



Partneriaeth
Ranbarthol
Gorllewin
Morgannwg

West
Glamorgan
Regional
Partnership



WEST GLAMORGAN ANNUAL REPORT

2020/21

If you require this document in a different format, please contact the
West Glamorgan Programme Office via email at west.glamorgan@swansea.gov.uk

CONTENTS

Foreword	Page 3
Background and Context	Page 4
Covid-19 Response	Page 4
Recovery	Page 8
 Stabilisation and Reconstruction	Page 8
 Remodelling Acute Health and Community Services	Page 9
 Transforming Complex Care	Page 10
 Transforming Mental Health Services	Page 11
Co-production and Engagement	Page 12
Communications	Page 17
Carers	Page 18
Children and Young People	Page 21
Dementia	Page 25
Our Neighbourhood Approach	Page 27
Cluster Whole Systems Approach	Page 30
Third Sector	Page 33
Housing	Page 34
Integrated Autism Service	Page 35
Research, Innovation and Improvement Hub	Page 36

FOREWORD

Welcome to the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board's second annual report. To say it has been a year like no other would be a real understatement, but since taking up the role of Chair in February 2021, I have witnessed first-hand the true power of productive partnership working.

The Covid-19 public health emergency has placed tremendous pressure on health and social care services, but over the past 18 months, I have seen service providers, carers and members of the community come together and work tirelessly to ensure the safety and well-being of everyone. An overwhelming demand for services coupled with a depleted workforce have presented challenges on a scale we've never experienced before, and I must commend all those involved in the partnership's work for their phenomenal efforts during this period of stress and upheaval.



This report provides a flavour of the combined response of regional partners to the Covid-19 emergency, as well as outlining the progress of the pre-existing work programmes that have continued throughout 2020-21.

Covid-19 has been a steep learning curve for us all, and our focus going forward is to build on the momentum gathered during the crisis. We have discovered just how much meaningful collaboration can achieve, and will continue to apply our learning to our newly developed programme of work.






Once again, I'd like to thank all partner agencies and individuals who have worked alongside us for their unwavering commitment and dedication. I look forward to continuing the good work as we enter this next phase of recovery.

Emma Woollett

Chair of the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The West Glamorgan Regional Partnership is one of seven 'regional collaboratives' across Wales. Our membership comprises:

-  Swansea Bay University Health Board
-  Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
-  Swansea Council
-  Third and independent sector partners, and
-  Citizens and Carers.

The primary purpose of the partnership is to provide a strategic mechanism for co-ordinating a programme of transformation via a suite of projects and work streams. However, the escalation of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020 called for a sharp shift in focus. A number of projects were suspended and resources were redirected to bolster the emergency response.

A productive partnership approach to tackling the issues relating to Covid-19 was essential. New multi-agency emergency governance arrangements were established and remained in place from April 2020 to June 2021.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Emergency governance arrangements for the region took the form of two new groups known as Community Gold and Silver Command. Meetings were held twice a week and membership included most of the key partners represented on the existing West Glamorgan Transformation Boards, with the exception of carers and citizens.

Some key pieces of work delivered in response to the pandemic are summarised below:

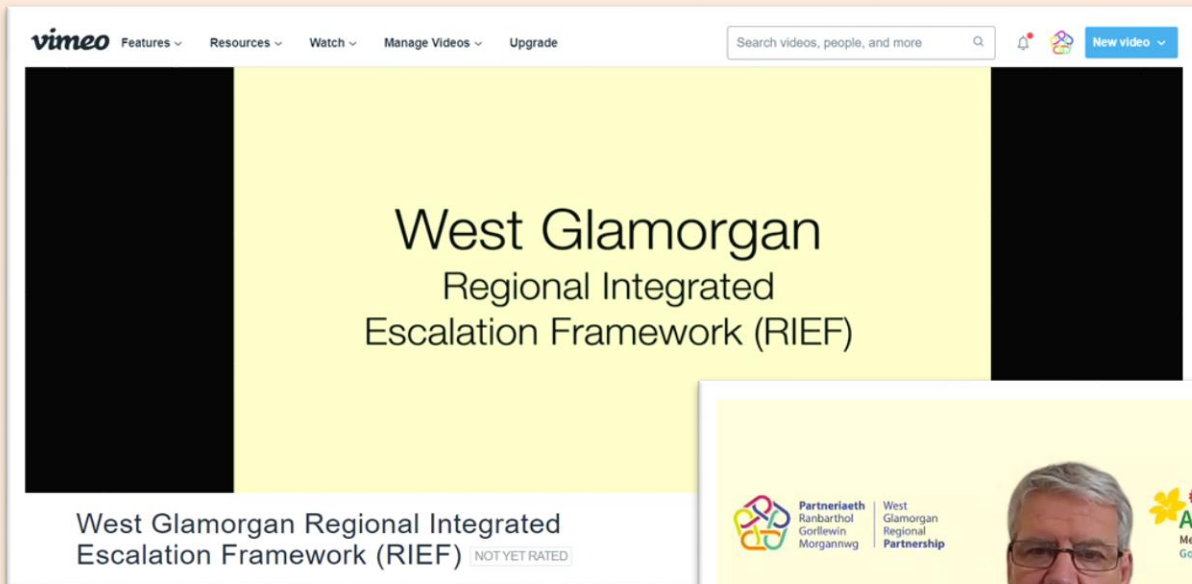
Regional Integrated Escalation Framework (RIEF)

In order to have a clear view of the impact of the crisis, not only in care homes but also across community services, the West Glamorgan Regional Integrated Escalation Framework (RIEF) tool was developed. This monitors service capacity against actual and predicted demand across all sectors, offering a clear understanding of the regional position and enabling organisations to identify and address areas of concern without delay. Its purpose also extends to ensuring that staffing resources are used flexibly to meet priorities and specific service pressures via a coordinated mitigation response.

The introduction of the tool has proved that the development of such a framework is critical, and it has now been embedded to support ongoing decision making.

Although the RIEF's scope is wider than just care homes, a broad range of care home related data continues to be collected on a twice weekly basis, which not only informs the RIEF, but shapes the focus of the joint emergency response.




Please click on the link below to view a video outlining the rationale, implementation and benefits of the RIEF. It was originally created as part of the [ADSS Summer Festival 2021](#) and held up as an example of innovative practice and positive partnership working:



<https://vimeo.com/585052308>

Emergency Funding

An emergency funding (50/50) protocol was developed in response to the unprecedented challenges care homes were facing as a result of the pandemic. This applies to settings where care is commissioned and where a commissioned placement is required in order to move on from the following locations:

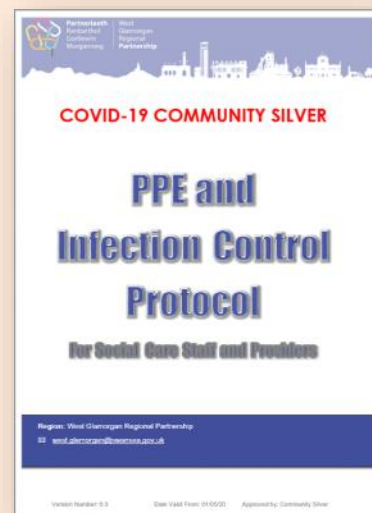
-  A hospital ward (including Mental Health wards)
-  An Assessment and Treatment unit
-  Living at home (where a move is required due to an emergency).

Where funding is disputed, a 50/50 funding split is agreed between the Health Board and the relevant local authority in order to support patient flow from hospitals and assessment and treatment centres. This ensures that a patient can be quickly transferred to a more appropriate setting which is better suited to their needs.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

A joint regional PPE and infection control protocol was created, based on national guidance and outlining the roles and responsibilities of partner organisations. Arrangements for the logistics of the procurement and delivery of PPE stocks were made by a dedicated regional multi-agency PPE and infection control subgroup. The supply of PPE for care settings was co-ordinated early on in the pandemic, and no shortages or other issues were reported.

The PPE protocol is a dynamic document that captures up-to-date information and ensures supplies are distributed fairly and consistently in line with demand. A regional West Glamorgan care home protocol was also developed during this time, which has been a key 'go-to' resource for guidance for care providers.



Care Homes

All West Glamorgan partners made a tremendous effort to support care homes during the pandemic. The importance of a partnership approach in tackling the issues in relation to Covid-19 was essential given the involvement of multiple agencies, including local authority and health board commissioners, Environmental Health, Public Health Wales, and Care Inspectorate Wales.

A regional care homes action plan was developed in line with a national report by Professor John Bolton. This captured all actions and outlined progress made by key agencies.

During the pandemic, it was recognised that infection prevention and control (IP&C) was fundamental to the provision of a safe environment for residents, visitors and staff in a care setting. Historically, IP&C was seen as the domain of a specialist infection control team (usually in hospitals) however the pandemic has reinforced the message that IP&C is everyone's business.

As the community transmission rates of Covid-19 increased, care homes saw a rise in the number of residents and members of staff testing positive for the virus. This highlighted a need to ensure support is available to care homes in order that they understand the importance of adopting a consistently high standard of IP&C measures.

A basic IP&C training course was organised by the IP&C team within the Health Board in order to upskill a range of officers from environmental health, Public Health Wales, Commissioners, and Care Inspectorate Wales.

Positive feedback was gleaned from attendees in relation to the training:



"Thoroughly enjoyed the training session, it was very informative and has provided me the knowledge, understanding to ensure good IP&C principles/ measures going forward..."

IP&C Training Participant



Funding was agreed to recruit a regional IP&C nurse dedicated solely to the care home sector. Although the initial focus of the work is on the prevention and management of Covid-19 in the care home sector, the long term aim is to develop a successful approach to supporting care homes across a number of common infections.

Funding for care homes was secured via the regional Integrated Care Fund (ICF) capital grant to purchase additional IT equipment to enable remote contact between resident and their loved ones. Alongside, this the Councils for Voluntary Service in Neath Port Talbot and Swansea offered support in relation to technical advice and digital skills. Funding was also made available to care homes for refurbishments, adaptations and equipment in order to improve safety and help facilitate outdoor visiting (an example of a covid-safe visiting booth is pictured).










The single biggest risk related to the workforce and the significant challenges around the ability to keep services operating during times of severe staff shortages. This became a serious concern and resulted in a 'call to arms' to employees from the third sector and the statutory partners who may have been willing and able to cover some shifts at care homes in crisis. Local rapid response teams were identified and assigned to support the care homes most at risk of potential short term failure. Teams included a range of staff roles, including management, supervisors, nursing staff, auxiliary staff, and support workers. A Regional Rapid Care Home In-Reach and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) was also developed which clarified the arrangements, including mutual aid if and when it was needed. This has been acknowledged as a progressive piece of work and requests have been made to share the SOP across Wales.

Carers Emergency Planning Guidelines

Following feedback from unpaid Carers via the West Glamorgan Carers Partnership Board, we found that the planning of the Covid-19 emergency response had failed to sufficiently and transparently consider the needs of Carers when implementing the changes and actions to respond to the pandemic. Carers felt that they were overlooked and were adversely impacted as a consequence.

A Task and Finish Group was established to create a set of planning guidelines based on the specific need of Carers. These guidelines can be used by partners and other organisations when considering and planning for emergency situations.

The following key themes/priorities are included:

-  Carers to be considered in decision-making
-  Channels of communication
-  Clarity of messages
-  Continuous engagement with Carers
-  Identification of Carers in an emergency
-  Input into response planning
-  Routes for escalating issues and ideas

- Services or alternative services for Carers.

The West Glamorgan Carers Emergency Action Planning Guidelines document was endorsed by the RPB and shared with partner organisations for their use in the future.

RECOVERY

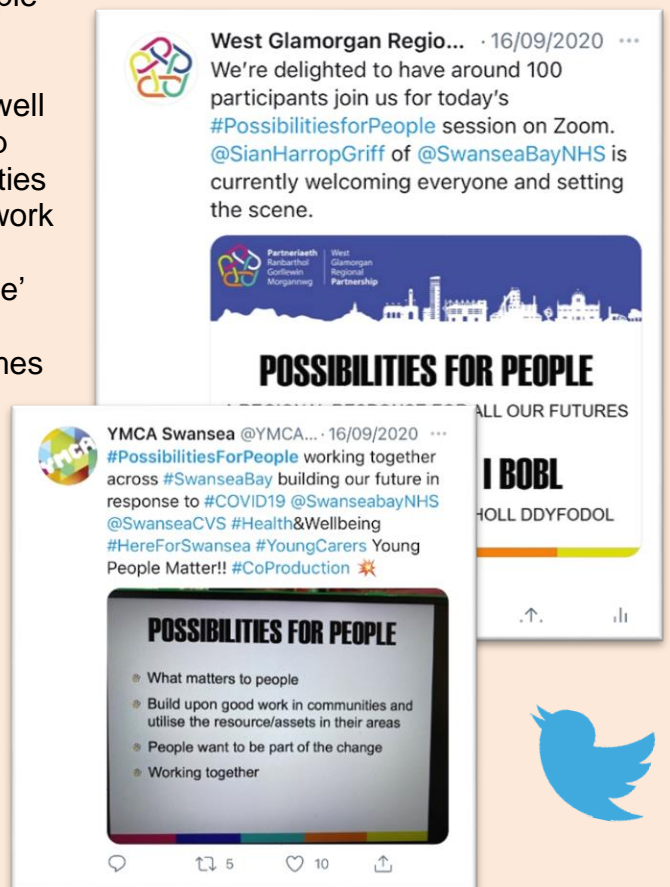
As we started to emerge from the most acute phase of the crisis, a temporary Recovery Transformation Board was established. This ran from September 2020 to March 2021 and set out four key priority areas. **These are summarised below and will continue to form the regional programme of transformational work going forward.**

STABILISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION

This involves working with (and investing in) communities, third sector organisations and volunteers in maintaining and strengthening an asset and strengths-based approach to safely supporting vulnerable individuals within their communities, without unnecessary recourse to critical/essential health and social care services. There is also a particular focus on support for Carers.

Key achievements for 2020-21 include:

- Two virtual ‘Possibilities for People’ engagement events were held in September and November 2020. The aim of these sessions was to reach out to our communities and representatives of the people of West Glamorgan to gather their views on what the priorities for health and social care transformation should be. The events were well attended and provided a great insight to help develop proposals for the role that communities will play in the way that the partnership will work after the pandemic.
- Following on from the ‘Possibilities for People’ events and the useful discussions they facilitated, we have identified some key themes for transformation, including: Communications, Technology, Community Assets, and Mental Health and Well-being. Our aim is to utilise these themes and priorities to inform our planning for future transformation activities, linked to the needs of the people in our communities.
- A sub group of the West Glamorgan Carers Partnership Board co-produced new Carers Emergency Action Planning Guidelines for use by organisations (as outlined on page 7).
- The Regional Partnership received £235k from the Welsh Government Coronavirus Recovery Grant for Volunteering. This aimed to help harness the community spirit



and willingness to volunteer that became apparent during the pandemic, and to work towards more long-term, sustainable ways of getting the most out of the volunteering experience for individuals and organisations.

Delivered between January and March 2021, our multi-organisational Volunteering Project produced a range of outputs, including:

- 🌐 Platforms for enhancing our 'hyper local' volunteering activities;
- 🌐 Review of partner organisations' strategic approach to volunteering;
- 🌐 Tips for co-production (developed by our Regional Co-production Group) and how to embed these principles into volunteering activities;
- 🌐 Development and delivery of local resilience and recovery plans;
- 🌐 A suite of new regional volunteering resources available to download at www.westglamorgan.org.uk/wgvs.



🌐 REMODELLING ACUTE HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

This priority focuses on continuing to remodel (and shift the balance of funding between) acute health and community health/social care services. Our main areas of work within this priority for 2020/21 have been the 'Hospital 2 Home' and the 'Keep Me at Home' programmes. The primary focus of these initiatives is to develop and deliver a combination of integrated health and social care services for people over 65. This includes a range of services to avoid unnecessary hospital admissions, or to support safe, timely discharge from hospital. The offer includes a range of clinical and reablement services, third sector support and community-based provision based on each individual's needs.

During the last financial year, the focus has predominantly been on revising our provision in line with the requirements of the pandemic and the national Rapid Discharge Guidance issued by Welsh Government in April 2020. We relaunched our "Rapid Discharge" model on 1st July 2020 and continue to develop and refine our approach in line with national prescribed process for discharging patients from hospital in a safe and timely manner (the image below depicts the discharge routes as set out by Welsh Government):

Our regional emergency and contingency planning has placed an emphasis on older people and people with dementia in relation to the development of a new rapid discharge process and further development of 'Hospital 2 Home' services (including community services, domiciliary care and care homes).

The implementation and development of the model continues across the region, with significant progress made. This will continue into 2021/22, enabling a move to a full discharge to recover and assess [D2RA] approach, incorporating well-being, prevention and wider links across the whole system.





Welsh Government provided additional funding to deal with the increased pressures in the health and community system during the winter months. This allowed us to scale up the third sector and community services support and increased capacity within the community care and intermediate care services. Additional assistive technology was purchased for items such as lifelines and sensors, which allowed people to live safely in their own homes. Funding was also utilised to secure additional care homes beds for people with particularly complex needs, including dementia, to ensure sufficient beds were available to avoid people having to remain in hospital once they were medically fit.

TRANSFORMING COMPLEX CARE

This involves establishing fit for purpose joint funding arrangements to support the provision or commissioning of integrated/collaborative health/social care services to support children and adults with complex needs.

This is intended to:

-  Safely support adults with complex needs to remain or return to living as independently as possible within their families or local communities within the region, rather than within more institutional settings.
-  Ensure seamless transition across all services, including young people into adulthood.



The overall aim of the Transforming Complex Care programme is to improve outcomes for individuals with complex needs by using the collective resources of health, social

care, and (where applicable) education. A key achievement has been the work involving service users and carers in the production of digital stories highlighting their lived experiences.

The programme provides overall direction and development of key processes to reset the management of complex care cases; increasing positive experiences, clarity of the administration and supervision of complex care cases, one process, policy and standard operating procedures across the region.



The programme was given the go-ahead in October 2020.

Key achievements for 2020-21 include:




-  Establishment of a regional Transforming Complex Care Programme Implementation Group
-  Establishment of the working task and finish groups to begin to review policies to enable them to become regional.
Work has started on the development of:
 - Transition from Child to Adult Policy
 - Multi-Agency Pathway for Children and Young People
 - Operationalising the Continuing Health Care [CHC] Policy.

TRANSFORMING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES




This area of work focuses on:

-  Developing a continuum of support for the population who require Mental Health and well-being services.
-  Safely supporting children and young people with emotional, Mental Health and well-being needs and other complex needs, including disabilities, to receive the support they need to live as fulfilled a life as possible with the minimum levels of intervention, and receiving integrated care in a timely manner when they do.









The scope of this programme includes the following projects:

-  Modernising Mental Health Support Services [MHSS] Project, which will develop existing services to be more responsive to the changing Mental Health needs of the population and to encourage greater independence and resilience of individuals. Support will focus on enabling people to recover from the effects of Mental Health conditions and support progression from statutory services or prevent progression to the need for secondary care services.
-  Delivering Responsive Community Services [DRCS] Project, which will review and develop a range of community services in order to improve the way that support is provided to people within the communities of Swansea and Neath Port Talbot. Initiatives include the development of the Sanctuary Service, aligning secondary Mental Health care services to primary care clusters, and developing a Single Point of Access for each local authority area.
-  Adult Acute Assessment Re-provision [AAAR] Project, which will develop and commission co-located/fit for purpose adult acute inpatient beds and provision of local Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit accommodation. The aim is to achieve this as part of a whole system change process to avoid unintended consequences across service areas and to achieve efficient and effective acute care. The

Strategic Outline Case for the capital monies has been approved by Welsh Government. This will enable us to start the detailed planning and engage on the location of the proposed new unit.

-  Older Persons' Mental Health Services [OPMHS] Project, which will revise current pathway and inpatient modes across the region in relation to services specific to older people's Mental Health. This project has recently been revised to include regional work on dementia, including the creation of a Regional Dementia Strategy and associated action plans.
-  Addressing Health Inequalities [AHI] Project, which will develop a strategy and approach for addressing health inequalities of people with Mental Health issues and improving physical well-being.
-  Well-being and Prevention Project, which will articulate the work and resources needed to take forward the primary prevention and early identification agenda. This will be in line with the Welsh Government's indicated direction of travel in the Together for Mental Health Strategy consultation which recognises the need for a greater focus and more action to be taken on the mental well-being and prevention agenda.

Key achievements for 2020-21 include:

-  The development and launch of the Sanctuary Service through our partner Hafal, which provides practical, therapeutic and holistic person-centred support to people at risk of a Mental Health crisis through the provision of a range of interventions in order to lessen hospital admissions and reduce risk of harm for people in their homes.
-  Review of Sanctuary and a move to direct access to the service.
-  The development of the Single Point of Access pathway and associated funding, which will help us move towards open access arrangements.
-  Capturing a range of intelligence, research and insight, including surveys with external organisations.
-  The creation of a draft Regional Dementia Strategy ready for wider consultation and development, including planning for the implementation of Dementia Care Pathway of Standards over 2021/22 and 2022/23.
-  A stepped care model for Psychological Therapies implemented
-  A map of Tier 0 therapeutic provision undertaken, planned to be developed into an online directory
-  The collaborative review of the Mental Health Practitioner posts, and subsequent design and implementation of the Mental Health Link Practitioner posts (a collaborative effort between the cluster leads and MH&LD)

CO-PRODUCTION AND ENGAGEMENT

The West Glamorgan Regional Partnership recognises the value and importance of meaningful co-production. The regional transformation of health and social care could not be successful without the involvement of people who share their insights, stories and

experiences. Making it work effectively and consistently across multiple organisations, services and groups is a significant challenge.

Our Regional Co-production Group includes members of statutory partners Swansea Council, Neath Port Talbot Council and Swansea Bay University Health Board as well as representatives from the region’s third sector organisations.

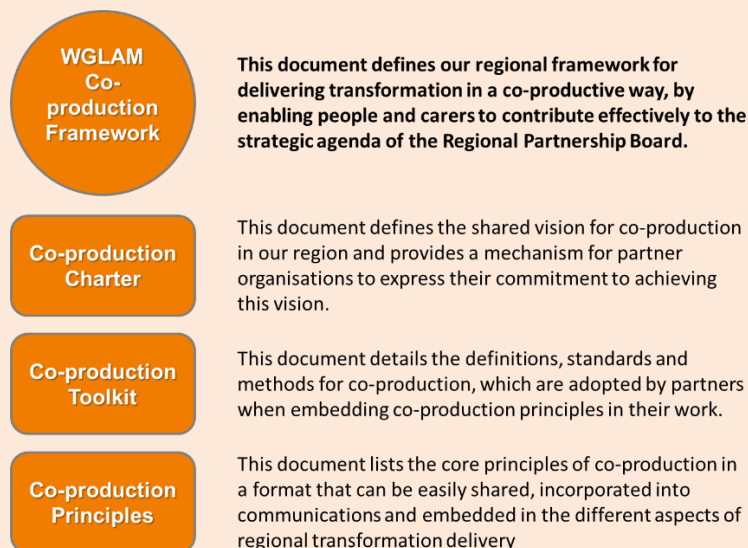
Our partners, service users and Carer representatives have developed a new framework for co-production. It includes a definitions, approaches, role descriptions and governance arrangements to help organisations to embed co-production in their usual ways of working. This is the first time our region has benefitted from a clear, consistent model that meets the local needs of our businesses and communities.

The foundation of this framework is a scale of co-production that is flexible to meet the challenges we face when dealing with specific issues ranging from the wording of a key message in a communication to the design, commissioning, delivery and evaluation of a new service. The more complex the issue, the more important it is that we use the right skills and principles of co-production in response:



The framework puts in place the ways of working that will help all parties work better together to plan and develop better products, services and information. It demonstrates how to apply this model within the partnership as part of our governance arrangements. It also references best practice and expert advice from trained Co-producers, as well as relating this approach to key principles of human rights and strength-based asset development.

This framework is a key part of a suite of documents that is open to anyone committed to achieving this ambition (see image below):



The significance of a mixed group of paid professionals from multiple organisations and volunteers from across our communities creating this suite of documents in the height of a pandemic can be considered a great success for the people of our region. The Partnership is continuing this good work by signing up to the charter and reviewing its processes to identify improvements that align with the principles of good co-production.

The benefits of this approach are set out below:

- 🌐 **Better outcomes for people** – co-production benefits our population in terms of delivering better outcomes. With the ‘voice’ of people and carers informing the development of our services, the results can include improvements in measurable outcomes and benefits for service users.
- 🌐 **Establishing more opportunities for community engagement** – creating new ways for the people in our communities to actively participate in regional transformation of health and social care.
- 🌐 **More effective professional roles** – a consistent framework for co-production will benefit professionals by helping them to be more effective in their roles and deliver better job satisfaction. As a result, working across multiple sectors and organisational boundaries will also be easier.
- 🌐 **Higher profile of ‘people’** – a big part of this change is raising the importance of the ‘voice’ of people and changing governance arrangements to provide a higher profile of our people and carers. Communities will also have a greater input into how funding from various sources will be used across the region.
- 🌐 **Better quality services** – organisations who provide services to the people of our region can benefit from more efficient and effective services, as a result of co-production in service design and service development. This is driven by a greater understanding of the roles of people and carers in helping to make health and social care services better.

Here’s a short video clip of Lee Ellery, Acting Chair of the West Glamorgan Co-production Group sharing his thoughts on the importance of working co-productively:



 <https://vimeo.com/585040899>

RPB Citizen and Carer Representatives' Commentary...

The first thing to acknowledge is that 2020-21 has been a tough year, and it's been difficult and challenging for carer and citizen representatives to play a meaningful role during the pandemic. That said, several positives have emerged, in particular the development and agreement of the co-production charter, framework and toolkit. You will see from the whole report that there are areas of work that have been really successful and some key quotes from citizens and carers are included to support this, however, as members of the Regional Partnership Board, it is difficult to see how at this level we are able to make a meaningful contribution to the wider programme of work.

Achievements

Volunteers act as an independent member playing a strategic role in embedding core values and principles which put the wellbeing of the user of services in the centre of reviewing, updating and developing new services. This includes focusing on enabling, facilitating, and supporting people so we work together to do "with all people"; rather than doing "for people" and giving people the opportunity to contribute to changing the way health and social services are run and developed.

It requires us as representatives to keep emphasising the need to take a rights-based approach to all the work that we do; and co-producing what matters to people rather than what matters to organisations. To do this takes time to build relationships, trust and time to know and to care what matters to people. Co-production cannot be rushed.

Over the past two years, a group of co producers have supported and developed the co-design of a charter, a framework and toolkit for co-production. Now begins the difficult part of taking it from the pages of a document and changing it to tangible action which will see a change in the way services are delivered to all sections of our society.

And this is where we can all play a part - if you want to find out more about how you can be supported and find out how co-production can change the way health and social care can change, please contact us, and see how your experiences can help develop better service for the future.

Challenges

It is particularly challenging as an individual to represent all types of users' and carers' experiences as so many different people engage with health and social care with many different and varied experiences. Indeed, the term 'citizen' is exclusive as it omits refugees and asylum seekers whose wellbeing also needs to be considered by RPBs.




Due to the volume of work and meeting papers, there is a need for carer and citizen representatives to be properly supported to take part in board meetings and have their contributions valued. The re-introduction of the Citizens' Panel is welcomed.

There is a need to recognise and address the need to increase the support required for carer and citizen representatives to play a meaningful role in the work of the RPB and contribute productively to meetings.



“Everything is too fast. I don’t live and breathe RPB. I generally don’t keep up with the changes. I don’t know how it actually can improve people’s lives as it all feels to be about the organisations and not really about the people – it feels so removed from what I am hearing from people on the ground.

Some key thoughts are:

-  *There needs to be a space to allow real issues to come to the table in the RPB – real issues that are happening to the people from the people’s perspective.*
-  *The voice of the people needs to be much, much stronger and mean more.*
-  *To authentically include and co-produce with the people, things really need to slow down.*

There are many more that I could mention also!”

Representative - Regional Partnership Board



“As a volunteer I can act as an independent member playing a strategic role in embedding core values and principles which puts the wellbeing of the user of services in the centre of reviewing updating and developing new services. This includes focusing on enabling, facilitating, and supporting people so we work together to do “with all people”; rather than doing “for people” and giving people the opportunity to contribute to changing the way health and social services are run and developed.

This is not by complaining when things go wrong, but trying to create an open space to ask what if we do things differently. It requires me as a representative to keep emphasising the need to take a rights-based approach to all the work that we do; and co-producing what matters to people rather than what matters to organisations.

To do this takes time to build relationships trust and time to know and to care what matters to people. Co-production cannot be rushed”.

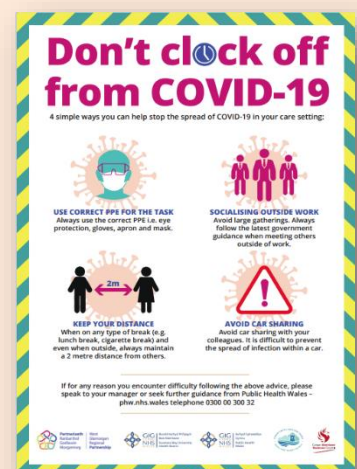
Representative - Regional Partnership Board



COMMUNICATIONS

The West Glamorgan Regional Partnership's dedicated Communications and Engagement Officer has delivered the following during 2020-21:

- 🌐 The quarterly West Glamorgan Regional Partnership e-Bulletin continued to be produced, although its focus shifted primarily to matters relating to the pandemic.
- 🌐 Coordinated the ongoing development of the new West Glamorgan website in partnership with the West Glamorgan Coproduction Group and Swansea Council's Web Development Manager. The Shaw Trust have been commissioned to undertake an accessibility assessment and work is ongoing to act upon the recommendations.
- 🌐 Supported individual work streams with targeted communications activities. This has included the development and dissemination of all branded training and promotional materials for the 'Hospital 2 Home' service, and the associated third sector 'Community Well-being Support Service', as well as an appeal for volunteers to provide practical care settings experiencing difficulties due to staff shortages.
- 🌐 Continued oversight and management of the West Glamorgan Twitter account - [@WGLamPship](#) and the partnership's [Flickr](#) and [Vimeo](#) pages.
- 🌐 Supported the planning and promotion of regional events, including 'Possibilities for People' engagement sessions and the new Carers Liaison Forum.
- 🌐 Collaborated with colleagues in the Councils for Voluntary Service to develop a suite of branded materials as part of the [West Glamorgan Volunteering Support](#) project. These will be launched in the summer of 2021.
- 🌐 Produced weekly summaries of the matters discussed at the Community Silver Command group meetings for dissemination among partner organisations. A weekly highlight report outlining key actions and decisions was also produced at the request of the SBUHB Gold group.
- 🌐 Worked closely with communications leads from the partnership's statutory organisations, third sector, colleges and universities and South Wales Police. A multi-agency communications cell was established during the early stages of the pandemic and met weekly to ensure all messaging was consistent and clear. Deliverables included the development of printed resources for help and support circulated to every home, social media collateral and joint media releases in partnership with the local press (e.g. www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/coronavirus-swansea-neath-port-talbot-19413005). The West Glamorgan Communications Officer also joined forces with Public Health Wales and other regional colleagues to create materials



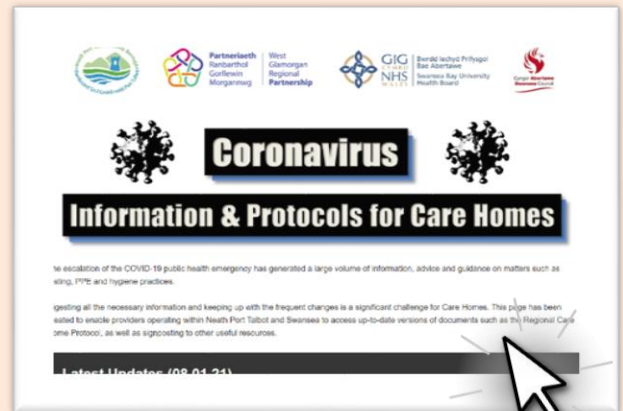
highlighting the importance of IPC practices to be displayed in care settings (pictured).

- Early on in the crisis, a decision was made to establish [a dedicated web page](#) featuring all the latest Covid-19 related information and guidance. Care homes were bombarded with new information, instructions and continuous updates, which they struggled to read and digest whilst also managing the day to day running of their homes. The web page has become a valued ‘one stop shop’ for all things relating to care homes in the context of the pandemic, and feedback gathered from managers via the comments box at the bottom of the page has been hugely positive:

“A great idea – please send my thanks to the creators”.

“I would say this website is a much better way of communicating latest guidance and changes relating Covid-19, rather than regular emails”.

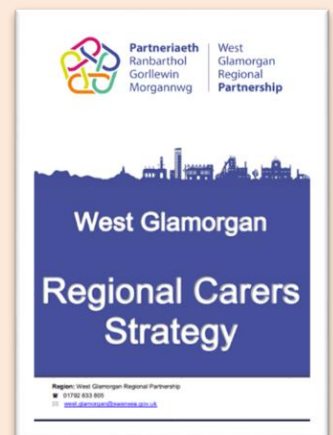
An [additional page](#) was also created to act as a catalogue of ideas for activities care homes may find useful to keep residents entertained during periods of lockdown.



CARERS

The West Glamorgan Regional Partnership’s dedicated Carers Development Officer has played an instrumental role in co-ordinating the achievement of the following in 2020/21:

- West Glamorgan Regional Carers Strategy** – The COVID-19 pandemic meant that the engagement events planned for 2020 could not go ahead as we’d hoped. As a result, we were not able to take the approach to co-production of our regional strategy that we have envisaged, but we adapted to ensure that we could continue to deliver a document that was based on the voice of carers and addressed the needs that had been evidenced through the Carers Partnership Board.
- West Glamorgan Carers Liaison Forum** – The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for more regular and consistent engagement with carers. The Carers Partnership Board approved the establishment of a new regional forum to strengthen ongoing co-production activities to implement the Carers Strategy.



A planning group was established and led by carers who organised a series of workshops to establish the Values, Vision and Aims of the Forum. The workshops were delivered by Dynamix with illustrations by Laura Sorvala (see example below) and were commended for their inclusive approach. The Forum has already met a number of times and will continue its development in 2021/22.

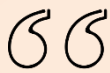


- 🌟 **Vaccination roll out to unpaid Carers** – The Carers Partnership Board including third sector partners supported Swansea Bay UHB to share the issues for unpaid Carers and were involved in developing the communications and monitoring the progress of the roll out to unpaid carers. Feedback received indicated that this prior involvement in planning made the process really simple and clear to understand for Carers.

- 🌟 **Carers Sub Programmes** – In 2020/21, the Carers Partnership Board continued to co-ordinate two separate funding schemes for carers; the ICF Carers Programme (£200,000) and the Welsh Government Carers Programme (£129,000). The schemes that were approved for funding contributed to the national priorities for carers with a particular focus on projects that support:
 - 🌟 Breaks for carers (respite)
 - 🌟 Raising awareness and providing information & advice
 - 🌟 Identifying and recognising carers.

Case Study: Male Carers Support Group

Swansea Carers have received funding to provide male Carers with one to one support and group sessions. This project promotes the needs of male Carers to the wider community and organisations, links them up within other groups and provides one to one and group support on a practical and emotional level.



"If it was not for you, I don't know what I would do.

Speaking to you helps, I feel able to speak freely. Honestly, I think I would have done something stupid if you were not around to talk to".

Feedback from a Male Carer



Case Study: Transition Link Support Worker

NPT Carers' Service received funding for the provision of a dedicated transition link support worker, supporting parents caring for children going through transition. This post runs alongside the current parent and Carer provision that works with parents of children aged 14 and under, while this project focused on those 14+ who were starting the transition process.



"Good to know there is support out there, if needed. As a family we feel it is our responsibility to look after our daughter, but to know there is someone we can contact to help and communicate these concerns, and hold discussions that will help plan for our daughter's post-16 care and needs are reassuring. It is good to know we can count on the Carers' Service for information and advice."

Quote from a mother of a child going through the transition process



Commentary from Carers:

As highlighted on page 7, Carers across the region reported feeling overlooked and consequently overwhelmed during the Covid-19 pandemic. Valuable lessons have indeed been learnt, and work is underway to develop a more targeted and robust approach to crisis management going forward:



"Carers have had to become self-sufficient - we've had to develop more skills which are not usually part of our caring role because of the reduction of services and support during the pandemic.

Communication is a challenge and Carers feel that they must battle to get support because demand for services is high. There is decreased capacity and increased workloads for statutory staff, which means Carers can only access crisis support.

I feel part of a productive process where I feel change is possible, however it still feels as if we're targeting Carers wellbeing after the stress has set in rather than preventing deterioration in wellbeing in the first place. We have a Carers Strategy but the real test will be whether we see better outcomes and improvements in Carers' wellbeing across the region."

Chris O'Malley - Vice Chair of the Carers Partnership Board



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Children and Young People [CYP] were severely impacted during the pandemic as emergency responses affected education, community services and as well as health and social care services directly supporting some of the more vulnerable children and young people. Our regional response has included:

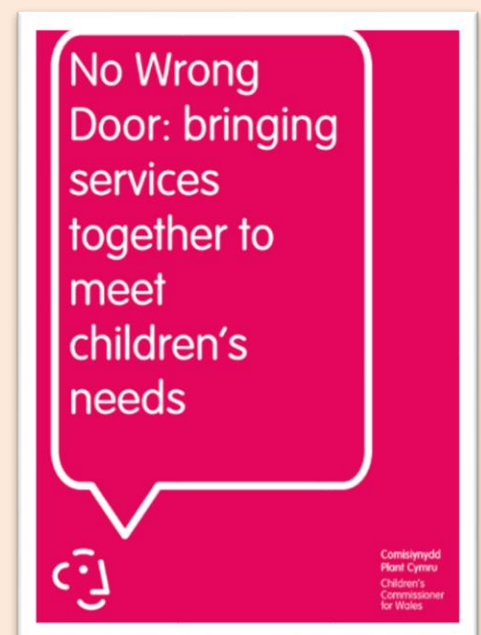
- 🧩 Rapid response of Children and Family Services to lockdown requirements;
- 🧩 Adopting a risk-based approach to safety and well-being of CYP;
- 🧩 Maintaining placement stability for Looked After Children [LAC];
- 🧩 Collaborative working between social services, health and education;
- 🧩 Use of virtual platforms to continue delivering vital services and support to CYP and families during lockdown;
- 🧩 Strong focus on staff well-being and staff engagement including senior leaders keeping in contact with front line staff directly supporting CYP.


In addition, a number of key recommendations and drivers for regional transformation were identified and reviewed during the year including:

- 🧩 **The Regional CYP Strategy** – through the pandemic, it became clear that our regional transformation approach on CYP needed to be reviewed and a new approach taken to provide focus and direction to the relevant services. This strategic approach would be shaped through a regional strategy and associated action plan, which would define our vision, mission, principles and outcomes for the region. Importantly, this strategy will be driven by the ‘Voice of the Child’ as we embed co-production principles in our approach to engaging and listening to children and young people. The new Regional CYP Strategy will be a key deliverable of the new governance arrangements in 2021/22.

- 🧩 **‘No Wrong Door’ Approach** – the Children’s Commissioner for Wales issued the [‘No Wrong Door: bringing services together to meet children’s needs’ report](#) in June 2020 which included a number of recommendations for regional transformation via the RPBs. The report concluded that regions are not yet fulfilling their potential in bringing together health, local authority and third sector services to transform children’s experiences. In most areas, children and their families still need to navigate complicated systems and multiple sources of help. They are often bounced between services who cannot agree who is responsible for their care.


The RPB responded with an outline of the planned actions in response to each of the recommendations from the ‘No Wrong Door’ report. Outstanding and continuing actions will be integrated into our transformation programme for CYP.



-  **Delivery of CYP programme requirements** – a number of important challenges were identified during the year which will form part of a planned programme of transformation for CYP services across the region. These include developing safe accommodation for CYP with complex needs, implementation of the new national NEST/NYTH Framework for Mental Health of CYP, and plans for the upcoming Additional Learning Needs [ALN] Act provisions due in September 2021.




It also became clear that other transformation programmes had specific requirements for CYP (such as Young Carers initiatives or impacts of housing, health and social care transformation). We understand that not all programmes can effectively deliver “all age” initiatives without collaboration with CYP or their representatives. We are in the process of establishing our new governance arrangements to ensure that we move forward with a clear understanding of how these various requirements will be implemented with appropriate consideration for the needs of CYP.

There are some services which require regional integration and coordination whilst being delivered to meet local needs and standards. These include:

-  **Multi-Agency Placement Support Service [MAPSS]** - this service provides therapeutically informed consultations and interventions for care experienced children, their Carers, families and social welfare teams. The team promotes placement permanence, reparative parenting, therapeutic intervention and also step down from residential, Independent Fostering Agency [IFA] and Looked After Child [LAC] status. Sometimes this requires a focus on facilitating transition to a new placement when a change is inevitable. The team also supports school transition, educational stability and understanding of developmentally traumatised young people's needs. The team receives referrals from across the West Glamorgan Partnership area.

MAPSS is primarily orientated to preventing placement breakdown and maximising therapeutic understanding and gain for young people and carers, rather than a crisis management service. However, MAPSS strives to provide expertise and be as helpful as possible in a range of difficult circumstances. Multi-disciplinary team meetings are held weekly to discuss referrals, consultations, care and therapeutic support plans and ongoing cases, these meetings are led by the lead Clinical Psychologist and Team Manager. They are supplemented by individual and group supervision and reflective practice sessions.

Achievements include:

-  The team has consolidated its ethos and ways of working (details available on request).
-  193 new consultations were undertaken in 2020-21, as well as 1317 client sessions (virtual and in person).
-  The team has provided consultations and formulations leading to contribution to case planning, writing trajectories, placement matching proformas, supporting transitions between placements and services/teams, support to access Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services [CAMHS], preventing placement breakdowns, transition support and contributed towards placement stability and security.

- 🌈 A number of children were supported to leave residential care homes into a more suitable placement, such as foster care.
- 🌈 The team has also supported children to move back to the area from an out of county placement and also to kinship care.
- 🌈 The team believe significant cost avoidance has been achieved through promoting greater stability and through the provision of in-house expertise and intervention.



“MAPSS has been able to support carers in understanding the worries and risks / behaviours shown and has worked with O to allow her to accept and understand her childhood at a pace that was right for her.

The work that MAPSS was able to do with the Carers was extremely beneficial. O was able to spend time with them and build up a positive relationship - this allowed them to see that they were capable and just needed more confidence in the care they gave.”

Feedback from a Social Worker



🌈 **Working Together** – this service provides support to vulnerable families with complex issues, and where there may be a possibility that a child or children could be taken into care. Support has included working directly with families referred to the service using a range of approaches from financial support to face-to-face home visits to providing resources that help families and sharing best practice / lessons learned across services.

Achievements include:

- 🌈 This service has received 318 referral throughout the year and supported 294 new children and their families to receive intensive community support.
- 🌈 25 children have accessed the hub for respite, providing 91 nights of respite.
- 🌈 The service has received good feedback from parents who have received interventions from the teams.




“Through Covid-19 you guys were amazing. I honestly don’t know how we would have coped without your support, without any family nearby.





After everything I had been through in my marriage it was so nice to see people believed I was on the right path. Having the right support. Knowing that I was getting something right. I was never very good receiving compliments but I’m trying, I’m getting better at it!”

Feedback from a mother who engaged with ‘Working Together’



 **Adoption Therapeutic Service [ATS]** – this service provides therapeutic support to adopting families who require help following the adoption process. Support has included virtual Therapeutic Parenting sessions, adoption support groups, and development of resources and tools.

Achievements include:

-  The service has offered pre-placement and post placement-support. There were 70 initial consultations undertaken throughout the year, which led to 791 follow up sessions with professional, fosters carers, directly with children, adoptive parents, and whole family groups. 39 reflective consultations have also been offered.
-  Support groups have taken place throughout the year, and 18 families have been involved.
-  Therapeutic parenting courses have taken place, and 19 adoptive households have attended.
-  The service matched 62 children in the year. Of these, 24 received a service from the therapeutic team in relation to an initial consultation in order to support either the child's social worker or foster carer in the transition of to the adoptive family.



“Having this conversation 1:1 has really helped - much better than reading a book. I’m surprised how much I’ve been able to learn and understand. Seeing the slides really helped and brought it home to me what my boys have been through.”

Feedback from a participant of the Therapeutic Parenting course



Case study: The Penderri Young Peoples Wellbeing Project

The Penderri Young People’s Wellbeing Project [PYPWP] is a partnership between the Penderri GP Cluster and Swansea Council for Voluntary Service [SCVS], and has received funding that offers a brief intervention service that is integrated within primary care supporting young people aged 9 to 17 years with their emotional wellbeing. The project also extends support to a young person’s family/carers should their needs be identified as having an impact on the young person, or if they require guidance on understanding and managing the child’s needs.



“As a family we have felt that you actually listened to us and taken the time to understand our needs and actually put us first. You have been able to identify in a short time what our strengths and weaknesses are and have helped us so much.”

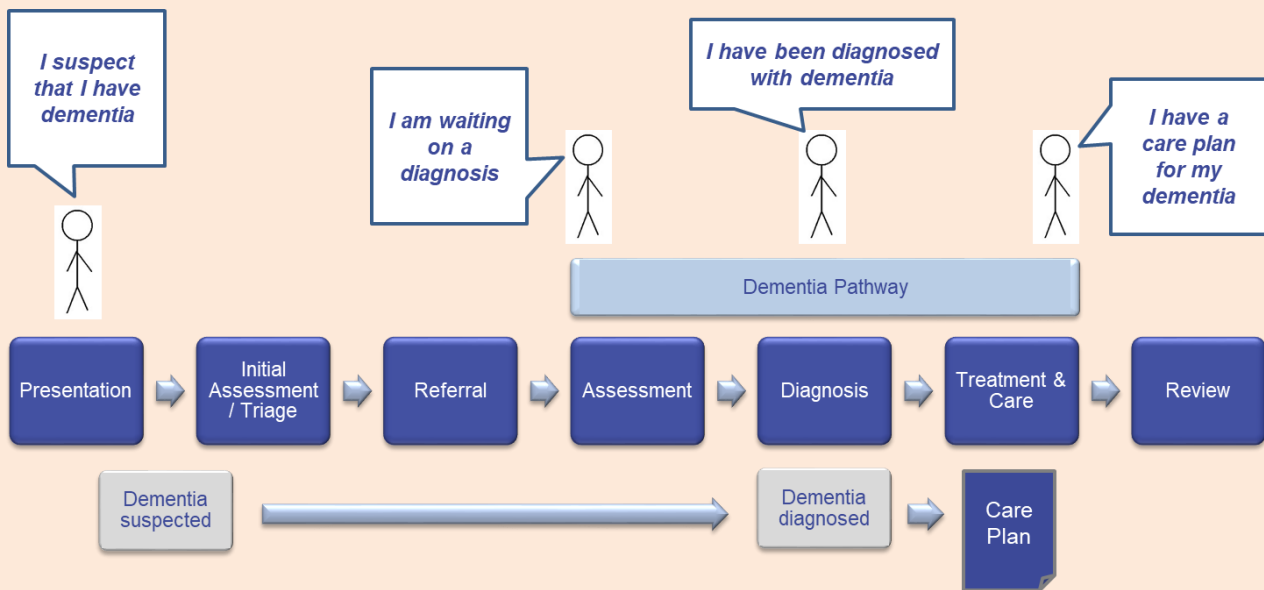
PYPWP Service User Quote



DEMENTIA

Our regional approach to transforming dementia services will be defined through the creation of a new Regional Dementia Strategy. This strategy demonstrates our commitment to significantly improving the quality of life for people living with dementia and their Carers, through more effective and targeted service provision. Insight for our regional approach has been taken from a range of activities, sources and the beginnings of a co-productive approach to identifying our transformation actions and priorities.

Our approach will focus on an integrated, multi-agency response to the dementia journey (otherwise known as the Dementia Diagnostic Pathway, see below):



Our strategic approach will cover the implementation of a number of important actions and deliverables, such as:

- 🌐 Implementing and building on the recommended actions from the Dementia Action Plan for Wales;
- 🌐 Implementing the Dementia Pathway of Standards as part a two year, nationally-led programme of change driven by Public Health Wales;
- 🌐 Creating a single integrated regional pathway for dementia that covers from pre-diagnosis (recognition and identification) through to end-of-life;
- 🌐 Mapping and identifying opportunities for further funding and project developments to support people with dementia and their families.

A number of dementia schemes have received investment via the ICF dementia fund. Here are a few great examples:

Community Hub (Me, Myself and I)

- 🌐 The services within the hub were designed to reach out to people of all ages that are living with dementia, with or without a diagnosis. Through the development of existing networks and partnerships, they reached people living in the community and received referrals from colleagues in health,

local authority and other private and third sector organisations. They also promoted their services and have been successful in connecting with people via the webpage, social media accounts and community involvement. Through a trained workforce and volunteers, they were able to adapt and tailor the service to meet the needs of the individual, ensuring at all times that, they were delivering a person-centred service.

- 🧩 Over the year, 40-65 people engaged on a weekly basis, utilising a blended approach including via telephone and video calling.
- 🧩 30 individuals participated in 'letterbox chats' and weekly visits took place with a core group of 10 people. The 'letterbox chats' lessened as people joined the centre for 'friendship afternoon' and 'day break' instead.
- 🧩 From 1st August 2020, 15-20 people have been supported each week. Activities have included walking, dancing, balloon badminton and armchair exercises.

Sporting Memories – Ospreys in the Community

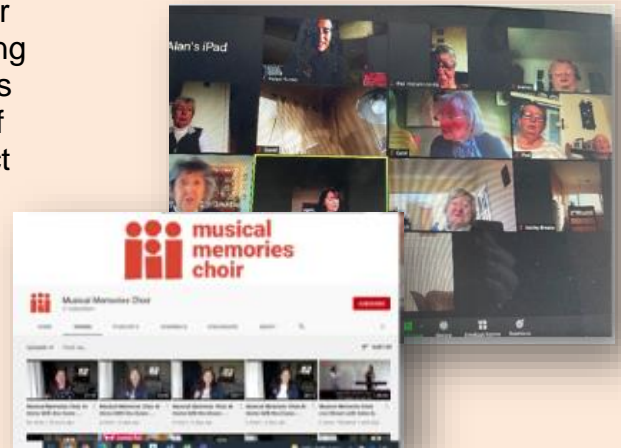
- 🧩 The project brings people with dementia together to share memories, connect with people in similar situations and improve their physical and mental wellbeing through physical activity. This was done within local communities, using a proven methodology, talking advantage of existing networks, structures and facilities that are available to the Ospreys in the Community and their social value partners across West Glamorgan Regional Partnership footprint.



- 🧩 This project collaborated with the charity Sporting Memories. The organisation has internationally recognised tools and resources that support people with dementia through sporting conversations. They harness the collective power of sport to engage people in a conversation, and then use this initial engagement as a vehicle to encourage participants to take part in appropriate physical activity. Deliverables have included:
 - 🧩 55 people were supported to set up and use social media accounts regularly.
 - 🧩 63 people registered to the project, all of whom are contacted in one way or another.
 - 🧩 Over the year, volunteers have helped to deliver 74 zoom sessions, plus holding weekly phone calls with individuals.
 - 🧩 Held 95 zoom activity sessions with a total of 773 participants.
 - 🧩 Facilitated WhatsApp groups with a total of 26 members.
 - 🧩 Opportunities for 1898 'sporting memories' chats and conversations across the 12 months.
 - 🧩 [We find other ways - YouTube](#) – This is an example of a lockdown Zoom quiz.
 - 🧩 [SM Episode 5 - YouTube](#) – This lovely video highlights the benefits of Sporting Memories for those who have engaged with the project.

Musical Memories Choir

🎨 The Red Café has received funding for their Musical Memories choir ‘on the road’ to bring people living with dementia and their Carers together to experience the many benefits of singing, as well as allowing them to connect with people living through similar experiences. The choir was established in 2014 and now has around 150 members. Virtual choir sessions were also held during lockdown via the dedicated [YouTube channel](#).



“Thank you and your team, the first time we played your CD and Mum was singing and conducting, my eyes filled with tears. Happy tears.”

Quote from Family Member of Musical Memories Participant



OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD APPROACH (ONA)

Our Neighbourhood Approach [ONA] is a community-led transformation project intended to encourage the provision more care in community and home-based settings. The service model for this project is focussed on developing an asset-based approach with the aim of encouraging people to support each other within communities. ONA was initially rolled out in areas of three clusters - Cwmtawe, Llchwyr and Neath.



Activities within ONA have proven themselves to be essential and effective within context of the pandemic. Covid-19 shone a light on issues within our communities (such as loneliness and growing Mental Health challenges) and offered a renewed perspective. This learning is being taken forward and utilised to adjust and improve the project. ONA continues to build on the asset-based and strengths-based approach, in order to support people in communities to support each other and build on aspects such as the volunteer effort and community champions.


During the Covid-19 pandemic, the programme was also extended across the region, as the RPB was able to divert resources from elsewhere to support the emergency response. This highlighted that the project would add value if applied on a regional basis, using the smaller pilot areas as a model for future developments and focussing on activities which can help alleviate pressures on health and social care.

The key areas of the programme that progressed in 2020-21 were:

Early Help Hubs in Swansea: The structural transformation was close to completion pre-Covid, however there was a significant impact on embedding into Early Help Hubs and co-located multiagency teams. The remit of Hub staff therefore changed in order to prioritise cases to focus on the most vulnerable children and young people during the pandemic. Swansea Council's approach to prevention is co-developed and delivered by a wide range of partners, including third sector organisations through its Early Help Hubs. The first three of the five co-located Early Help Hubs, launched in April 2020, have been well received by partners and families. They benefit from multi-agency staffing and use the Signs of Well-being framework to inform 'what matters' conversations at the front-door. There are indications, despite the challenges to implementation of this new service due to Covid-19, that the Early Help Hubs have been effective in redirecting people to where help is most needed, and where appropriate, preventing escalation to statutory services.

Local Area Coordination [LAC]: Local Area Co-ordinators in Swansea and Neath Port Talbot walk alongside individuals, helping to make connections and building local relationships, as well as developing long-term community resources and assets. Provision was scaled up in 2020-21 to support the pandemic response.

Here is one example of the work they are doing within communities:

-  John was diagnosed with a Learning Disability as a child and attended a school for children with additional needs. He was also involved in a road traffic accident in his twenties, which resulted in significant brain injury and further physical disabilities. John spent a great deal of time in hospitals, adult residential homes and adult foster care. He is now able to live in his own flat.

As a result, of his past experiences John is fiercely independent and reluctant to seek help when he needs it. It took Local Area Coordinator Tara a long time to build a trusting relationship with John and get him to a place where he feels in full control of his life but still able to access support.

Over time and with John's full consent, Tara has been able to work alongside John to tackle some of his problems. This has included contacting services and professionals such as Occupational Therapy and Social Services. Tara has also helped John to access all the support he is entitled to in terms of Welfare Rights. John trusts Tara to act in his best interests and as a result he has found a better balance within his life.


The support from Tara is a blessing... other people just do for them, whereas Tara does what you need, and she will come and see me. I like to think that I am a little bit better than what people can see me like... I like to do or try, even if it might take a little bit longer to do things."


John – Local Area Coordination Service User


Community Development in Neath Port Talbot and Swansea: SCVS and NPTCVS scaled up their approach to the pandemic response, building on the strengths of communities. They organised staff into GP cluster areas with staff reassigned to crisis-focussed roles. Cluster area maps were completed, which held information about local services, available support from the third sector and useful information to keep residents connected within their communities. With this information, staff were able to respond quickly to individuals who were looking for support, be it help with shopping, prescription collection, emotional support or looking for ways they could help others by volunteering their time.


In Swansea, **SCVS Neighbourhood Development Officers** made a proportion of the ONA grant available to community groups within the area. Groups were invited to pitch ideas in order to access funds, with members of the community making up a panel to ask questions and make decisions regarding allocation of funds. Community groups were required to ensure that their idea improved community cohesion and took Covid-19 safety measures into account.

Some examples included:

-  **Eagle's Nest Men's Shed** were awarded funding for wood turning equipment and a contribution towards a new shipping container to enable the group to expand. The Men's Sheds initiative aims to improve the mental wellbeing of men.

-  **Penllergare Willow and Thicket Ponds** were awarded funding to develop a wildlife area to invite local community groups to visit and get involved in developing and learning more about wildlife. The project is delivered by volunteers.

-  **Friends of Melyn Mynach Park** were awarded £500 for litter picking and gardening equipment for their volunteers to make the park a more pleasant place to visit for the local community.

-  **Swansea Music Art Digital** were awarded £990 towards their Digital Collaboration project with young people. This is intended to improve wellbeing following the pandemic.

Building Safe and Resilient Communities (BSRC) in Neath Port Talbot: This programme was paused to focus on critical aspects of social care, however the 'Safe and Well' service was delivered, which offered practical help and support to those who were isolating. This involved coordinating street champions, recruiting volunteers, and linking in with the third sector to respond to the community-based needs of high-risk individuals. 448 people were supported through this service, including the collection and delivery of medication, dog walking, emotional support, practical support and signposting. The Neath Port Talbot Council also refocused their response to provide more virtual support, this included the development of an emotional health and wellbeing website for young people. This provided access to information, tools and resources for young people and their families during lockdown and brought together links from education, health and the third sector.

The Innovate and Create Fund was a local flexible grant administered by Neath Port Talbot CVS (funded via the Transformation Fund) that aimed to improve the health and well-being within the local neighbourhoods of Briton Ferry and the Melin. A total of 21 projects were awarded £300k, with an additional £27k being levered in via match funding.

One recipient was the F.A.N Community Alliance: The Friends and Neighbours Centre. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the F.A.N Centre reached out and helped approximately 200 local people each week. The facility became a food distribution centre where hot meals, surplus food and emergency provisions were prepared, packed and distributed seven days a week to the most vulnerable in the community.



A volunteer at F.A.N Community Alliance prepares food ready for distribution.

CLUSTER WHOLE SYSTEMS APPROACH (CWSA)

Cluster Whole Systems Approach (CWSA) is a cluster-led transformation project. A cluster is a group of GP surgeries working together to pool resources and share best practice, to support the population to help them remain fit and healthy and to improve the way people are cared for if they become unwell. They work in partnership with the wider Swansea Bay University Health Board, dentists, opticians, community pharmacists and the voluntary sector as well as the local authority to develop and create a culture of health and wellbeing.




The CWSA's ambition is to increase the scale and pace at which clusters provide a greater focus on self-care and prevention, as well as facilitating the integration of health and social care systems at a local level, and the delivery of care closer to home. There is

an emphasis on accelerating change within the clusters, whilst ensuring that services remain effective and sustainable.

The project was intended to improve the sustainability of primary care, create more capacity for community-based approaches, and avoid the need for unnecessary hospital-based care.

CWSA has been rolled out across all eight clusters across West Glamorgan in a phased approach. The first cluster to go live was Cwmtawe, which was awarded funding separately and commenced in November 2018. The other seven clusters were introduced over time, with the last four (Afan, Bay Health, City Health, and Penderi) going live in January 2020.

The key strategic aims of this project focus on:







-  Improving health and wellbeing across the age spectrum, including a focus on facilitating self-care and building community resilience, and with targeted population groups dependent on cluster demographics;
-  Coordinating services to maximise wellbeing, independence, and care closer to home, including flexibility to coproduce, design, and implement services in partnership with the community; and
-  Testing out the vision and aims described within the ten-year plan, and implementing components of the overall model, demonstrating proof of concept and an ability to evaluate and redesign.

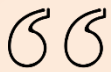
The Covid-19 pandemic meant that many of the projects within CWSA had to be adapted or paused. Across the region, efforts were focused on activities that would support the response to the pandemic and certain planned activities were unable to go ahead due to lockdown/physical distancing requirements.

It is important to note that due to the staggered roll-out of the CWSA project, certain clusters were affected more than others. By the onset of the pandemic, the Cwmtawe cluster had been “live” for over a year, whereas Afan, Bay, City and Penderi had been live for just two months. There were notable exceptions to the adaptation/pause of roll-out, which included the Extended Multi-Disciplinary Team model, Phlebotomy service redesign, and the digital triage and consultation system. These have all shown significant importance during the Covid-19 pandemic and in the ongoing context. For example, encouraging practices to engage in a digital triage and consultation model was key to the pandemic response from both a GP practice and patient perspective. The service facilitates electronic contact between patients and GPs, allowing them to interact in a way that is safe under the circumstances and benefits both parties. This approach was proven under the Cwmtawe cluster (with the service being implemented in November 2019), and roll-out was accelerated due to the pandemic. Two thirds of practices chose to taken advantage of transformation funds to adopt the askmyGP system, with others choosing alternative solutions with positive outcomes that are reflected in patient feedback.

The pandemic provided an opportunity to reflect on how services are run and how they could be further transformed, not only to address the immediate need, but to adapt and evolve to provide ongoing benefits.

Key achievements have included:

-  Implementation of askmyGP to all practices who wished to embrace the opportunity afforded by Transformation funding. askmyGP provides patients with an online portal to GP practices, including doctors and the wider practice, which allows clinicians to manage, where appropriate, diagnoses, signposting and prescribing without the need for a face to face review. The deployment of askmyGP was a major milestone as implementation was able to begin almost immediately with the pace of roll-out only governed by individual practice preferences. The system is proving truly transformational for both practices and patients.
-  Phlebotomy service redesign - The principles of a community-based service have been fully tested at a number of locations, and this has helped relieve footfall at hospital sites. The pandemic also highlighted the need to implement an appointment-based phlebotomy service, which had the dual benefits of reducing patient waiting times whilst allowing physical distancing measures to be managed effectively. Further digital solutions were supported included GP (electronic) Test Requests [GPTR] and an enhanced patient appointment portal.
-  The pandemic also highlighted a heightened risk for those who may be subject to domestic abuse. To this end, IRISi - a specialist domestic violence and abuse [DVA] training, support and referral programme for GP practices was piloted in two clusters with positive results. Extended roll-out forms part of 2021-22 plans.
-  Virtual Wards have played a key part in managing the impact of the pandemic. Multi-Disciplinary teams comprising health, social care and third sector professionals review and support vulnerable and at-risk patients through the pooling of knowledge and resources in a virtual environment. This has proved very successful in avoiding hospital admissions and providing improved care at home. Again, the success of this means that it forms a significant part of the strategy for 2021-22 and beyond.
-  The value of Transformation-funded MDT resource in GP practices and clusters was demonstrated during the pandemic. They enabled practices to adapt to the changing environment and utilise these additional specialist resources at their disposal to meet patient needs. Funding to a maximum of 12 months continues into 2021-22 for late adopting clusters, but 90% of the initial cohorts have been retained by practices at their own cost.
-  Adaptation of plans should also be recognised with Speech and Language Therapy and Physiotherapy providing online consultations, Audiology resources being redeployed to Covid-19 related work, and the Sexual Health team ramping up community based activity using their mobile units.



"I have found that my daughter who has Asperger's uses this service very well. Whereas before, she would not even phone the doctor"

"Sometimes my anxiety gets in the way of being able to express myself and my needs. This way I can think about what I need and type it out clearly in my own time without the added stress of being restricted for time and often feeling rushed by the doctor. Also, I like that I can choose which doctor I'd like to be seen by"

Feedback on the askmyGP service gathered via the Community Health Council



THIRD SECTOR

An ICF third sector grant scheme for large and small grants was administered in 2020-21, with support from the Councils for Voluntary Service in Swansea and Neath Port Talbot. 18 small grants and 8 large grant schemes were awarded to a variety of different third sector organisations. Examples of these are included throughout the report under the relevant sections, and the outcomes highlight the difference made to the lives of the people receiving services.

Commentary from the region's Councils for Voluntary Service...

Achievements

One of the most significant achievements has been the involvement of the third sector in the process of planning responses to the pandemic. The sector recognised the need to stand-down the structures at the start of the pandemic emergency, which did make contact points difficult, but the structures then put in place facilitated greater, more effective third sector involvement. It is clear from this reorganised structure of meetings that the community response became at the forefront of thinking within the RPB, and not solely focussed on health. One of the key achievements was the support provided to the RPB by the third sector in facilitating the Hospital 2 Home community discharge pathway. The past year has demonstrated that change can happen at pace when needed. The flexibility in making funding more easily accessible for the third sector has been positive and has helped the sector to adapt services quickly and effectively to respond to identified needs. The capital element of the Integrated Care Fund (ICF) was positive, well received and really made a difference. The sector also received continuation funding through a straight-forward process when it was most needed.

Challenges

The biggest challenge for the RPB was the pandemic itself and having to respond quickly to an emergency not previously faced by regional and local partnership structures. The consequent challenge was for the RPB to take on board reflection and learning in the reconfiguration of structures and ensure that there was an improvement in these, and the opportunity to facilitate more frequent communication with and involvement of the third sector.



Third Sector representation in the wider work of the RPB

It was really important for the RPB to recognise the 'lost voices' - those in the third sector and in communities who would not normally have a communication channel to the RPB

structures. Whilst having to respond at pace and in standing-down its structures, Carer and community member voices became lost at their point of greatest need. It is clear that in some parts of the whole system, and the timing of some communication did not give partners and the wider sector a chance to respond or prepare for the impact of this on individuals in our communities. It is noted for this Annual Report however that the RPB is moving in the right direction and that the sector has had a part to play and has had a voice. Being a vehicle for regional consistency, especially where the third sector is involved (e.g. the volunteering recovery fund) the RPB has been a positive and welcome development.

HOUSING

Our regional approach to housing, health and social care transformation has changed a lot this year after we reviewed our governance arrangements. Prior to April 2020, there were two regional collaborative groups working to bring together stakeholders under this area of work:

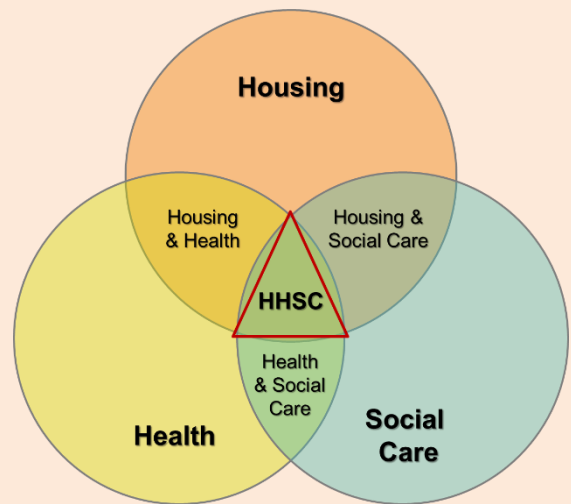
-  The Social Care, Health and Housing [SCH&H] sub group of the RPB, which focused on defining a regional approach to bringing these three sectors together to work in an integrated way on service delivery and co-ordination.
-  The Regional Housing Support Collaborative Group [RHSCG] which was established under the arrangements for the Welsh Government Housing Support Grant [HSG] scheme, which focuses on addressing homelessness in local authority areas.

As both of these groups involved many of the same stakeholders, similar themes of work and a common goal to work collaboratively across housing, health and social care, RPB approved proposals to align the two groups in a new structure.

The Regional Housing Partnership is the key decision-making group that will help us to define our strategic direction for housing, health and social care transformation (which now includes greater focus on supporting people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless). This new board will be responsible for developing a Regional Housing, Health & Social Care Strategy and associated action plan.

The Regional Housing Forum is our first regional forum to bring together people from across the region to help us understand and drive transformation of housing, health and social care. This will be an open forum which we encourage the people of West Glamorgan to participate in, especially where they have lived experience of housing-related services that have impacted on their health and wellbeing. We aim to embed the principles of co-production through this forum and the first few meetings have focused on appointing a Chair/Vice Chair and commencing stakeholder mapping to ensure we involve the right people and representatives.

Early work of the new Housing Partnership governance has focused on scoping and understanding what we mean by “housing, health and social care transformation”. This important distinction (what services and themes overlap all three sectors) will help us to ensure that we are focused on delivering the right changes to meet the needs of our communities and people. With this focus, we can ensure that funding is used appropriately (including the use of our Capital Programme) to achieve our regional ambitions.



INTEGRATED AUTISM SERVICE (IAS)

Western Bay Integrated Autism Service was launched on the 1st April 2019 on a phased basis, with full roll-out achieved by September 2019.

The small team consists of highly skilled professionals and support staff from health and social care backgrounds and covers Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend.

Our philosophy centres on working in partnership with autistic individuals, all sectors and the wider public to promote understanding around autism and acceptance of difference. Our aim is that through awareness raising and training, environmental barriers will be removed so that autistic individuals can achieve their potential in life.











We pride ourselves on our open referral system, which means people can self-refer for an assessment of autism or support and don't need to see a medical professional beforehand. However, we also accept referrals from professionals and others. Whilst there is a waiting list for diagnostic assessment, we are able to expedite some cases depending on circumstances.

Since our launch, we have forged excellent partnership relationships with many sectors across West Glamorgan and parts of Cwm Taf and include Department of Work and Pensions, Halo Leisure, Swansea University, a range of services across Swansea Bay University Health Board, teams across Children and Adult Social Care and voluntary organisations.

As with other public sector services, the Covid-19 pandemic has brought many challenges, but has also provided us with opportunity to be creative and flexible with how we deliver services.

We now offer:

-  Virtual advice hubs run on a weekly basis where people are offered a 30 minute appointment with our skilled support workers to discuss any autism-related queries
-  A rolling 6 week virtual post diagnostic support course to help people understand their autism diagnosis and what it means for them
-  Virtual and face to face diagnostic assessments
-  Bespoke assessments to identify autism-support needs
-  Bespoke support packages
-  Professional consultation and joint assessments
-  Virtual and face to face bespoke training for all sectors
-  Themed Social Forums for autistic adults – initially facilitated by members of the IAS, but with the view that these will be run co-productively with or entirely by autistic adults.





We are especially proud of specific achievements over the past 12 months, which include working in partnership with Swansea University Student Well-being service. A number of students were identified as undiagnosed autistic and on the verge of dropping out of their studies. We agreed to prioritise the 23 students referred in, all of whom received a positive diagnosis and are now able to access the relevant financial and practical support needed to help them complete their studies.

We have developed and delivered a specific training package aimed at teams across Adult Mental Health and Social Care services, which helps professionals to understand how they can tailor support for autistic adults who present with mental ill-health. We are particularly passionate to dispel the myths around autism and help professionals understand the female presentation as evidence suggests autism in females is often missed.





RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND IMPROVEMENT HUB


To help develop the approach to better co-ordinating research, innovation and improvement, each region across Wales was given a three-year grant via the Transformation Fund to develop Regional Innovation & Improvement (RI&I) Hubs to jointly support health and social care research capacity.

The Research, Innovation & Improvement Hubs are expected to:

-  Better coordinate and align the cluttered landscape of research
-  Evidence integration, new way of workings and quality-led approaches
-  Strengthen Research, Innovation and Improvement infrastructure
-  Provide better quality and higher value Research, Innovation and Improvement.

Each Hub is expected to do this by:

-  Providing a comprehensive and current overview of all R,I&I activity across the RPB area
-  Developing a coherent strategic analysis of this activity
-  Ensuring that leaders, partners and stakeholders are informed and engaged
-  Working with other regional hubs as a national network, with an emphasis on





- driving the adoption and spread of activity
-  Working with national bodies such as the Life Sciences Hub, Health Technology Wales and 1000 Lives Improvement.

Background to the West Glamorgan RI&I Hub

The West Glamorgan RI&I hub became functional towards the latter part of 2019-20, when the Hub's Manager and Data Analyst came into post in March 2020.

Year 2 commenced with a work plan to deliver on the objectives and targets agreed with Welsh Government for 2020-21, however the Covid-19 pandemic interrupted the work of the Hub. Its focus was realigned at the start of the pandemic, to support the emergency response.



The Hub has been supporting the region in many ways, but some key aspects of this work included:



-  collecting the lessons learned during the emergency
-  gathering data intelligence for Care Homes in particular to support the crisis and embed processes to continue this work post-emergency
-  developing the tool to support the RIEF
-  gathering research and evidence of actions taken across the world in support of the pandemic to review and analyse against our own response and provide other innovations that could potentially be adopted through the crisis or during recovery. For example, investigating different approaches to dealing with dementia care to inform the regional strategy; researching the ways that commissioning could be adapted into a regional commissioning strategy for complex care; identifying various components of the domiciliary care landscape; and providing a summary of the findings to inform new ways of working.

The Hub is supporting and will continue to have a major role in the development of a Regional Performance Framework. During the pandemic, the Hub developed key information sets that were previously collected in an ad-hoc manner between organisations. Using SMART thinking, the pooling of information was streamlined into one source of the truth. This supported the development of the RIEF, along with providing key commissioning-related data.

Whilst the purpose of the Hub is to support the regional work, it will use the national network of the RI&I Hubs to upscale and spread good practice where relevant and to share learning and knowledge where there are interdependencies and relational activity with partners. New and innovative models of working will follow a flow from localised improvement projects to being applied across Wales.

Some other highlights of the work the Hub has been (and continues to be) involved in include:

-  Determining the revised/newly published regional priorities. The Hub has supported the collation and analysis of the lessons learnt from the Covid-19 work streams across the region
-  Researching new ways of working and models of delivery for numerous work areas such as Care Homes, dementia and the voluntary sector

-  Researching different models of commissioning for complex care, both nationally and internationally
-  Supporting performance arrangements and developing processes for SMART management information to be shared with partners, including Covid-19 command meetings for the Health Board.