS provides for our community? With my own career in the NHS, I could never have imagined where it would take me. We can give this kind of opportunity to so many of our young people."

Liz has an enviable CV having worked in a number of different specialties, including intensive care and surgery. Her many contributions were recognised in 2023 when she was awarded an MBE for her dedication to nursing.

She spent the first 18 years of her career working in NHS Wales and was the Director of Nursing in Swansea and Bridgend before taking up her first Chief Nurse post in 2009 at the University Hospital of



## Welcome for Marie

Swansea Bay has also welcomed the arrival of our new Executive Director of Planning and Partnerships, Marie Davies.

Marie, who joined us from Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, where she was Interim Executive Director of Strategic Planning, began her new role at the start of February.

She has picked up the reins from Nerissa Vaughan, who has been undertaking the role here on an interim basis.

Marie's skills and experiences will prove vital for the development of our future plans and the modernisation of our services against a challenging financial context.

North Staffordshire (now University Hospitals of North Midlands).

After taking up her current role in Portsmouth in 2019, she was made an honorary professor by the University of Portsmouth as recognition of her leadership role within the profession and the health service. She is passionate about development and education in nursing and midwifery and during her time in Portsmouth, led the creation of the Trust's latest Nursing and Midwifery strategy.

Liz will also be able to draw upon some particularly challenging times while working in the Midlands.

"I was with North Staffordshire for about four years and was involved in the building of a new hospital, which is something I'd never been involved with before and was a brilliant experience," added Liz, who is

married and has two grown-up children, who both work for the NHS in Wales. "Twelve miles down the road was Mid Staffs and after about five years we became University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust following the outcome of the Francis Report into the the Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust.

"I worked on the preparations for these changes. There'd never been a Trust that had been dissolved before, so it was a major undertaking.

"It was a hospital that was in distress. The staff that were there had had a horrid time. But over time we built that back up and when I left, we were rated as outstanding for care across the whole of the organisation.

"This experience taught me something I couldn't even have imagined.

"When there's been such a massive scandal, how do you pick up teams, how do you make them feel that their value is huge?

"It taught me the value of clinical leadership, the influence that nurses and midwives have, the part nurses play in a multi-disciplinary team and the fact that nurses provide 80 per cent of patient care, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

"So nurses should never underestimate the fact we're the custodians of care. I would never have had the experiences I've had if I'd stayed in Wales. But Swansea Bay beckons. I'm nearing the end of my career and however long I work for, I thought it would be in Portsmouth but now it's going to be at home!

"Things will have changed, it's 16 years since I left but there will be a few familiar faces, I'm sure, and many new ones that I look forward to meet. And lots to learn about Swansea Bay, which will be great."

## Focus on tackling discharge delays

# Callum goes with the flow to get patients home safe

Despite what many people think, hospital is not always the best place to be when you're sick. In fact, for many, it's the worst place to be.

Hospitals can be noisy, disorienting places. And long days spent in bed is not restful but can lead to people, especially the elderly, struggling to cope with everyday tasks when it's time for them to go home.

Not everyone who is ill requires hospital care. There are alternatives that better suit their needs. But should they need to spend time in hospital, the aim is to ensure that time is kept to the absolute minimum.

It's not only better for them but for other patients who have endured long waits, often in the Emergency Department or the back of an ambulance, until the bed they need becomes available.

Callum Allen-Ridge is the head of patient flow at Morriston Hospital, working with matrons, patient flow coordinators and other teams across the hospital.

"We coordinate what is happening with all our patients, understand the risks we are carrying, and understand how our demand and capacity is looking," he explained. "Are we okay today, because we have more patients being admitted than discharged and we have capacity?"

"Or are we the other way round and we have more patients being admitted than discharged? If so, we look at what we can do to balance risks, share resources, understand how patient pathways are working and how we operate escalations and actions."

Callum said the first step was to try to stem the flow of patients coming in by looking at all the alternatives to admission. This could include virtual wards or working with community services or social care colleagues.

"But if they are coming in, we need to ensure we maximise every minute they're in the hospital, so they're not waiting any longer than necessary for that X-ray or scan, or that specialty review by a diabetic nurse, for example.

"And then we move them through the hospital. We aim for the right patient in the right place at the right time. We know that improves patient care.

"It's better for staff because then they get the patients they're trained to look after. If you're a respiratory nurse, you want to look after respiratory patients.

"That will help minimise any delays and they are experts in giving the most effective treatment advice and guidance."

Once patients have been admitted, Callum and his team work to ensure they do not stay any longer than necessary. They link with hospital staff and social care colleagues to achieve that aim.

It not only releases beds for those who need them but is better for the patients who have been treated and are ready to go home.

This avoids problems such as deconditioning, which is when patients in bed rapidly lose muscle mass, and hospital-related delayed harm.

"Delayed harm is generally when we're keeping

Callum Allen-Ridge is playing an important role in the health board's efforts to improve patient flow through our health and care system



someone in an area of the hospital longer than they should be. We know, and we can prove through statistics, the amount of harm they are going to incur," said Callum.

"Another word we use is institutionalisation. Traditionally, it was believed that people coming into hospital were in a place of safety. But if you look at the amount of time a patient interacts with staff whilst they're in hospital, it's surprisingly low.

"They are with us 24 hours a day, but the amount of physio input they're getting, the amount of time they have with the nurse or with the doctor is very minimal. They become disempowered.

"They're not making their own food, they're not getting up and making a cup of tea or wandering to the shops. They're not getting up and about, turning the TV and radio on or off.

"And it's surprising, within a couple of hours of being in bed, especially if you're elderly, how quickly muscle mass starts to deteriorate. And as you decondition, things become harder. So when you are ready to go home, it's not uncommon then for patients to struggle with simple things like just getting out of bed or balancing to put their trousers on."

Callum said they wanted patients to be as active as possible during their time in hospital, so they felt empowered to do things for themselves.

Visiting families and relatives, he said, had a part to play, by encouraging their loved ones to get up, get dressed and move about, to do as many normal activities as possible. "It's almost counter intuitive

because when you have a loved one in hospital you always tell them to get plenty of rest," said Callum. "But there are very few cases when we actually want them to rest in bed. With respiratory diseases, for example, it's better to be up and about and moving as much as they can. We appreciate they will feel tired and will need to take breaks, but they will recover, and they won't lose that muscle mass."

Relatives can help in another way, too. Typically, when patients leave Morriston Hospital it's quite late in the day. By the time they get home it can be 5pm-6pm or even later. At this time of year it is dark and cold.

If something isn't working, there is less support available.

"So getting your loved ones home and supporting them and just settling them as early as possible allows you to make sure they're okay," said Callum. "But also if you need to get any other resources or somebody

needs to do a check-in, it's still early enough to do it. And home is the best place to recover."

Dealing with so many complex situations can be stressful, particularly when the hospital is really busy. Callum said one way they coped with this was by learning to disconnect and leave work behind.

"It's being able to trust in your colleagues, that you can hand things over to them and they will pick up the baton after you," said Callum.

"Every one of my team, everyone who works in flow, will say you're never doing this alone. It's very much a team sport."

**"It's surprising, within a couple of hours of being in bed, especially if you're elderly, how quickly muscle mass starts to deteriorate."**

Callum Allen-Ridge



As a health board, we are well aware the recent issues faced in our Emergency Department must be remedied

## Three-point plan for tackling ED overcrowding

Overcrowding and delays in Morriston Hospital's Emergency Department are being tackled on three fronts, the health board has announced.

Staffing levels, the building itself and the way patients move through the system are undergoing reviews with some improvements already made or due to happen soon.

The health board made the announcement in response to the publication of a report following an unannounced inspection of ED by Healthcare Inspectorate Wales. During the three-day visit in November inspectors found a department under extreme pressure, noting that long waiting times and overcrowding were creating patient safety risks and affecting the delivery of care. Concerns over staffing levels were also highlighted in the report published on March 5th.

However, inspectors praised the teamwork and professionalism of staff and highlighted how patients were treated in a polite and dignified manner despite being hindered by the challenges. And although patients raised significant concerns about waiting times, most told inspectors they were generally happy with their care.

The health board's response said: "The HIW report is a fair and balanced review of an Emergency Department (ED) working under extreme pressure. We are pleased it acknowledges that despite the extremely challenging conditions, our staff treat patients politely and in a professional and dignified manner.

"However, there is no doubt that we share HIW's concerns about delays and overcrowding and the impact this has on patient care. This is why improving urgent and emergency care, particularly in regards to the ED, is one of our top priorities.

"We are tackling this challenge on three fronts. This involves looking at staffing levels, the building itself and also the ways that we work across the health board in order to provide patients with the right care in the right place.

"Patients are at the heart of this work and we have already submitted a detailed action plan which has been accepted by HIW, and many of these measures have already been completed or are due to be shortly. But while these steps will help, we know that they are not the full answer to managing the ongoing and sustained pressures that our ED – like many others – is facing.

"There are concerns over whether we have enough of and the right balance of staff in ED to meet the current demand and the needs of our patients. Our Director of Nursing has therefore commissioned a baseline assessment of our workforce so that we can understand the current position and identify any changes which need to be made and how we can make these happen at pace.

"Our existing department is too small and badly designed by modern-day standards. We are talking to Welsh Government about both short-term and long-term capital investment.

"We hope to have a temporary measure in place very soon which will give the ED some much needed breathing space to reduce overcrowding. This is likely to be a modular building located next to the department. Proposals are also being developed for a purpose-built new facility in the future – subject to planning permission and funding being agreed.

"We are liaising with Swansea Council over the pre-application consultation for planning consent for the longer term plans. As part of this, information boards will shortly be erected at Morriston Hospital giving patients, the public and our staff more details.

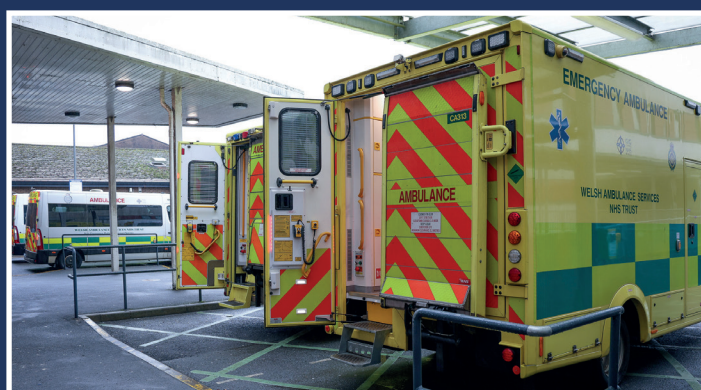
"In the meantime, a great deal of work is ongoing across all of our services, which is key to reducing pressure on the ED.

"We know that home is best for care and recovery and also where most people want to be. So we are continuing to strengthen services in the community, delivering some of the things traditionally done in hospital, in order to keep patients at home for as long as possible.

"If patients need to come to hospital, we work closely with GPs and the Welsh Ambulance Service to make sure they are seen in the right place to meet their needs, which may not be the ED. Our Older Persons Assessment Unit (OPAU) is a great example of this and we are pleased HIW noted this improvement as a step in the right direction.

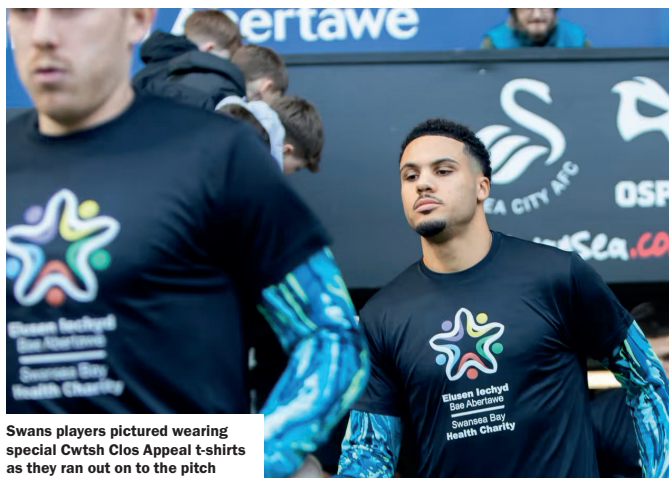
"We have also strengthened our ability to offer same-day care so patients can be seen and return home.

"For those who have been admitted, we are working even more closely with our partners in local authorities and the voluntary sector to identify and reduce discharge delays. This helps us to free up beds for those patients who are waiting. We continue to listen to staff and patient concerns about our ED."



## Cwtsh Clos

# Swans help charity appeal hit the target with special football fixture



Swans players pictured wearing special Cwtsh Clos Appeal t-shirts as they ran out on to the pitch

What a result! Our Swansea Bay Health Charity's Cwtsh Clos Appeal and local football stars Swansea City enjoyed a double win after the Swans fixture against Blackburn was dedicated to the appeal. The Cwtsh Clos Appeal is hoping to raise £160,000 to pay for the refurbishment of five two-bedroom houses at Singleton Hospital used as temporary accommodation by families who have babies in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

And the big occasion in late February proved a huge win-win as the charity (with a small army of volunteers) raised around £2,000 from bucket collections and online donations on the day, which is being matched by the club.

Meanwhile the Swans players, wearing special shirts featuring the charity logo, put in one of their best performances of the season in a memorable 3-0 victory.

An auction of the team's shirts from the day further boosted fundraising. In addition to the big fundraising boost, the appeal's profile was also taken on to a new level with the Swans promoting Cwtsh Clos at every opportunity, with big screen and advertising hoarding displays throughout the afternoon.

Swansea Bay Health Charity support manager Lewis Bradley was joined by Swans legends Alan Curtis and Lee Trundle, plus local celebs Mal Pope and Kev Johns, to discuss why the appeal is so important in hospitality lounge presentations before and after the game, while Kev also interviewed Lewis about Cwtsh Clos on the pitch at half-time.

"The game really was the perfect win-win for the appeal and our charity," Lewis said.

"I'd like to thank everyone at the Swans for embracing Cwtsh Clos, all the time and support they have given us and also thank everyone who kindly donated on the day and who will spread the word for us.

"I'd also like to thank all of our volunteers, who were wonderful, and everyone who has supported the appeal so far. We're more than halfway to our target and have other, exciting events in the pipeline so watch this space."

Prior to kick-off, players were greeted by a guard of honour, with banners and flags while one family who knows more than most how priceless the Cwtsh Clos houses are, Pepsi Evans, Scott James and their three children Jacob, lyla and Noah, were there on

The small army of bucket collectors on the pitch at the Swansea.com Stadium



## Get in the swing for charity with golf day

If football isn't your thing, Swansea Bay Health Charity has also organised a Cwtsh Clos Golf Day on April 25th, hosted by Fairwood Park Golf Club.

The day, which is also part of the charity's season-long link-up with the Swans, is open to teams of four, there's hot drinks and bacon rolls before teeing off plus prizes and a meal at the end of the day.

In addition, there'll be some well-known Swansea City ex-players in attendance along with Mal Pope. For more details and to register, search for <https://register.enthuse.com/ps/event/CwtshClosGolfDay>.



the pitch to welcome both teams. Pepsi and Scott, a big Swans-supporting family from Merthyr, used the same Cwtsh Clos house twice in less than year as their boys Louie, who sadly passed away after six days and Jacob, who is now a thriving four-year-old, fought for their lives in Singleton Hospital's NICU after being born prematurely.

The NICU provides care for around 500 babies a year, with families from all over Wales relying on the unit at Singleton - not just from the Swansea Bay area. Many live hours away by car and even longer by public transport, so it's not practical to travel to and from the unit every day.

But after many years of regular use, the five homes are in real need of some TLC to bring them back up to scratch and make them the kind of 'home-from-home' providing a welcoming sanctuary at a terrifying time for any parent.

Swans match-day host Mal Pope has backed the appeal from the beginning in memory of his grandson Gulliver, who was cared for in the NICU but tragically passed away after being born 18 weeks prematurely.

"When I heard about Cwtsh Clos it made me realise how lucky we were to live locally in such terrible circumstances," said well-known musician, composer and BBC Wales radio presenter Mal.

"Gulliver arrived in the world after 21 weeks and left us after six days, so after going through this terrible experience as a family, I said I'd do anything I could to help the appeal.

"These houses make such a difference to so many families who need, like we did, to be as close by as possible when their little ones are being cared for in the NICU."

Mal's kind support helped pave the way for Swansea City AFC to choose the Cwtsh Clos appeal as their official charity partner for the 2024-25 season.

To make a donation using your phone, please text 'Donate Swanseahealth homes' to 88802.

If you would like to fundraise for us yourself, or hold a fundraising event, please visit our Enthuse donation page for Cwtsh Clos at <https://swanseabayhealthcharity.enthuse.com/cf/cwtsh-clos-appeal> where you will find more information.

## Primary care update

April / May 2025 ISSUE 14

### Pharmacists can now provide pain relief and treatment for UTIs

Women with a urinary tract infection can now get pain relief without having to see a GP.

A new service launched in Swansea Bay allows community pharmacists to assess their symptoms and provide free pain relief or treatment if needed. It is available to most women aged between 16 to 64, who have symptoms of a urinary tract infection, or UTI.

These can include pain or a burning sensation when peeing, needing to pee more often than usual, needing to pee suddenly or more urgently than usual and lower tummy discomfort, among other symptoms.

Pharmacists will ask questions to determine whether the patient needs a urine test and will then complete a clinical assessment before deciding if treatment is needed.

It allows patients to receive their care closer to home and not have to make a GP appointment first.

Patients are advised to contact their local pharmacy before attending to check if the service is available to them.

Sam Page, Head of Primary Care at Swansea Bay University Health Board, said: "If the patient's answers indicate a UTI is likely, a urine test may not be necessary.

"If a urine test is needed, the patient will only have to wait for a few minutes to receive the result.



"The test will help the pharmacist to make a diagnosis if it is not clear based on their symptoms alone."

If treatment is not required, the pharmacist will offer self-care advice to help patients manage the infection at home.

Antibiotics can help to treat many infections, but they are not always needed for urinary symptoms.

By only taking antibiotics when they are needed,

it can help to reduce the risk of antimicrobial resistance which can make some infections more difficult to treat.

Dr Charlotte Jones, the health board's clinical lead for antimicrobial stewardship, said: "To help keep the antibiotics working, they should only be taken if a health professional has advised to do so.

"By only taking them when advised, they are more likely to work for a potential future infection."

## Social prescribers are here to help

Elizabeth Samways, dentist at Penclawdd Dental Practice, and Lois Woodward, social prescribing co-ordinator for SCVS



For some people, the winter months can bring a reduction in social activity which can create feelings of loneliness and low mood.

Social prescribers are on hand to help support people to improve their health and wellbeing.

GPs and healthcare staff can refer patients who may be struggling with anxiety, low mood, grief, loneliness or financial worries, to the social prescribing team.

Run by Swansea Council for Voluntary Service (SCVS), and Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Service (NPTCVS) in partnership with the Local Cluster Collaboratives (LCCs), the social prescribers can offer and signpost people to appropriate support for their individual needs.

Lois Woodward, a social prescribing co-ordinator for

### Wellbeing events win praise for Penderi

A primary care team has been recognised for helping to enhance the health and wellbeing of its local communities.

Staff from the Penderi Local Cluster Collaborative (LCC) have hosted multiple free wellbeing events in recent years.

The aim has been to support and motivate people to improve their health and wellbeing by raising awareness of the different resources and services available to them closer to their home.

The LCC, which covers the Fforestfach, Brynhyfryd,

Manselton, Gendros, Penlan, Portmead, Ravenhill, Treboeth and Blaenymaes areas of Swansea, has helped to educate and inspire its patients to live even healthier lifestyles.

Each event has brought together a range of community groups, organisations and healthcare experts to share information with the public.

They have included organisations such as Swansea Carers Centre and Barnardo's, as well as health board teams including the dietetic service, Help Me Quit and the immunisation service.

SCVS, said: "We offer very personalised support to the individual. If some people need support with housing or finance, we can signpost them to the right services.

"It could also be supporting people with social connections or building self-esteem through engaging in activities in the community, such as walking groups, Men's Sheds and other fitness and outdoor activities.

"We also offer more emotional support too, which could be for people who have been through a trauma, life change or a bereavement and might need linking up with support groups."

Once the patient has been referred, the social prescribers make initial contact to direct them to support that might be relevant to them at that stage.

Carys Richards, principal officer for health, social care and wellbeing at NPTCVS, said: "Social prescribing

takes a holistic approach to improving health and wellbeing by connecting people to groups, activities and services within their communities.

"We have seen some really positive outcomes for people who have engaged with the service."

Llŵchwr LCC has funded a new pilot project which will see the service expanded so more healthcare professionals can make referrals.

"We will start off with staff from optometry, dentistry and community pharmacy and will also look at occupational therapists and physiotherapists too," Lois added.

"We want to see how these staff members may be able to make referrals into our service for people that come into their practices, who may have some wellbeing needs."

## Patient experience

### New dialysis unit means closer-to-home bonus for patients

"It's cut an eight-hour day down to a four-hour day."

So said patient Chris Randle, who was among those who praised a new closer-to-home kidney dialysis unit in Bridgend.

Chris and other patients told Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care Jeremy Miles during a visit how the long-awaited facility has cut journey times, giving them a life outside of treatment.

Previously they had to go to the over-capacity Morriston Hospital unit - often late in the night due to insufficient space in the day - or travel to Llantrisant.

The transformation of the former gym in Brackla is part of a wider regional investment



Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care Jeremy Miles, pictured talking to patient Alan Gibson at the new dialysis unit in Bridgend

in dialysis provision designed to meet current and future demand. It also represents Swansea Bay

University Health Board's commitment to provide services which deliver the best outcomes closer to where patients live.

Patient Brian Phillips from Maesteg has dialysis at the centre on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

He said: "It's a life saver and I'm very pleased with the place. It's really good."

Alan Gibson from Ogmere Vale also described the benefits.

"Extra lie on in bed in the morning. Less travelling time, which makes heck of a lot of difference.

"You haven't got the traffic on the motorway to worry about.

"It's lovely, absolutely great."

## Book trolley's proving a big success story for patients and staff alike

An idea developed during the Covid pandemic for a hospital library book trolley to visit wards has proved to have wheels after winning an award.

Swansea Bay's Library Services has thrived since its inception and was named winner in the most recent in-house One Bay Way Awards' Arts in Health category.

Run in collaboration with the health board's volunteers service, the simple yet impactful initiative has transformed hospital stays for countless patients.

With generous support from staff, charities, and the community, the trolley has expanded to include radios, large print books, tablets, religious texts, and reminiscence boxes thanks to a generous donation from Swansea Museum.

Advice was sought from experts in infection prevention and control to ensure the safety of this initiative.

So far the service has distributed over 2,500 donated books and other items to patients across the health board to lift their spirits during a hospital stay.

Patients have shared how these resources have improved their wellbeing, reduced anxiety, and provided much-needed companionship.

Liz Wonnacott, Head of Service for the health board's Medical Directorate, nominated the team for the award. She said: "The library service, based across the three acute hospital sites and Cefn Coed Hospital, works really hard to think of new and innovative ways to support health and wellbeing, not just for staff, but patients as well.

"The book trolley is a great example of this and I am delighted to see the initiative has been recognised with a One Bay Way Award.

"The feedback the library team and volunteers

have received from staff and patients has been overwhelmingly positive and often our volunteers are able to have great conversations with patients during their rounds with the trolley. For some, this could be the closest they come to having visitors.

"A survey of patients has shown that the initiative made their stay better and made time pass quicker. It also helps keep patients mentally active and occupied." The book trolley also helps prevent patients deconditioning whilst in hospital.



Volunteer Sharon Winters pictured with a delighted patient during his book trolley rounds

The project keeps patients mentally active and occupied.

Liz added: "The book trolley has also helped promote awareness of the library service with staff members who may not necessarily have been aware of it and the support available for staff."

Librarian Rhys Whelan was delighted with the award.

He said: "We're extremely pleased to have been recognised.

"The service would not be possible were it not for

close collaboration with the volunteers service and library staff going above and beyond every day to keep the trolley fully stocked. We're grateful to everyone who has donated books to the trolley."

Sharon Winters, a volunteer, said: "Every time I go away, I have stories about people who have spoken with me and the books they have taken - just the other week a lady looked at the trolley and said, 'I've always wanted to read that' and she took the book. That's a good feeling."

Sharon agreed the social interaction was also valuable.

She said: "It's about interacting with patients - a means to talk to people, really.

"It gives them something else to think about, to look at during a day probably filled with people prodding you and taking your temperature."

And Sharon believes the patients appreciate the efforts of all involved.

She said: "I think the patients appreciate the service.

One patient, Hilda Mears, was full of praise for the service.

She said: "A service like this is remarkable. When you get taken to hospital people don't always

think to take books with them to read.

"It's remarkable because books take you out of yourself. They take you to another world, and they make you feel much better.

"I've always been an avid reader. You read a nice book, and no matter how low you are feeling, you feel lovely."

The annual One Bay Way Staff Awards recognise the many fantastic projects, ideas, leadership developments and improvements to patient care happening across Swansea Bay University Health Board over the previous 12 months.

# How to make a huge difference to mental health in just 75 minutes

It can take just 75 minutes to make a big difference to your own mental health or that of a colleague.

Training is available for all health board employees to help recognise when a colleague – or yourself – may be suffering psychological distress.

REACT Mental Health is a tool, developed by experts at March on Stress – a UK company providing psychological support – which aims to help staff have psychologically savvy and supportive conversations with each other about their mental health.

Leon Murnieks and Lesley Bevan deliver REACT training to staff.

Evidence shows that colleagues who receive training in identifying difficulties can develop the confidence to successfully engage in supportive conversations with peers, and can help reduce the risk of long-term mental ill health by up to 90 per cent.

It was introduced into Swansea Bay by the Staff Wellbeing team as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

REACT is an acronym, which provides a framework for the conversation:

- Recognise
- Engage
- Actively Listen
- Check Risk
- Talk to them about specific actions

Training has taken place virtually and in person, with 4,260 staff trained in the last four years.

The 75-minute sessions have proved hugely successful, with feedback showing it has helped staff understand mental health more given them the knowledge, skills and confidence to have a conversation and decide whether a colleague needs further help and, if so, where to get it.

Staff have also been specifically trained to deliver the

REACT MH course. Leon Murnieks is part of the Staff Wellbeing team that deliver the training.

Leon said: “The REACT MH training is very important for our staff, and feedback has been very positive, so we’re really keen to see more and more of our workforce getting involved.

“To date we have trained over 4,200 members of staff in REACT while there are some who can deliver REACT training.

“As part of our evaluation of the programme, there were significant changes between pre and post-training measures with regards to confidence in having psychologically savvy conversations in the workplace, as well as exploring the difference in staff’s knowledge and understanding before and after attending the training. It is our ambition that every member of staff has access to the training be able to support the cultural shift to one where we will care for and support one another.” Here is some of the feedback given

following REACT sessions: “The training helped me be courageous in asking a colleague to meet up for a cuppa when she seemed especially low.

“It seems like a small thing, but as a result of our conversation she sought help from Occupational

Health and shared her feelings of being overwhelmed with her line manager.

“I’m not sure that I would have asked a second time ‘are you really ok’ without the training.”

“It was a really powerful and important session. The delivery of the session was engaging and the resources provided extremely useful. I definitely feel more confident in facilitating these conversations if the need arises.”

“Excellent session. I used the skills from that training to support a

medical colleague who was experiencing a crisis in their life and was able to signpost to support.”

If anyone would like a bespoke session for their team please email [SBU.trimteam@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:SBU.trimteam@wales.nhs.uk) to arrange a date and time.



Leon Murnieks and Lesley Bevan deliver REACT training to staff

## You don't have to be religious to call on chaplaincy service

Whether you have a religious belief or not, the health board’s chaplaincy service is available for all staff along with patients and their family.

The Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care team provides a confidential listening service and pastoral care that is not necessarily religious.

The service is non-judgmental, confidential and is led by you.

### The Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care team

The small team is made up of people of different faiths who provide care and support to patients, families, carers and staff across all sites whether they have a faith or not.

As well as providing dedicated support, the team also offers group support, services of thanksgiving, memorial services and mark important events in the calendar such as Holocaust Memorial Day, Eid and



the Armistice silence. The health board has multi-faith centres at Morriston and Singleton and Ysbryd Y Coed, alongside dedicated prayer spaces in Neath Port Talbot. All are open 24 hours a day, seven days

a week. The Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care team provides:

- A listening service, including out of hours’ telephone support
- 1:1 personal support
- Training in spiritual care
- Books of condolence
- Memorial Services
- Advice on different religious practices especially at end of life
- Support staff who have patients who are lonely or vulnerable.

Chaplains are available Monday-Friday. For referrals, please call our internal number 33301, or externally on 01792 703301. You can also email [sbu.chaplaincy@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:sbu.chaplaincy@wales.nhs.uk)

Any urgent referrals between 4.30pm-8.30am should be made through the hospital switchboards.

## What's on

### Dates for your diary



April 8

#### Steps to wellbeing - sleeping soundly

Takes place on Teams. To sign up, email [SBU.OHWBTraining@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:SBU.OHWBTraining@wales.nhs.uk). The Occupational Health and Staff Wellbeing service has developed a range of sessions which we invite you to join. These are open to all staff, students and volunteers.

The aim of the 'Steps to Wellbeing' sessions is to work with you to share useful, applicable, and evidence-based techniques, to promote being healthy in work.

April 10

#### Graduate Manager Gateway Programme Training Programme

The fifth and final workshop for Cohort 6 of the Graduate Manager Gateway Programme Training Programme. This workshop sets out the fifth and sixth stages of the 6M process, covering monitor and maintain as well as Planned Care Dashboard training.

April 10

#### Inoculation Injury Awareness

Taking place on Teams. This session is open to all employees and managers. It will provide you with information surrounding the risks of inoculation injuries, actions to be taken in the event of an inoculation injury, and the next steps following the incident. For more details, please email [SBU.OHWBTraining@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:SBU.OHWBTraining@wales.nhs.uk)

April 16

#### Menopause Cafe - Morriston

Taking place between 2-3pm in the meeting room, Morriston Hospital library. Menopause Cafes are inclusive events, open to all SBU staff interested in the menopause: all genders and all ages. There is no agenda. It is a safe environment to chat with colleagues for support. For more information please email [sbu.ohwbtraining@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:sbu.ohwbtraining@wales.nhs.uk) as soon as possible so your space can be offered to someone else.

April 23

#### Tailored Adjustments for Managers

A session for Managers to look at the Tailored Adjustments part of the Managing Attendance at Work Policy and how to support employees with tailored adjustments to reduce sickness absence and support employees within their workplace. If you have any questions, please email [SBU.OHWBTraining@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:SBU.OHWBTraining@wales.nhs.uk)

May 6

#### Counter Terrorism training

Between 10-12pm, Millennium Room, SBUHQ HQ, Baglan. Event will deliver Action Counter Terrorism (ACT), 'face to face' to specific groups, (strategic, tactical and operational) of identified Health Board personnel.

For more events for your diary, log on to the events listings on the SBUHQ Intranet.

## £25k farewell gift

A group that has spent a quarter of a century supporting people with cancer will help continue the good work even though it is disbanding.

The Swansea and Gower Cancer Self Help Group was founded in 1999 by Yvonne Young after she received a cancer diagnosis.

It held weekly sessions in Swansea for people affected by cancer and also ran a very successful fundraising shop.

But, as with so much else in life, the legacy of Covid has left the group without a home and with dwindling numbers.

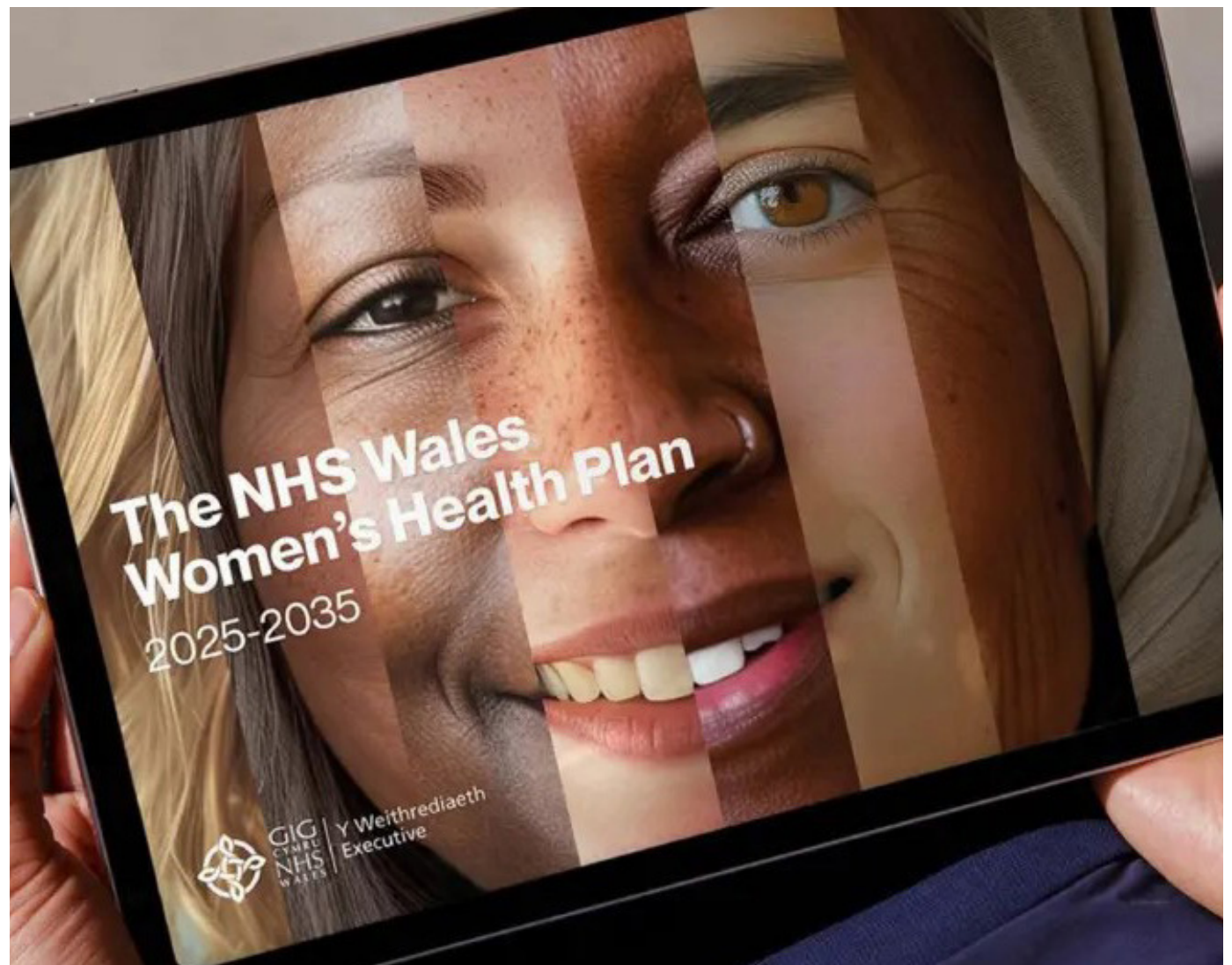
Before closing for good, though, group members have shared the money left in the group's account with a number of worthy causes.

That included a £25,000 donation to develop a wellbeing room for use by patients and staff at the South West Wales Cancer Centre, or SWWCC.

The centre, now celebrating its 20th anniversary year, is run by Swansea Bay University Health Board and provides a range of lifesaving NHS treatments.

Facilities are being upgraded, with the Chemotherapy Day Unit (CDU) on Ward 9 being transformed thanks to charitable donations. Plans are also being drawn up for a new outpatient suite in the old CDU at the back of Singleton.

## Women's Health Plan for Wales



## Women's Health Plan – our progress so far...

Swansea Bay University Health Board recently provided an update on progress so far regarding how it intends to implement the Women's Health Plan for Wales.

The nationwide plan, launched in December, is intended to make key improvements to the provision of healthcare services for women in Wales.

Created by the National Strategic Clinical Network for Women's Health, the plan sets out how NHS organisations in Wales will close the gender health gap by providing better health services for women, resources permitting, ensuring they are listened to, and their health needs are understood.

Research shows that while women live longer than men, they live fewer years free from disability, wait longer for pain relief and many women report having their symptoms dismissed.

So to bring you up to speed if you missed our update, we have now established a Women's

Health Steering Group, led by Christine Morrell, our Executive Director of Allied Health Professions and Health Science.

We are also in the process of assigning leads for each of the eight priority areas highlighted in the Women's Health Plan for Wales and have started looking widely at women's health services in Swansea Bay to establish what services we are currently delivering.

We're mapping these against the recommendations in the plan, so that we can gain a deeper understanding of the whole picture of women's services within Swansea Bay.

We will be engaging with women within Swansea Bay to help us identify the actions we should be prioritising and also engaging with partners, both locally and regionally, to identify early opportunities to ensure we are building into our forward plans. We'll also be holding a women's health steering group workshop in the spring - look out for further details.



Have an idea to raise money to support staff and patients in Swansea Bay?

Contact the Swansea Bay University Health Board charity via our website: <https://swanseabayhealthcharity.com> (Registered charity number 1122805)

**Bay Health**

Staff newspaper of Swansea Bay University Health Board

Contact Editorial: [communications.department@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:communications.department@wales.nhs.uk)