

Easy Read



Bwrdd Partneriaeth
Rhanbarthol Gwent
Gwent Regional
Partnership Board

Gwent Regional Partnership Board Annual report

What we did in 2023 to 2024

This document was written by the **Gwent Regional Partnership Board**. It is an easy read version of '**Gwent Regional Partnership Board – Annual report 23-24**'.

October 2024

How to use this document



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Words in **bold blue writing** may be hard to understand. You can check what the words in blue mean on **page 42**.



Where the document says **we**, this means **Gwent Regional Partnership Board**. For more information contact:

Email:

GwentRegionalPartnershipBoard@torfaen.gov.uk

Phone: 01495 761691



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About us



We are the **Gwent Regional Partnership Board**.

We want to improve the lives of people in Gwent.
We want to:



- Improve care and support.



- Improve health and **wellbeing**.

Wellbeing is feeling happy, healthy, and comfortable with life.



- Provide **person centred** care and support. **Person centred** means focusing on what each person wants and needs.



We work with many partners on our board. We want to make sure we share our resources and skills in the best ways.



We also make sure we work closely with other organisations, networks, and forums.

About this report



This report is about the work we did in 2023 to 2024.



We made an **Area Plan in 2023**. This plan was based on the needs of people of Gwent.



To achieve the goals in our Area Plan, we set up **7 strategic partnerships**. They are:

- Adult Strategic Partnership
- Carers Strategic Partnership
- Children and Families Strategic Partnership
- Dementia Strategic Partnership
- Health, Housing and Social Care Strategic Partnership
- Mental Health and Learning Disability Strategic Partnership
- Autism and Neurodevelopmental Strategic Partnership

Our work in 2023 to 2024

The Adult Strategic Partnership

What we want to do:



- Improve **wellbeing**.



- Support older people at home.



- Reduce waiting lists for support, appointments, and medical treatments.

What we did



We worked with local care homes and care providers. To make sure services are strong and continue to improve.



The **Community Connectors** service helped people find information and support in their local communities. There are community connectors in Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen.

The **Community Car Scheme & Befriending** service helped to:



- support people struggling to access transport



- and helped people to stay connected with others.



This is especially important in villages. The scheme connects people who are lonely and **isolated**.



Isolated is when someone is alone and not in contact with other people.



Over 60 thousand people were supported through the **Home from Hospital programme**. The programme supports people on their return home from hospital to support recovery.



4 **SMART spaces** have been set up in Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire, Newport, and Torfaen.



SMART spaces are places where people and staff can try out technology products designed to improve care and support. This will help people stay healthy at home longer.

The Carers Strategic Partnership

What we want to do:



- Help unpaid carers by giving them breaks, information and support.



- Make life better for young carers and young adult carers.

What we did



Our **Carers Hub and Spoke Model** service provided support, information and advice to unpaid carers in the community.



More than 1,500 carers used the service.



In 2023, 59 **HUG devices** were given to unpaid carers in Gwent. **HUG devices** are like soft toys. They provide comfort for people living with **dementia**.



Dementia is an illness that affects the brain. It makes it hard to remember, think and do things.



19 services and 1 employer have got the Carer Friendly status. This means making workplaces better for carers .



89 schools took part in the **Young Carers in School Programme**. 562 young carers got support.



Since April 2023, 579 people have had training on carers.



433 carers got small grants through the Small Grants Scheme.



Projects were created to help carers with **hospital discharge**.

Hospital discharge is the process that happens when a patient leaves hospital.



More than 3 thousand carers got a short break from their caring role.



Projects provided information, advice, and support to over 3 thousand carers.



We have a **Gwent Citizen Network Champion** who is an unpaid carer. Unpaid carers are part of the Carers Strategic Partnership. It gives carers a chance to have their say.

The Children and Families Strategic Partnership

What we want to do:



- Help children with complex needs. This means they need a lot of support.



- Support mental health and **wellbeing**.

What we did



We are creating a 4 bedroom home for children. It provides a safe place for children while their families get help to look at the best long term care plan.



We worked with parents, children, and organisations to improve **Neurodevelopmental** services for children and young people.



Neurodiverse means that people's brains work in a different way to others. Like Autism and ADHD. **Neurodevelopmental** services support **Neurodiverse** people.



There are 3 centres in Gwent that provide counselling, workshops, and therapy for children and carers.



The **Integrated Services for Children with Additional Needs (ISCAN)** team support children with extra needs.



They have meetings with health, social care and education professionals. To make sure every service a person uses works well together.



The **Family Intervention Team** uses a clinical psychology service to offer early mental health support. This service is available across Gwent.



The **Platform 4YP project** helps young people aged 14 to 18 years to:

- get involved in the community
- and get support.



We work with Welsh Government to raise awareness about **NEST/NYTH**. **NEST/NYTH** is a planning tool for Regional Partnership Boards. It aims to improve mental health and **wellbeing** services for children, young people and their families.



We are working with the Regional Youth Forum on a mental health campaign. This campaign was a result of the survey called Make Your Mark survey.

The Dementia Strategic Partnership

What we want to do:



- Help people living with **dementia** and their carers to have better lives.

What we did



Our health board follows the [Dementia Friendly Hospital Charter for Wales](#). The **Dementia Friendly Hospital Charter** is a **guide** to improve care for people with **dementia** in hospital.



We had feedback from patients about their experiences.



The hospital **dementia** action plan has been updated based on what is important to people.



We have been working on the **All Wales Dementia Care Pathway of Standards**.



There are **dementia** champion volunteers that offer support in hospitals.



Our **Dementia friendly network** raises awareness about **dementia** across Gwent.



They work with schools, colleges, and community groups to provide **Dementia Friends** sessions. These sessions help people learn:

- more about **dementia**
- how it affects a person
- what you can do to help people affected by **dementia**.



The **Dementia Friendly Network** collect views from people. People with **dementia** and their carers are involved in saying how **dementia** care services are run.



We are working to reach groups of people who can sometimes be left out of planning and decisions. This will help us understand what matters to them. And how to improve **dementia** care for everyone.



Improvement Cymru launched a campaign called the **Wales Listens Campaign**. The campaign aims to find out what is important for **dementia** care and support.

The Health and Housing Strategic Partnership

What we want to do:



- Work with organisations to improve housing.



- Make sure **Disabled Facilities Grants** are used in the best ways. **Disabled Facilities Grant** help towards the costs of making changes to your home.



- Work with partners to help homeless people.

What we did



We are preparing for a 4 year programme called **Regional Integrated Fund - Housing with Care Fund**. This programme will:



- Support housing for people who need a lot of support.



- Provide **intermediate care**. This means support for a short time to help you recover and be independent.



- Help make changes to homes to meet people's needs.



Monmouthshire County Council and Torfaen County Borough Council run the **Hospital to Healthier Homes project**. This project helps people leave the hospital sooner by making changes to their homes.



We provide support to other organisations to help them prevent homelessness and help people find and keep housing. We also support victims of violence across Gwent through using a grant to fund refuge support.



We developed free online training about **substance misuse** for housing staff. **Substance misuse** means taking drugs or drinking too much alcohol.



Housing is a big part of **wellbeing**. We started the **Housing Engagement and Learning Panel (HELP) Group**.



The **HELP Group** lets people share their housing experiences. They point out where services need to improve, and what is working well.

The Mental Health and Learning Disability Strategic Partnership

What we want to do:



- Have better understanding and awareness of mental health.

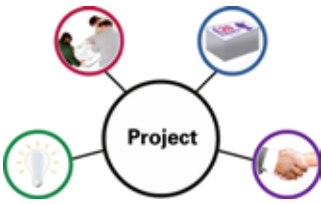


- Improve **wellbeing** and mental health for adults and children.



- Help people with learning disabilities live independently.

What we did



We are running lots of programmes and projects to improve **mental wellbeing**.



Mental Wellbeing is when you are happy and comfortable in yourself. You see yourself as being able to cope well.



The **Gwent Emotional and Mental Wellbeing Foundation Tier Programme** aims to improve access to resources that can support your mental health.



Melo Cymru is a website which provides self help resources for **mental wellbeing**.



It is used by many organisations like NHS 111. There are talks about making Melo available for the whole of Wales.



The **Gwent Connect 5 Training Programme** is designed to help **frontline workers** talk about mental health. For example, staff in health, care, police, and fire services.



We have free specialist support for people affected by **suicide**. **Suicide** is what we call it when a person ends their own life.

There are organisations that provide support like:



- **2wish** - supports people who have lost a loved one suddenly, including through **suicide** under 25 years old.
- **Jacob Abraham Foundation** - Since April 2023, they have provided support to people affected by a **suicide**, over 25 years old.



Since 2021, over 100 free **Suicide First Aid** training courses have been offered in Gwent. This training helps professionals, carers and volunteers recognise and respond to thoughts of **suicide**.



There are free online **Suicide First Aid** courses from Zero Suicide Alliance. These are available on the Melo website.



We are working with people who use mental health and learning disability services. We have created a **Coproduction Steering Group** to involve people in making decisions as equal partners.



It also helps people with lived experience to have their say.

The Autism and Neurodevelopmental Strategic Partnership

What we want to do:



- Provide quicker assessments and better access to services.



- Improve **neurodiversity** awareness and understanding.



- Help people live independent lives with more opportunities for paid work and training.

What we did



This partnership is co-chaired by people with lived experience and carers.



We are checking the how the **Autism Code of Practice** is working in Gwent. This is a guide that says how Autism services should be provided.



Our partners also oversee the **Neurodivergence Improvement Fund**. This is money to improve support for children and families.



Funding has been provided to ABUHB to support more assessments to help children and families.



5 local Third Sector organisations got money from this fund in 2023 to 2024 to provide information and support to children and families.



Support was offered to parents and carers. There were coffee mornings to build community support.



19 training days and 5 events were held to improve autism awareness among frontline staff. 387 people went to these events, including healthcare workers and police.



From July 2023, adult **ADHD** services became **independent** to offer their own assessment and treatment.



ADHD stands for **Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder**. It is a medical condition. People with **ADHD** find it hard to focus or control what they do. It can make daily tasks tough.



This means people could get direct referrals in January 2024. There was no need to go through the community mental health team first. This made the process faster and lowered waiting times.



Professionals took part in training and planning for making joint assessments.



We are working to improve support for children and families waiting for assessments.

Other areas of work

Gwent Citizen Network



After COVID, the Gwent Citizen Network started having meetings in person and online.



Now, the network has over 100 members. Members get weekly updates with information and advice. We are continuing to grow the network.

Coproduction Luncheons



We are planning in person events called **Coproduction Luncheons** in each Local Authority area.



These events give us a chance to meet people and work together better.



A group of people are helping to plan these events. The first event was in February 2024. After each event, members will get a newsletter with key points and next steps.

Decisions made together event



In May 2024, we had an event in Newport. The event showed how important it is to make decisions together.



Over 150 people attended from across Gwent, including organisations. People talked about what worked well. And where services need to improve.

Dewis



Dewis is a website people can use to find information and advice about **wellbeing**.



More people are now using Dewis to search for information and resources.

Dementia Friendly Gwent Network



There are now over 270 members in the network. Including professionals, volunteers, carers, and people living with **dementia**.



55 members went to the 2023 **Dementia Friendly Gwent** coffee morning.

Workforce and College Consortium



There was a new scheme to help students find work in the local authority.



There were 92 work placement applications in 2023 to 2024.



We work with Coleg Gwent to promote careers in health and social care.

Access to Medicine Course



We developed a new course with Professor Paul Edwards called **Access to Medicine**. This course is designed to support students who face barriers going into careers in medicine.



The first group of students started in September 2023.

Clinical Placement Programme



The **Clinical Placement Programme** started in September 2022.



It gives second year students 100 hours of work experience in hospitals. This year, 38 students from Coleg Gwent got work placements.

Micro Care



This programme helps local people become self-employed care workers. There are 25 micro carers listed in Monmouthshire's Micro Care Directory.



We have also received funding to create an online portal. This portal will make the process easier and better.



In July 2023, we started a **Micro Care Community of Practice in Wales**. This group meets every 2 months.

AskSARA



There are more people getting help through **AskSARA**.

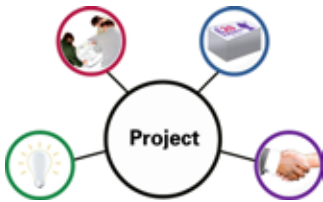


This is an online guide which provides information on products and equipment to make daily living easier.

Regional Integration Fund (RIF)



We use money from the Welsh Government to help improve services for people in Gwent. This is called the **Regional Integration Fund (RIF)**.



RIF funds programmes and projects to help people across Gwent with health and social care needs.



The funding has helped improve care services across Wales.

Capital Programme 2023-2024



The Capital funding helps to build and transform spaces and buildings, so communities can make the most out of them. We want to provide care closer to home and the Gwent Capital Programme funds several large and small projects to help support this work.

Assistive technology



Assistive technology is tools that help people do things they might find hard. Things like: Wheelchairs to help people move around, hearing aids to make sounds louder, screen readers to read text aloud.



The **Gwent RPB Assistive Technology Programme** uses technology to help people:

- improve **wellbeing**
- and be more independent.

Communication



We are working on better ways to talk to and involve people.



We have updated our website.



We are working hard to make sure our website is easy to use.



We have added support for speech, reading, and translation.



We share information about our work on social media.



It helps us get views from the people of Gwent.



Over the last year, we have had more followers on social media.

Working together

Forums



We are working with other organisations to use the **Social Value Forum Toolkit**.



The **Toolkit** helps us work together to provide services that help improve people's lives.



We want to support businesses that think about the needs of people and the community.



We are finding ways to use money to support voluntary services.



We have forums to support care providers and voluntary organisations. For example:

- Gwent Regional Domiciliary Care Forum
- Gwent Care Homes Engagement Forum
- Gwent Third Sector Forum

The Gwent Regional Innovation Coordination Hub



The **Gwent Regional Innovation Coordination Hub** was set up to improve how health and social care work together.



The hub was launched with a website to help people learn about it.



In 3 months, the hub has funded 9 projects to help improve services in health and social care.

What happens next



We will review our area plan. We will keep working on it through 2024 to 2025.

We will:



- Involve people in planning health and social care services.



- Improve how we measure our work.



- Reduce the time older people stay in hospital. Help them return home safely with the right support.



- Support children with lots of support needs and those in care.



- Find new ways to help people waiting for Autism or **neurodevelopmental** assessments and support with diagnosis.



- Continue helping people with **dementia** and their carers.



- Continue to find ways to solve staff shortages in health and social care.



- Work with partners to lower **isolation** and loneliness and help people feel included.



- Continue to work with other organisations in partnership.



- Support carers who need to take breaks.

Hard words

Assistive technologies

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ADHD

ADHD stands for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. It is a medical condition. People with ADHD find it hard to focus or control what they do. It can make daily tasks tough.

Dementia

Dementia is an illness that affects the brain. It makes it hard to remember, think and do things.

Hospital discharge

Hospital discharge is the process that happens when a patient leaves hospital.

Isolated

Isolated is when someone is alone and not in contact with other people.

Mental Wellbeing

Mental Wellbeing is when you are happy and comfortable in yourself. You see yourself as being able to cope well.

Neurodiverse and Neurodevelopmental

Neurodiverse means people with brains that work in a different way to others. Like Autism and ADHD. Neurodevelopmental services support Neurodiverse people.

Suicide

Suicide is what we call it when a person ends their own life.

Wellbeing

Wellbeing is feeling happy, healthy, and comfortable with life.

