

EITEM AGENDA / AGENDA ITEM: 6.1

Cyd-bwyllgor Iechyd a Gofal y Canolbarth / Mid Wales Joint Committee for Health and Care			
Dyddiad y Cyfarfod: Date of Meeting:	13 th October 2025		
Teitl yr Adroddiad: Title of Report:	Rural Health and Care Wales Work Programme update report		
Arweinydd: Lead:	Keith Jones, Director of Operational Planning & Performance and Programme Director for the Mid Wales Joint Committee (MWJC) Anna Prytherch, Head of Rural Health and Care Wales		
Pwrpas yr adroddiad: Purpose of the Report:	To receive an update report on the RHCW Work Programme 2025/26	Ar gyfer cytundeb For Agreement	
		Ar gyfer trafodaeth For Discussion	
		Ar gyfer gwybodaeth For Information	✓
<u>Crynodeb / Summary</u>			
This report provides an update of progress made to date by RHCW in achieving its Work Programme for 2025/26.			
<u>Argymhelliad / Recommendation</u>			
For information - The Mid Wales Joint Committee for Health and Care is asked to note for information progress made in achieving the RHCW Work Programme 2025/26.			



RHCW Progress Report June - October 2025

Aim 1: Health, Wellbeing and Prevention

- *Improve the health and wellbeing of the Mid Wales population*

- The review of **Pharmacy** services across Mid Wales has been completed and a report attached as *Appendix 1*. The review of **Dentistry** services across Mid Wales is almost completed.
- The first annual **Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales** report was launched during the WISERD Conference in Aberystwyth on 30th June 2025. Three innovation workshops have now been held that explored the concept of food as being a conduit for community wellbeing, with the outcome being that a pilot for developing a Community-Led Kitchen Network will be undertaken across Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire. The objective of the initiative is to unite people in rural communities by providing nourishing, sustainably produced seasonal food, whilst also addressing loneliness and social isolation by providing socialization opportunities for cooking and eating in community venues.

A strategy day was held on 9th and 10th September 2025 in Bangor University for the management teams, with AP (RHCW) attending as co-Lead of the Enhancing Wellbeing in Place thematic group.

- Work is continuing on developing case studies for the **Macmillan Rural Cancer Patient Experience** research (cancer patients, their families / carers), with the end of project report due in November 2025. As part of the work, RHCW (AP) was approached to contribute to a national Paper on “*Invisible*

***** CASE STUDIES WANTED *****

DO YOU LIVE IN MID WALES?
DO YOU HAVE OR HAVE HAD CANCER? OR HAVE YOU SUPPORTED SOMEONE WITH CANCER, EITHER AS A PROFESSIONAL OR AS A FRIEND / FAMILY MEMBER?
WOULD YOU LIKE TO IMPROVE THE CANCER PATIENT EXPERIENCE IN MID WALES?
WE NEED YOUR HELP!



Can I be a Case Study?

If you are someone who is living with or have had cancer, aged over 18 and resident in Mid Wales you can take part.

We are keen to also speak with family and friends of people with cancer and professional people who have supported people living rurally with cancer.



What is involved?

Being a case study involves sharing your cancer experiences and your thoughts and feelings around this.



How do I take part?

Normally, it is an informal chat with the researcher, taking about an hour of your time. Alternatively, you can record your experiences any way that you wish. This includes notes, journal, voice recording, drawing or photographs. Personal details will be anonymised in the final report.



Why should I take part?

Your experiences will contribute to the wider evaluation of rural cancer patient experiences and will help highlight where these may be improved.




Who do I contact? - Please get in touch with Anna Prytherch
anna.prytherch@wales.nhs.uk Tel: 07815746850



Geographies – the Rural and Coastal Blind Spot in UK Cancer Policy: a Content Analysis”, which was led by Dr David Nelson from the University of Lincoln. The Paper reviewed coastal and rural cancer policies across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, concluding that “*despite sizeable rural and coastal populations facing specific health challenges across the UK, national cancer policies, excepting Northern Ireland, gave minimal guidance for delivering cancer care tailored to these communities*”, with the recommendation that the other 3 developed countries followed Northern Ireland’s approach. The Paper is attached to this report as *Appendix 2*.

In association with the publication of this Paper / research, RHCW has been asked to sit on a National Rural and Coastal Research Cancer Network which is currently being established.

Finally, RHCW (AP) has been asked to present on the Wales Rural Cancer Patient research findings at a national Lung Cancer Conference being held in London on 4th November 2025 – see www.uklcc.org.uk/conference/programmes.

- The **Wellbeing Walks** leaflet for **Tywyn** is almost completed, with the launch planned for the end of November 2025.

RHCW (MS) has had a paper on RHCW’s Wellbeing Walks recently accepted for publication in Emerald’s Journal of Integrated Care special edition on social prescribing, which will be published in January 2026. AP is a guest editor for the special edition.

- Scoping work has commenced on the Mid Wales **Park Run** research, which will seek to quantify the health and wellbeing benefits of participating in park runs, from a participant and volunteer perspective. Final report anticipated to be completed by end of December 2025.
- Confirmation of the ARUK funding (£2.5K) to host **dementia** research events across Ceredigion, Powys and Gwynedd has been received, with events planned for Powys, Ceredigion and Gwynedd in 2025/26. Further details of the proposed events will be provided to members once funding has been confirmed.

Building on the dementia research she has been undertaking for RHCW, MS successfully submitted an article on “*Hearts and Minds: 14 reasons to move and improve*” for the Public Health Network e-bulletin on Brain Health and Dementia Risk Reduction (August 2025). RHCW (MS) also submitted a case study on “Dementia Friendly Ceredigion” to the Rural Health Compass (accepted, with podcast also to be recorded). A copy of the Ceredigion Dementia scoping review is attached as *Appendix 3*.

- RHCW is working with **ENRICH** (Enabling Research in Care Homes) to try to sign up care homes from across Mid Wales to become involved in national care home research initiatives. An event is being held in Canolfan Rheidol,

Aberystwyth on 3rd October 2025 to raise awareness of ENRICH and highlight the value of getting involved in active research for care homes, with very few from the Mid Wales region currently signed up, giving a bias on research outcomes to urban care home issues.

- RHCW (AP) is a member of part of Coed Lleol's **Outdoor Health Development Group** in Powys; Rosie Strang from Coed Lleol presented an update on their "Awyr lach" project at the Stakeholder Group meeting held on 9th September 2025. 'Awyr lach' is a new initiative that enables people living in the Dyfi Valley in Mid Wales to access outdoor activities in nature to boost their health and wellbeing. It has been awarded grant funding of c.£420k from the National Lottery Community funding to enable provision of this service free of charge through Bro Ddyfi Community hospital, working closely with PTHB.



**Celebrate the voice of
CARE HOMES
IN RESEARCH**

Friday,
3rd October
10am-1pm

at Canolfan Rheidol,
Rhodfa Padarn,
Aberystwyth,
SY23 3UE

Join our informal event to hear more about:

- ENRICH Cymru's work and try out some of the current research, including the experience of the Welsh language in care homes and intergenerational activities that support conversations around climate change
- A free taster session of a training workshop designed with care home staff
- Free lunch and refreshments

Come along to this FREE event to find out more about ENRICH Cymru, a pan-Wales research network hosted by Rural Health and Care Wales, promoting high-quality research in care homes for older adults.



Rural Health and Care Wales, Canolfan Rheidol, Rhodfa Padarn, Llanbadarn Fawr, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, SY23 3UE
Tel: 0300 430 7983 - Email: contact@ruralhealthandcare.wales

Aim 2: Care Closer to Home

- *create a sustainable health and social care system for the population of Mid Wales which has greater focus on care closer to home*
- The **Sustainable Communities / Cymunedau Cynaliadwy** project continues to thrive in Lampeter, Ceredigion, with a popular trips undertaken over the last few months to Llanerchaeron National Trust center and the Cliff Railway. The social events calendar for October through to December has been set up,



however the postal survey of Lampeter residents is slightly delayed due to logistical reasons in setting up the mailshot with Royal Mail.

A case study on the Sustainable Communities project in Lampeter was submitted by RHCW (ML) for publication in the international Rural Health Compass, with a podcast also planned for later this year.

In addition, a draft framework for a rural community resilient model is under development, to be presented at the RHCW Stakeholder Group meeting in December 2025.

- The review of **GP / Primary Care provision across Mid Wales** is ongoing, with the GP questionnaire having a very slow response rate. Additional work will be put into ensuring all GPs across Mid Wales participate in the review to ensure a balanced representation. A draft report is underway, focusing on actions that could be applied from a regional perspective and will be presented to the RHCW Stakeholder Group in December 2025.

The initial work undertaken with SAIL at Swansea University, which quantified the distance travelled to GP practices for rural patients across Mid Wales and provided an overview of common health parameters has been written into a paper which will be published in ADR Insights in October 2025. This is attached as *Appendix 4*.

- A response is still awaited from HDdUHB regarding board approval of the proposed model of **Virtual Rural Healthcare** for Mid, North and West Wales. At the RHCW Stakeholder Group meeting held on 9th September, members voted to proceed to seek funding to develop the model with just PTHB and BCUHB executive support received, in the hope that HDdUHB would join in the venture shortly, due to the considerable length of time it has taken to develop a proposal that has widespread support and in light of the considerable technological advancements that are moving forward at a pace in the health and care sector.

Aim 3: Rural Health and Care Workforce

- *Create a flexible and sustainable rural health and care workforce for the delivery of high quality services which support the healthcare needs of rural communities across Mid Wales*
- RHCW has been working with the **Graduate Entry to Medicine** / admissions team at Swansea University to try to attract applicants from Mid Wales to apply to become doctors. As such, a Graduate Entry to Medicine day was held at Canolfan Rheidol, Aberystwyth on 30th

TECHYD A GOFAL GWLEDIG CYMRU
RURAL HEALTH AND CARE WALES

Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe

Medical School
Ysgol Feddygaeth

Graduate Entry Medicine Event

Have you ever considered a
career in Medi

Document was last saved: Just now

Did you know that the Swansea University
GEM course accepts graduates from
any discipline?

Join staff and students from Swansea
University Medical school to learn more
about the course and the opportunities to
train and work in rural healthcare.

APRIL
30

Canolfan Rheidol
Aberystwyth

10:00am - 12:30pm or
2:00pm - 4:30pm

Graduates, Undergraduates,
A-Level students, Teachers,
Career advisors

REGISTER
HERE:

For more information contact L.V.Blake@swansea.ac.uk

April 2025. 24 people registered to attend the event and a significant amount of publicity was generated, promoting the possibility of applying to study medicine as a second degree, for people from all backgrounds and all ages.

The event was a big success and plans are afoot to repeat the event, with a modified agenda, in 2026. Evaluation will be undertaken in terms of assessing whether any attendees apply for the GEM course in 2026.

- RHCW attended **Tywyn High School** on 7th July 2025 to present on the work of RHCW and also to discuss the various career pathways available in rural health and care across the region.
- RHCW met with Geetanjali Chavan, Senior Project Support Officer, HEIW and Sue Bracegirdle, **Future Workforce Manager**, HEIW on 13th August to explore collaboration opportunities to support careers outreach in rural communities across Mid Wales. A very productive meeting was held and resources shared, with joint opportunities for future co-working planned. RHCW was also asked to join the HEIW “**Health and Social Care Network**”, which meets quarterly.
- RHCW (AP) was asked to contribute to “*Chapter 2: Global Rural, Remote and Island Healthcare Landscapes*” (definitions, typologies and socio economics) of a **book** being written by Professor Jean Ross (School of Nursing, Otago, New Zealand; Global Rural Nursing Exchange Network) on rural nursing, which will be a published learning resource for student nurses interested in working rurally.

Aim 5: Communications, Involvement and Engagement

- *ensure there is a continuous and effective communication, involvement and engagement with the population of Mid Wales, staff and partners*
- A very busy week was held at the RHCW stand at the **Royal Welsh Agricultural Show** (21 – 24 July 2025) which showcased the various research projects undertaken by RHCW, whilst also using it as an opportunity for public engagement and education.



Invitations to attend the stand during the week for various events were sent out to relevant groups and individuals, to view the work of RHCW and have a chat / refreshments at any time during the week.

Multiple research posters were produced, which were prominently displayed on the stand. As RHCW is supporting the work of PhD student Stephanie Jones at AU and her project on loneliness and social isolation in rural areas, her findings were also on display.



RHCW STAND EVENTS 2025

10AM-12PM

MON 21st	SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES Learn about the project's impact on rural social isolation and loneliness
TUE 22nd	DEMENTIA RESEARCH See our work on rural dementia experiences and dementia support across Mid Wales
WED 23rd	RHCW STAKEHOLDER GROUP An invitation to Stakeholder Group members, and beyond, to join us for a refreshment and a chat
THU 24th	WELLBEING EVENT Join us for an interactive session on the importance of maintaining your wellbeing

COLOURING COMPETITION!
Take part in our colouring competition for a chance to win a fun prize

Free light refreshments!
Come inside for a chat and to rest your feet!

Rural Health and Care Wales
Tel: 0300 430 7983 - Email: contact@ruralhealthandcare.wales
Website: <https://ruralhealthandcare.wales>



In addition to hosting RHCW events, the WAST team attending on Tuesday (22/07/25) afternoon to demonstrate and showcase their Save a Life Cymru (SaLC) initiative, which proved very popular. Members of the Comms. and Transformation team at HDdUHB attended the stand every day of the show to engage people in the health board's Clinical Strategy Consultation and PTHB's Better Together consultation was made available.

The popular children's colouring competition was a great engagement activity and attracted families to the stand, who then engaged in conversations that led to pertinent dialogues. Girl Guides Cymru were the adjudicators of this year's competition.



As usual, instantaneous Mentimeter evaluations were undertaken during the event and both presentations rated as excellent (see page 8), with the Webinar itself having been recorded and uploaded to RHCW's YouTube channel.



Rural Health & Care Wales Summer Webinar

Tuesday 12th Awst 2025
10am – 12 noon

Blood Bikes Wales: Together we keep the NHS moving



June Jones
Controller with
Blood Bikes Wales

June Jones has been a Controller with Blood Bikes Wales (BBW) since 2017, also being a trainer and mentor since 2020; she is also a Trustee with BBW, with responsibility for the Aberystwyth and Pembrokeshire Groups. In this presentation, June will outline the important role that BBW plays in transporting blood and other products to and from key NHS sites, an activity that is of particular significance in rural areas of Wales facing geographical distances away from main clinical locales. In addition to her role as a Controller with BBW, June is an avid fundraiser and spokesperson for the Charity who, prior to undertaking the Controller role, was employed as Regional Manager for Mid and West Wales.

MyWay Diabetes and Rural Communities in Wales



Dr Debbie Wake
NHS Consultant
Diabetologist



Chris Avery
CEO at MWDH

This presentation by Dr Debbie Wake and Chris Avery will provide an overview of the MyWay Diabetes (MWD) App which has recently been very positively appraised by Health Technology Wales, who stated that the evidence supports the adoption of the MWD digital platform as it is associated with improved glycaemic control compared to standard care. Furthermore, economic modelling suggests MyWay Diabetes is cost effective compared with standard care. Debbie is Co-Founder / CEO and an NHS Consultant Diabetologist who is also a trained clinical safety officer and previously a health columnist for a national UK newspaper and TV doctor/presenter. Chris is the Chief Operating Officer at MWDH who has almost 40 years' experience in the medical device industry, with a particular focus on diabetes, and a proven track record of building successful organisations from startups to large medtech corporations within the UK and across Europe.

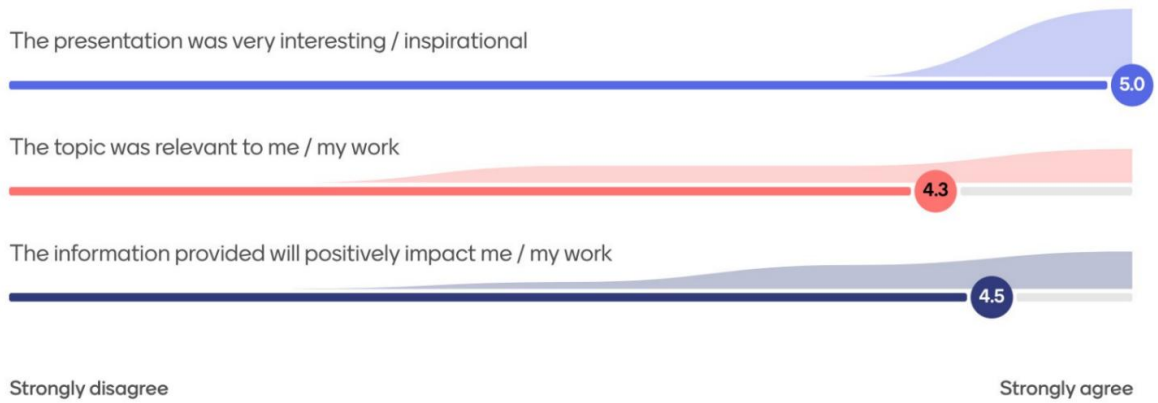
Agenda	10am	Welcome & Introduction
	10.15am	Blood Bikes Wales: Together we keep the NHS going
	11am	MyWay Diabetes and Rural Communities in Wales
	12 noon	Close

The Webinar is free of charge to attend but you will need to register your place by emailing anna.prytherch@wales.nhs.uk, quoting the reference "RHCW Summer Webinar 2025".

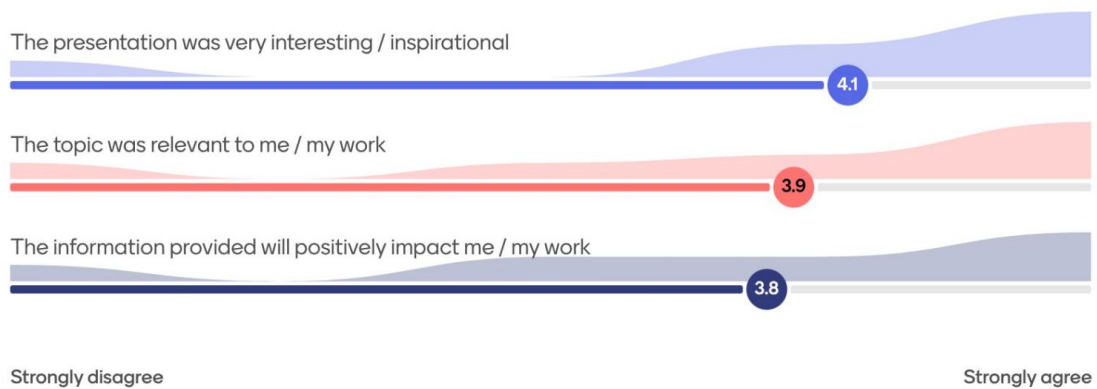
www.ruralhealthandcare.wales
contact@ruralhealthandcare.wales

The next RHCW Webinar will take place in January 2026.

Blood Bikes Wales: together we keep the NHS moving



MyWay Diabetes and Rural Communities in Wales



Please provide ideas for future RHCW Webinars

Are there any particular topics or areas of interest that you would like to see covered in one of our future Webinars?

21 responses



- The call for Papers for the **RHCW Conference** has now closed, with 52 applications received from across the UK and internationally. The Selection Panel is meeting on 3rd October to go through applications, with a draft Agenda available shortly after.

The title and themes of the Conference for 2025 are as follows:

TITLE: Innovation and Improvement – advances in the delivery of rural health, care and wellbeing services

Themes:

- The delivery of Integrated Health and Care services in Rural areas, including cross-sector, multi-agency and / or multi-disciplinary working
- The role of Rural Communities and unpaid Carers in Health and Care
- Advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI), Telehealth / Telemedicine and the remote delivery of Health and Care services in Rural areas
- Social / Green Prescribing and the impact of Art, Crafts and other non-clinical interventions on Health and Wellbeing
- Recruitment and Retention of Health and Care professionals in Rural areas
- Education, Training and Continuous Professional Development for Health and Care professionals working in Rural areas
- Addressing the broader Social Determinants of Health and the Preventative Agenda in rural health, care and wellbeing

As usual, the Conference will be held in hybrid format, to be accessible on line via Teams and held in person at the Montgomery Pavilion, Royal Welsh showground, Builth Wells, Powys (10am – 4pm). The health boards' Chief Executive's Panel is being staged on Tuesday 11th November at 3pm.

Further details of the Programme for the two days of the Conference (11th and 12th November 2025) will be sent to members in October after the selection of Papers has been conducted.