

West Wales Regional Partnership Board Annual Report 2020 - 21



Contents

Foreword.....	3
Executive summary	5
1. West Wales Care Partnership and the Regional Partnership Board.....	6
2. Transforming and integrating care and support	9
3. Making a difference across our population.....	19
4. Research, innovation and improvement	29
5. A high performing, sustainable workforce	31
6. Continuous engagement and co-production	33
Appendix 1	36

Foreword

It is my great pleasure as incoming Chair of the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) to introduce the sixth Annual Report of the West Wales Care Partnership (WWCP).

This year has been one unlike any other, marked of course by the immense public health emergency presented by the Covid-19 pandemic which hit at the very start of the period covered by this Report. The commitment and dedication of all partners in responding to the crisis and ensuring that everything that could be done was done to address the unprecedented challenges we faced has been truly phenomenal. While clearly there are lessons to be learnt, I believe we should be encouraged by the way in which colleagues worked across disciplines and organisational boundaries to make decisions quickly and efficiently and, in so doing, protect and safeguard some of our most vulnerable citizens. I believe that structural arrangements supporting partnership working and an increasing culture of collaboration and trust across agencies made our position stronger than it would otherwise have been, and this bears testimony to the work we have undertaken since 2016 in building the WWCP. And those same strengths will be instrumental in helping us build a strong and sustainable recovery in the months and years ahead.

In many ways the pandemic also proved the worth of our various change programmes, notably those resourced through the Welsh Government's Transformation and Integrated Care Funds. In no small measure they enabled us to respond to the needs of people for whom lockdown meant isolation and increased need for support, through matching volunteers across our communities with calls for help, providing proactive calls to people on the shielding list, connecting people via technology and ensuring that vital clinical interventions could be done at home without the need for admission to hospital. In a world that has undoubtedly changed for ever, we now have an opportunity to reflect and mainstream approaches that worked in our everyday business moving forward. The extension of the Transformation Fund and ICF for a further transitional year is very welcome and this will enable us to further test our innovative models of care over the next twelve months and develop robust business cases for those we want to continue and make 'business as usual' when the funding period ends.

This foreword would be incomplete without paying tribute to the outgoing Chair of the West Wales RPB, Councillor Jane Tremlett, for her excellent leadership of the Partnership over the past two and a half years, which has been pivotal in laying the strong foundations on which I want us to build over the coming period. One of Jane's last actions as Chair was to commission externally facilitated development sessions for the RPB and senior leaders across the system and this provided a welcome and timely opportunity for us to reflect and to plan ahead.

2021-22 will be a crucial year for us as we continue to deliver on our existing priorities and take a detailed look forward to the future by completing our second Population Assessment, identifying need for care and support within our communities and this time supported by a comprehensive assessment of our local markets and their sustainability over the coming period. Both exercises will be key in setting our future direction, taking into account the impact of the pandemic and potential implications of 'Long Covid' within our population. I very much look forward to working with partners and citizens as we direct our ambition, energy and resources to developing and implementing the right solutions for West Wales.

I am determined that our experience and learning should be shared more widely as, across Wales, we continue to work collectively and at all levels to deliver the objectives set out in the Social Services and Well-being Act and confirmed within A Healthier Wales.

I hope you enjoy our Annual Report and I remind you that you can find much more information on the work of the Partnership on our website at <https://www.wwcp.org.uk/> or by contacting members of the Regional Partnership Unit, contact details for which are provided at the end of the report.

Finally, my personal thanks go to all members of the RPB and the wider partnership for their support and all their hard work in bringing about the considerable achievements presented in this report.



Judith Hardisty

Chair, West Wales Regional Partnership Board

Executive summary

The West Wales Care Partnership (WWCP) operates across the footprint of Hywel Dda University Health Board which includes the counties of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire. It oversees a wide-ranging programme of activity aimed at improving outcomes for people needing care and support and their carers. The Regional Partnership Board (RPB) brings senior leaders from across sectors, together with users and carers, to direct the Partnership's programme. This year has seen the appointment of Judith Hardisty from Hywel Dda University Health Board as Chair of the Board and Hazel Lloyd Lubran of Ceredigion Association of Voluntary Organisations as Vice Chair. Six years after the RPB was established, partners have also taken time to reflect on our progress and identify priorities and improved ways of working in the coming period.

In many ways Covid-19 has accelerated the pace of collaboration and innovation in the region, as partners have worked together to reduce its impact on some of the most vulnerable people in our communities. Programmes supported by the Welsh Government's Transformation Fund and Integrated Care Fund (ICF) have been instrumental in providing an effective, integrated response to the challenges faced over the period of the pandemic. Robust evidence of outcomes delivered across the region and the observations of independent evaluators will feed into sustainability plans for carrying forward those things that have worked beyond the transitional funding period, which ends in March 2022.

The Transformation Fund and ICF, along with other resources provided by Welsh Government such as funding to support discharge, have helped us to deliver new models of care and improved outcomes for different population groups including autistic people, children and young people, people living with dementia, people with learning disabilities and mental health problems, older people and those living with sensory impairment. We have also been able to invest further in support for unpaid carers, who play such a vital role in keeping family members and friends safe and well at home.

We are always careful to reflect the views and needs of citizens when developing new approaches and want to build on our ability to work meaningfully with people living in West Wales in our continued drive to innovate and embrace the very best practice from across Wales and beyond. The views of providers are equally important and, once we have emerged from the pandemic, we will seek to use our Innovations Forum to engage with those delivering care and support on the strategic and operational issues that matter. New capacity provided through the Research, Innovation and Improvement Coordination Hub (RIICH) will assist with this and help ensure that we upscale the things that work and adopt approaches that have been proved to be successful elsewhere.

Of primary importance in our continued quest for excellence is attracting people into the health and care sector and ensuring that people opting to work in this area are valued and are given genuine opportunities in terms of working conditions and personal and professional development. Through our regional workforce board, we will ensure that staff, who are our most valuable asset, are fully empowered and enabled to make a difference in the lives of those people we aim to serve.

1. West Wales Care Partnership and the Regional Partnership Board

The West Wales Care Partnership (WWCP) operates across the footprint of Hywel Dda University Health Board, which includes the counties of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire. It oversees a wide-ranging programme of activity aimed at improving outcomes for people needing care and support and their carers by transforming the way in which services are provided and developing a joined-up approach that spans preventative support, social care and community health services.

The Regional Partnership Board (RPB) brings together senior leaders from the NHS, local government and third sector, independent providers and users and carers. The RPB directs the work of the Partnership and in so doing, fulfils statutory duties introduced in Part 9 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. These include:

- Promoting the integration of key services such as those for older people, people with a learning disability, carers and children with complex needs
- Establishing partnership arrangements for specific services and pooled funding arrangements where appropriate
- Ensuring arrangements are in place to meet core statutory duties such as the provision of Information, Advice and Assistance and advocacy services

The RPB's membership was extended in 2019 and now includes representatives from education and children's services, housing and the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (WAST). This helps ensure that the programme extends across all population groups and means that we have the right people around the table to tackle a range of determinants of health and wellbeing across our communities.

Changes that took effect during the year included:

- The appointment in October 2020 of a new Chair, Judith Hardisty (also Vice Chair of Hywel Dda University Health Board) and Vice Chair, Hazel Lloyd Lubran (Chief Executive of Ceredigion Association of Voluntary Organisations). In agreeing these appointments, RPB members paid tribute to the former Chair, Councillor Jane Tremlett, and her leadership of the Board over the past two and a half years
- The resignation of one carer representatives, Margaret Allen in early 2021. We will be looking to expand our user and carer representation early in the new financial year, building on the considerable contribution already made by Margaret and other citizen representatives to the work of the Partnership

Current membership of the RPB is provided in Appendix 1 to this report.

Generally, the RPB meets 5 times a year. In 2020-21 meetings took place on:

- 11 May 2020
- 22 July 2020
- 29 October 2020
- 11 February 2021
- 18 March 2021

Due to Covid-19, all RPB meetings were held virtually this year. This has not affected the variety or robustness of discussions, which have ranged from the response to the pandemic and its anticipated impact, development of a regional Carers' Strategy, evaluation of externally-funded programmes and development of forward plans, implementation of our integrated winter plan, strengthening our focus on children and young people, implications of the new Code of Practice on the Delivery of Autism Services and the opportunities this brings for renewed focus on services for autistic people and their families. Practical benefits of virtual arrangements, such as partners not having to travel considerable distances to attend meetings, have become clear and we will be looking to retain and consolidate on these when we come to consider post-Covid operating arrangements.

Over the year we have continued to work closely with the three Public Services Boards in our region, focusing on areas of shared interest such as building connections within our communities and sharing data to inform respective programmes. We will continue to build on this in the coming year.

Agendas and minutes of RPB meetings are available to the public via the following link:

<https://www.wwcp.org.uk/west-wales-regional-partnership-board-agendas-and-minutes/>

In the Autumn of 2020 externally facilitated development sessions were held for members of the RPB and the Integrated Executive Group. These provided an opportunity to review core aims and purpose, revisit priorities, assess effectiveness and impact and identify areas for improvement. Members felt that partnership working had matured considerably over the five years since the RPB's inception and that regional arrangements enabled rapid, informed decisions between partners in responding to Covid-19. However, it was agreed that further work was needed to:

- Articulate shared priorities and outcomes, informed by a clear vision for the region
- Test collective and individual actions by partners (both in terms of 'core' activity and externally funded programmes) against these priorities and outcomes
- Develop a more proactive, strategic approach to transformation and integration that informs future investment priorities
- Further strengthen links between the regional programme and strategic change being taken forward by individual partners, such as the Health Board's health and care strategy and the work of the three Public Services Boards

Specific actions being taken forward as a result include:

- Development of an overarching Manifesto for primary, community and social care in West Wales. This will be linked to population needs and reflect commitments within the Area Plan (refreshed as necessary) and priorities of individual partners. It will enhance accountability between partners and with stakeholders, including the public, and facilitate monitoring of progress. The Manifesto will be brought to the RPB for sign-off in the early part of the new financial year
- A review of regional governance aimed at ensuring robust accountability across the Partnership's programme and facilitating a co-productive approach to service development and delivery. Enhancements already in place include the establishment of a Healthier West Wales Programme Board to oversee delivery of Transformation-funded programmes and Children and Young People Programme Group supporting collaborative

action to ensure the best start in life and positive outcomes for people in West Wales. Alongside this, discussions are being taken forward regarding the potential creation of a joint 'assurance' group to scrutinise delivery and expenditure across the wider Partnership agenda.

Also this year, a national 'Leadership Forum' of RPB Chairs and Vice Chairs was established, with West Wales playing a full and active role. The Forum is supported by the Officer Leads across the seven partnership areas. The timing of this development is helpful in that it comes in the wake of the Welsh Government's White Paper 'Rebalancing Care and Support', published for consultation in January and proposing new legislation to improve social care arrangements and strengthen partnership working.

The Forum provides an opportunity for regional leaders to come together, share learning and experience, identify challenges and opportunities and agree items for further discussion and exploration with Ministers and Welsh Government Officials as we move RPBs to the next phase of their development.

2. Transforming and integrating care and support

This core ambition lies at the heart of everything that the RPB and the wider WWCP do. Our overarching commitment remains that of ensuring that people with a need for care and support in West Wales receive the right help, in a joined up and seamless way, so that they stay well and independent for as long as possible and can make the very best of their lives. This chimes with the aspiration within the national plan for health and social care 'A Healthier Wales', for a 'whole system approach to health and social care, which is focussed on health and wellbeing, and on preventing illness.' It requires attention and investment in each of the following four areas, described as the 'Quadruple Aim':

- Improved population health and wellbeing
- Better quality and more accessible health and social care services
- Higher value health and social care
- A motivated and sustainable health and social care workforce

The WWCP has adopted a 'triangle of care and support' setting out what this whole system approach, focused on wellbeing, means for people in our region at different stages of their journey:



Each tier within the triangle has the following aims:

Help for strong communities

- ✓ Focus on strengthening our communities and take an asset-based approach to wellbeing.
- ✓ Deliver a coherent model of locality resilience, with roles that support and enhance each other
- ✓ Encourage and foster communities to co-construct provision through collaboration in contract to traditional top down approaches
- ✓ Support practical solutions that encourage 'social productivity' by focusing on the building strengths of 'real' relationships and communities

Help to help yourself

- ✓ Build on our co-designed and asset-based approach to deliver proactive integrated care, support and wellbeing services to local populations
- ✓ Ensure that services are proactive & empower individuals to manage their health and wellbeing
- ✓ Align our services and the co-ordination of care around our population, based on their needs and the shared understanding of what matters most
- ✓ Deliver an innovative and proactive service supported through transformation funds to support proactive care planning for risk stratified groups

Help when you need it

- ✓ Ensure that our single point of access is effective and efficient; streamlining pathways, maximising potential for prevention, and improving outcomes
- ✓ Embed and strengthen our approach to Integrated Intermediate Care based on 4 areas so that people can recover, rehabilitate, or re-able at home rather than in hospital
- ✓ Deliver an innovative community-based Crisis Response Service to strengthen our short-term response through integrated locality teams

Help long term

- ✓ Deliver seamless pathways of care and support, through our integrated locality teams
- ✓ Align our specialist services for complex, chronic and long term and palliative care to our Integrated Localities to build a comprehensive network of specialist professionals.
- ✓ Facilitate a shift of care into community-based clinics
- ✓ Work with local, regional and national third sector organisations to enable high quality, compassionate and dignified care for those living with long term conditions or those at the end of life

Help in hospital

- ✓ Provide high quality patient care in response to acute episodes of illness which require care inpatient setting
- ✓ Provide dedicated and equitable frailty service focussed on enabling people to return home in a timely way and thereby reduce the risk infection or deconditioning
- ✓ Enable patients to access alternative community settings through connecting with the integrated community teams

This model is driving system change across the West Wales area. From a regional point of view, we look to ensure that all funding that the RPB receives from Welsh Government is used to support delivery of one or more of the five elements.

The following section looks briefly at individual funding streams, what they are helping us achieve and where we plan to go next.

Transformation Fund

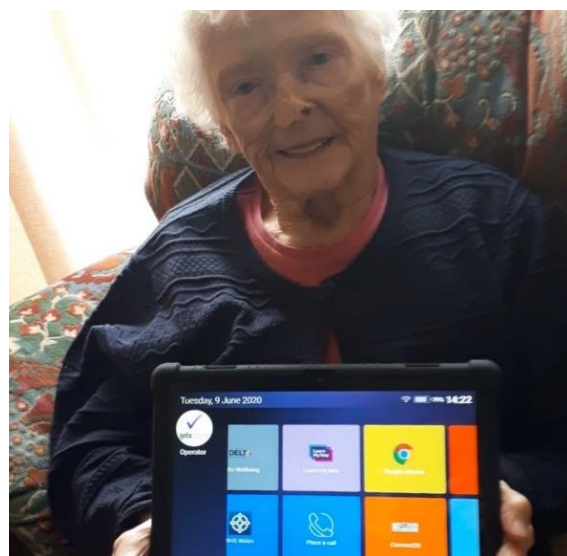
This Fund has been available since 2018 and is provided to support partnerships in delivering the aims of 'A Healthier Wales'. In 2020-21 West Wales received £7.483m for the continuation of our 'Healthier West Wales' programme. This comprises three interdependent sub-programmes which together aim to boost support for people at risk of needing care and support at an early stage and prevent them from having to receive ongoing social and/ or medical care. This will be achieved through building active and kind communities, helping

individuals to help themselves, proactive monitoring of people who are particularly vulnerable, provision of technology-based support and a joined-up response to non-medical and clinical emergencies that gets people back on their feet quickly and avoids the need for hospital-based or long-term care wherever possible.

Components of each programme are listed below (*programme numbers reflect those allocated within the original Healthier West Wales proposal (2018) which comprised eight programmes, from which these three were awarded funding*):

Programme 1: CONNECT

- Individualised wellbeing assessment focusing on what matters to the individuals and based on an academically validated Spanish assessment tool
- Bespoke wellbeing plan identifying personal outcomes and 'trigger events' such as loneliness, falls and carer stress
- Proactive wellbeing calls to discuss progress, agree changes and relay public health messages
- 24/7 welfare response within 60 minutes for non-medical emergencies as far as is reasonably practicable
- Proactive support pathways matching individuals' needs, including: (1) provision of tablets and CONNECT 2U App linking people to virtual communities and reducing isolation; (2) enhanced support for carers; (3) falls management; (4) education programme for self-management; and (5) other flexible community support



Programme 3: Fast-Tracked, Consistent Integration

- Fast Access Community Teams in all parts of West Wales providing multi-disciplinary to people in their homes, delivered within 2 hours and over a maximum period of 8 days
- Complements the welfare response service within the Connect programme
- Supported by integrated project managers located across the region with a broader remit to accelerate integration across all parts of the system



Programme 7: Creating Connections for All

- CONNECT To platforms supporting person to person time-banking through matching requested support with offers of help
- Connect To Kindness Campaign promoting active citizenship and compassionate communities, focusing on key groups such as young people with mental health problems and driving change within the workforce
- Accelerated skills programme for community workers to enhance community engagement and encourage involvement in care and support
- Incentivising volunteering through flexible delivery models, developmental support for community groups and community resource plan pilots
- Local Action Hubs based on a 'virtual village hall' model, supporting the development of blended community support
- Grants programme to support inter-generational projects, increasing skills and reducing isolation
- 'Community Connector Plus' Officers promoting the programme and supporting implementation

We have progressed the Healthier West Wales programme considerably over the past year. Covid-19 has certainly impacted each of the programmes, although they have been adapted, and in some instances accelerated, to meet specific needs emanating from the pandemic.

Examples include:

- The extension during the first wave of proactive calls and provision of tablets providing links with virtual communities to shielded groups and other vulnerable residents including people with dementia and those at risk of domestic abuse, through CONNECT
- Enhancements to virtual consultations and improvements in crisis response times through the Fast-Tracked, Consistent Integration programme
- Accelerated development of virtual Local Action Hubs to facilitate groups providing specific Covid-related support and matching of volunteers to people needing support within the community through Creating Connections for All

A summary of outcomes provided to date is provided below.

Programme 1: CONNECT

- ✓ Service in place across the region
- ✓ 2,300 residents signed up to the programme by March 2021, 88% of whom have not previously had a lifeline
- ✓ 12,030 proactive calls made and 45,152 monitoring conversations by March 2021
- ✓ More than 40% of CONNECT participants report improvements to their mental health, ability to care for themselves and getting the right support, as well as reduced loneliness and isolation
- ✓ 2,500 welfare response visits, of which only 6% resulted in referral to emergency services
- ✓ 91% of participants opting to continue service after initial, free 6-month period

Programme 3: Fast-tracked, Consistent Integration

- ✓ Local models in place across the region
- ✓ 9,202 people supported
- ✓ Around 5,000 hospital admissions avoided
- ✓ 1,000 facilitated discharges from hospital into service
- ✓ More than 4,000 people able to stay safely at home

Programme 7: Creating Connections For All

- ✓ Connect To platforms operational across the region, with over 600 signed-up members and more than 60 hours of support exchanged
- ✓ Roll-out of Connect to Kindness campaign, including national TV advert. More than 300 kindness pledges have been made and 800 people have signed up to a Facebook Connect to Kindness group
- ✓ Skills programme delivered for more than 30 community workers
- ✓ 350 Local Action Hubs and community groups supported to increase active citizenship and enhance community resilience
- ✓ £250,000 allocated to community groups to support inter-generational projects

For a selection of case studies illustrating the impact of the Healthier West Wales programmes on individuals across the region, follow this link

<https://www.wwcp.org.uk/healthier-west-wales-case-studies/>

In August 2020 the RPB commissioned an independent evaluation of the Healthier West Wales programmes. This noted progress across the board and recommended a number of enhancements including improving data sets to assess impact of programmes; evidencing the impact of different delivery arrangements in different parts of the region; strengthening engagement with users, carers and other stakeholders and using resulting intelligence to inform programme development; and closer alignment of programmes to enable staff involved in their delivery to recognise their contribution to the wider transformation landscape. An action plan has been developed to address each of the recommendations. In view of the positive evidence presented within the report, Welsh Government confirmed an allocation of just under £6m in 2021-22 to continue the programmes for a further, transitional year.

Alongside the Healthier West Wales programmes, the Transformation Fund also provided ring-fenced resources to the Partnership in support of performance management and reporting and continuous engagement. As a result, in 2020-21 we were able to appoint a Performance and Evaluation Officer to lead on the development of metrics to assess impact of transformation and other regional programmes. We also contributed to the costs of the 'Engagement HQ' digital platform which has been acquired by the RPB alongside Public Services Boards and several individual organisations in the region. This software will provide a tool for engaging with different communities (both geographical and of interest), using a range of mechanisms including virtual forums, on-line message boards, place-based

conversations, interactive stories, question and answer facilities and polls and surveys. We intend rolling the system out early in the new financial year.

Finally, RPBs across Wales have also received Transformation funding to set up Research, Innovation and Improvement Hubs (RIICHs) to coordinate related activity within their areas. More information on the approach being taken in West Wales is provided in Section 4.

ICF

The ICF provides revenue and Capital funding to RPBs to support the development and delivery of new, integrated models of care and support for older people, people with dementia, children at risk of going into care, children with complex needs, people with learning disabilities and unpaid carers.

As with the Healthier West Wales programme, the pandemic impacted on a number of the ICF programmes; some were accelerated and scaled up to support the response, others were refocused and some were unable to proceed; in those instances, resources were reallocated to support other activity.

In spite of these challenges, we were able to invest the £11.8m allocated to West Wales in 2020-21 in a range of innovative schemes including:

- Projects aimed at building resilience within local communities, preventing people from being admitted to hospital and enabling quick and safe discharge for those that have had to be admitted
- Enhanced Information, Advice and Assistance services ensuring people are signposted or referred to the right kind of care and support
- Intermediate care models helping to rehabilitate people following an episode of poor health and preventative interventions such as falls avoidance and targeted exercise programmes aimed at improving physical and emotional wellbeing
- 'Front of hospital' services helping avoid admissions to hospital of people arriving at Emergency Departments and accelerating discharge wherever possible
- Crisis response services providing medical support in the home
- Enhancement of longer-term care and support services for those people that need them
- Initiatives aimed at raising awareness of, and support available to, unpaid carers
- Targeted activity to improve opportunities and the support available for people with Learning Disabilities
- Service interventions and training, based on trauma informed practice, which support children at risk of entering care to remain with their families
- Delivery of a three-stage care and support pathway for people living with Dementia

Detailed examples are provided in Section 3.

ICF funding also supports the roll-out of the Integrated Autism Service (see Section 3 for more details) and the ongoing implementation of the Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS), an integrated care management system that enables the sharing of information between local authorities and the NHS, making joined-up care of individuals

easier. Ceredigion County Council currently uses WCCIS and the system is also being rolled out across some parts of Hywel Dda University Health Board. A key priority for the coming year will be developing its functionality to enable information to be shared between WCCIS and other care management systems in place across health and social care, bringing the same potential benefits to a wider range of service users and carers.

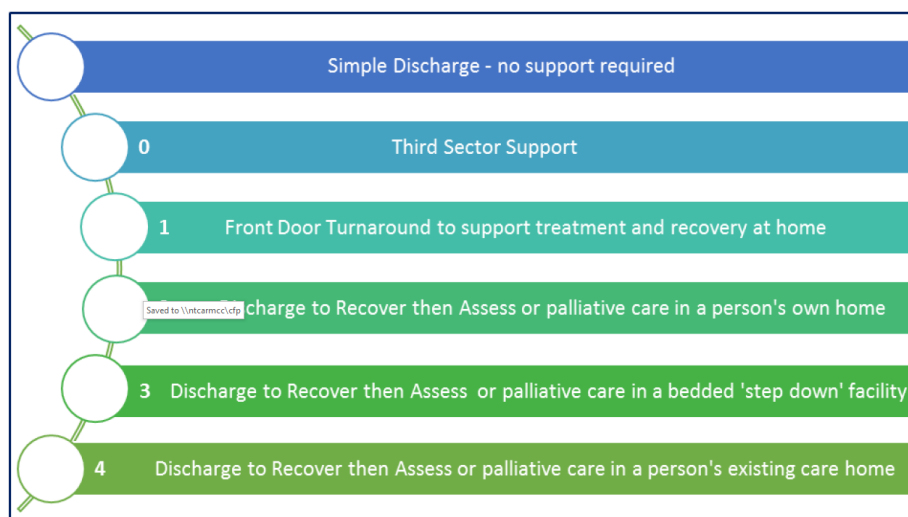
In addition to revenue funding, West Wales received an allocation of £5.3m in ICF Capital. This brings the total allocation over the past four years to £19.2m, with a further £5.3m earmarked for 2020-21. Given the scale and complexity of many of the supported projects, funds have been programme managed over financial years, enabling preparatory and structural work to be scheduled appropriately over the medium term and to align with revenue funding to support delivery. This funding has enabled us to progress a variety of valuable schemes, all underpinned by the core aims of collaborative working, supporting independence and reducing the need for traditional, institutional care. Across the region, we have used the resources available to:

- Significantly enhance our portfolio of supported living units, helping people with learning disabilities to transition from residential to independent living
- Develop new supported living facilities for young people alongside provision on-site of agricultural education, behavioural support and employment opportunities
- Acquire transitional housing and respite units for people with a dual Mental Health/ Learning Disability diagnosis and for people being looked after by unpaid carers
- Establish parent and baby centres in each county providing support for young families with additional needs
- Increase intermediate care capacity in residential homes and community hospitals
- Deliver a range of smaller projects including community equipment and minor housing adaptations, allowing people to remain safely in their homes

We have also commenced initial feasibility work on a major scheme which will deliver multi-agency, accommodation-based, trauma-informed support for children and young people with high end emotional and behavioural needs. Delivery of this programme, which will be instrumental in bringing children and young people currently placed for care outside the region back to West Wales, will be a key priority over the coming year.

Discharge funding

In April 2020 Welsh Government issued new Hospital Discharge Service Requirements aimed at managing discharge and hospital flow during the pandemic and based on a range of Discharge to Recover and Assess (D2RA) pathways. These pathways are as follows:



To support partnerships in developing capacity across these pathways, Welsh Government provided RPBs with two funding allocations over the course of the year:

- May 2020: Covid-19 surge funding, to expedite implementation of the D2RA model during the first wave of Covid-19
- September 2020: D2RA funding, coinciding with the second wave and to support the further development and delivery of models of care that prevent unnecessary hospital admission and enable people to leave hospital when ready; supported schemes were to form part of wider, integrated winter plans

West Wales received £1.4m and £1.3m respectively in respect of these allocations. A range of local projects were funded, including:

Covid-19 surge funding	D2RA winter funding (supporting the West Wales Integrated Winter Plan)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of 'virtual ward' arrangements in Carmarthenshire to monitor and support patients with Covid-19 following discharge from hospital • Enhanced step-up and step-down facilities in Ceredigion to avert admission and facilitate timely discharge • Rapid Response and Care Home Emergency Support Team in Pembrokeshire supporting Covid-19 patients in residential settings and at home • Regional discharge support service for Mental Health and Learning Disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of a 'Community Independence Service' providing short-term, bridging support and right-sizing new packages of care • Investment in servicing and decontamination of equipment and new purchases to support timely discharge • Increased investment in community palliative care services • Increased assessment/ interim beds • Establishment of 'Simply Safe' domiciliary care service • New 'bio-psycho-social Multi-Disciplinary Team providing specialist aftercare for Covid-19 patients • Additional support and capacity for care homes to counteract high levels of staff absence due to Covid-19

Delivery of D2RA schemes as part of our integrated winter plan was hampered by various factors, notably difficulties in securing appropriately skilled staff due to the pandemic and the imposition of embargos in care homes, which prevented full use of planned step-down

facilities. Nevertheless, the indications are that those programmes that were able to proceed impacted positively on flow across the system, reducing length of hospital stays and conveyance from Emergency Departments over the funding period. Wider benefits from the implementation of new models included:

- Greater shared understanding across health and social care of pressures across the system
- Improved shared intelligence supports a more regional approach
- Integrated triage enabling better coordination and quicker discharges
- Appointment of additional assistant social workers focusing on rapid discharge and assessments in community following a period of recovery has improved flow
- Redeployment of therapies staff from acute to the community providing direct support to care homes
- Introduction of county touchpoint calls feeding into the Health Board's established escalation calls, enabling a whole system approach
- Establishment of a new Transfer Escalation Panel to review those who are delayed on a pathway and to determine the most appropriate placement

We intend to mainstream successful approaches to alleviate flow on a permanent basis and ensure that West Wales is well placed to meet pressures in the next winter season and/ or those associated with any subsequent waves of Covid-19. The recently announced Transformation Scaling Fund provides an opportunity to consolidate and test further innovative approaches in the coming year, prior to upscaling where appropriate.

Early years and prevention

A further two funding streams from Welsh Government were made available to support collaborative programmes aimed at improving the life chances of children and young people and, more generally, enhancing preventative support across a range of health determinants in West Wales. We received £200K to support low level intervention for children with mental health problems and this enabled us to invest in development and delivery of a programme of psychological support and attachment aware training.

Under the 'Building a Healthier Wales' initiative, funding was used to support a range of preventative initiatives, including mental health wellbeing support for young people during school holidays, roll-out of our smoking cessation programme, running 'Be Active' programmes for young people with high levels of need, expansion of social prescribing across the region and upscaling of effective cluster pilot programmes such as pre-diabetes support.

Assessing impact

Assessing the impact of funded programmes remains a priority. We need to learn from what works and what doesn't so that resources can be directed to where they will make the most positive difference for users and carers and help alleviate pressures on the health and care system.

We have continued to refine the metrics against which we monitor our programmes, with an eye to ensuring that we have a balanced view of how much we have been able to do, how well we have been doing it and what the benefits have been to people receiving care and support. Alongside quantitative measures, we are also using our ground-breaking Connect to Wellbeing App to track the difference that interventions are making to individuals' lives and sense of wellbeing.

Mindful that decisions will need to be made regarding the mainstreaming of successful approaches beyond the transitional funding year, with partners redirecting core budgets to support new models of care, we will be undertaking detailed analysis of the financial benefits and return on investment from our programmes. This will help us identify the right level and share of investment needed from partners for these activities in the coming period.

We are continuing to develop our regional outcomes framework which will enable the partnership to assess the extent to which the combined activity across programmes is impacting on key areas of performance, such as hospital admission, numbers of care packages and time spent at home. Whilst Covid-19 has made objective analysis of trends within the health and care system change difficult over the past year, we remain committed to carefully monitoring key trajectories as we emerge from the pandemic and more normal services resume.

We have also begun a major mapping exercise through which we are plotting all our funded programmes across our health and care pathways so we can better align activity, compare levels of investment with system outcomes, address areas of duplication and identify areas that require additional resources. This will help ensure that the RPB can make informed and strategic decisions about future investment, both through any successor funding from Welsh Government and partners' core funding.

Finally, we remain committed to robust, ongoing evaluation of our major programmes. Towards the end of this year, we appointed new independent evaluators to work with us over the coming twelve months on the evaluation of the remaining period of the Healthier West Wales programme. We will also be participating in a national evaluation of the ICF, which will include a number of schemes funded in West Wales and working with our RIICH to apply the same methodology across other parts of the ICF programme. We look forward to sharing the outcomes of this in our next Annual Report.



3. Making a difference across our population

Under Part 9 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, RPBs are required to prioritise the integration of services for older people with complex needs and long-term conditions (including dementia), people with learning disabilities, children with complex needs and carers. When undertaking population assessments, Boards are also expected to consider the needs of people with sensory impairment, people with mental health problems and autistic people.

Integrated approaches must cover service development, the provision of care and support and prevention and early intervention.

In West Wales we have maintained a consistent focus on each of these groups within our regional programme. Our approach is to respond to emerging needs, including those resulting from Covid-19, whilst delivering against the high level aims within our Area Plan which can be accessed via the following link: <http://www.wwcp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/West-Wales-Area-Plan-English-Final-Version-29-03-18.pdf>.

This section outlines some of the changes we have made and our general direction of travel in relation to these groups within our communities.

Autism

We continued to deliver a range of support through the ICF-funded regional Integrated Autism Service (IAS) which complements wider support for autistic people in the region and provides diagnostic assessment, support and advice for autistic adults alongside parents, carers and professionals. Over the year we:

- Introduced revised pathways for the service, including diagnostic referrals, support referrals, support screenings, group work and virtual work
- Undertook demand and capacity reviews to identify areas for efficiency improvements in the service; however, due to the pandemic and its impact on staffing levels, the impact of improvements may not be evident for some time
- Delivered a range of support including assessment, by phone, email, text and video conferencing over the period of the pandemic, whilst continuing to see people face to face where there were high levels of clinical risk
- Established a virtual information hub through which clinicians and support workers have provided autistic people and their families with support and advice
- Delivered virtual consultations
- Delivered face to face and virtual training for individuals after a diagnosis of autism

Looking forward to next year, we will be considering how to further align the IAS with children's NeuroDevelopmental services; seeking to reduce waiting lists using a range of approaches such as group work and training and development for other services; and assessing how we maintain equity of provision as many services are being delivered via technology.

The forthcoming Code of Practice on the Delivery of Autism Services will place new responsibilities on RPBs, including the need to have dedicated governance arrangements for autism underneath the Board, an explicit requirement to consider the needs of people with

autism within regional population assessments and the development of strategic and operational teams with autistic people on them to inform service development. The RPB has begun to consider these requirements and will take forward necessary improvements over the coming year.

Further information is available via the West Wales IAS website at:

<https://autismwales.org/en/integrated-autism-service/west-wales/>

Children and young people

During 2020-21 we established a new regional children and young people's group comprising representatives from across statutory partner agencies and the third sector, which will have responsibility moving forward for ensuring that people in West Wales get the best start in life. Alongside health and social care colleagues, this group brings education professionals around the table. Our focus will be on delivering the best outcomes for children and young people in the region and in ensuring that the right range of preventative, community-based and statutory care and support is in place to make sure this happens. New requirements within the amended Statutory Guidance for Part 9 of the Act, which emphasises the need for RPBs to prioritise the integration and transformation of services for children and young people, are key to our developing programme, as are the recommendations within the Children's Commissioner's Report 'No Wrong Door: Bringing Services Together to Meet Children's Needs' which was published in June 2020. The report sets a clear challenge for agencies to work better together in delivering seamless, responsive support to children and young people with emotional and mental health needs.

In our regional action plan developed in response to the No Wrong Door report we made clear commitments in terms of gaining a better understanding of what services are currently available and opportunities for further improvement and integration of those services, a more strategic approach to use of regional funding in helping us deliver our objectives and involving children and young people in the development of services and more generally in the work of the Partnership.



To help us address the needs identified within the report, we aim to take forward a flagship programme next year to deliver safe accommodation and multi-agency, person-centred support for children with complex emotional and behavioural needs, preventing the need for secure or inpatient care and supporting people out of such care. We have applied for ICF revenue funding to support delivery of this programme and are also investing ICF Capital to develop a regional hub providing a central observation and assessment unit, supported by three local centres offering short-term accommodation for children when necessary as they receive this new model of support. We look forward to reporting on progress over the coming year.

We hope to further strengthen care and support arrangements for children with emotional and mental health needs by becoming early adopters of the national Early Help and Support Framework which is being implemented as part of the Together for Children and Young People (TCYP) programme. Also known as 'NEST', the framework is tool for planning mental health, wellbeing and support for children, young people, parents, carers and their families across Wales. Co-produced by these people and a range of professionals, the Framework is designed to help partners within a region to better coordinate care, from preventative, low level support to specialised services, improve alignment and maximise access for those needing them. If successful, the WWCP will receive support from national partners in implementing the framework in West Wales, as a key enabler in enhancing outcomes in this vital area. Once again, this will be fundamental in helping us address the recommendations within the Children's Commissioner's report.

We have also undertaken considerable work to improve commissioning arrangements for children and young people's services, agreeing in principle to set up a regional panel for commissioning placements for children with complex needs and piloting a Resource Allocation System (RAS), for matching resources provided for disabled children and their families to assessed need, in Carmarthenshire. Both these initiatives will be progressed further over the coming year.

Dementia

The incidence of dementia in West Wales (and Wales in general) is expected to rise dramatically over the coming decades. Across the region, numbers of diagnosed cases are likely to nearly double, from 2,812 to 4,200. A likely gap in diagnoses of some 50% means that the true extent of people living with dementia and future prevalence is significantly higher.

The [Dementia Action Plan for Wales 2018-22](#) sets out a strategy for Wales to become a dementia-friendly nation based on the rights of people with dementia to feel valued and live as independently as possible in their communities. The Plan recognises that a cross-sector, co-produced approach is required to provide effective care and support for people with dementia. Funding is provided to RPBs to support such approaches and £1.2m was allocated to West Wales for this purpose in 2020-21. This has enabled us to continue to continue to enhance services across a 3-stage care and support pathway, with key achievements over the past year including:

- Completion of a training needs analysis highlighting where additional education and support are needed to ensure that employees across the health, care and support sectors are able to recognise and respond appropriately to the needs of people with dementia and their carers. This will inform a comprehensive programme of training for staff in 2021-22
- Appointment of 7 'Admiral Nurses' across West Wales, working in a variety of settings and providing people living with dementia and their families one-to-one support, expert guidance and practical solutions when challenges and difficulties arise
- Establishment of a Dementia Wellbeing Team providing support to individuals and carers in a range of settings to reduce distress, often presenting as challenging behaviour in people living with dementia

As a Partnership, we are keen to consolidate these positive developments and to ensure a consistent approach across the region, delivering the best outcomes for people living with dementia and their families. To help us on this journey, in early 2021 we appointed external consultants to work with us on the development of a regional Dementia Strategy and review of our ICF programme, designed so that our approach reflects recognised best practice at a national and international level and that our shared resources are invested wisely. We expect a draft Strategy to be available by mid-2021 and have committed to undertaking extensive engagement with people living with dementia and their families and professionals from all sectors, co-producing the right solutions for our region and ensuring ownership across all stakeholder groups.

Learning Disabilities

Our regional Improving Lives Partnership has continued to oversee the delivery of a range of initiatives which support the aims within our Area Plan and those set out within the groundbreaking West Wales Learning Disability Charter. This Charter was developed by the 'Dream Team', a group of people with learning disabilities from across West Wales, and is unique to our region. It aims to increase visibility of issues faced by people with learning disabilities, promote their rights, improve access to services, business and leisure facilities and empower people to co-produce future solutions.

Fundamentally, we always take an enabling approach. Key activity this year, supported by the ICF, has included:

- Supporting individuals in promoting the Charter among a range of service providers and other organisations
- Advising colleagues in Powys in relation to setting up a Dream Team and developing a Charter
- Development of a travel App which will assist people with learning disabilities to use the public transport system independently and with confidence
- Delivery of an employment and training project offering opportunities for people with learning disabilities to access volunteering, paid work and training
- Roll-out of the 'Exercise Buddy' project, providing on-line facilitated sessions
- Provision of activity packs to people who would normally attend day centres but were unable to because of the pandemic
- Provision of bespoke support for people with learning disabilities to help them access supported accommodation, being developed through ICF Capital

We also commissioned a detailed review of Learning Disability and Mental Health specialist accommodation in the region, mapping this against projected future needs to inform future joint commissioning plans.

Mental Health

Prioritising mental health has never been more critical as we emerge from the pandemic in the coming months. The effects of social distancing, lockdown, and loss of loved ones to the virus is taking a huge toll on mental health and wellbeing and will have a lasting impact on the mental health of our population. The lasting effects of trauma and severe economic pressures



will be felt by many - those working on the front line, those who have spent months alone, those who have lost their livelihood and young people who have had their support networks taken away. There will be a long-term impact for individuals in care homes and their families who have not been able to see each other for many months.

Aspects of the health Boards regional strategy, aligned to Transforming Mental Health, have been accelerated at pace during the Pandemic, in order to provide extended and more efficient Mental Health services. The expectation is that these improvements will continue in the long-term based on the outcome of respective evaluations. Specific examples of work undertaken over the past year are provided below.

- The Health Board has been working with Welsh Government to implement a pilot for a Mental Health Single Point of Contact (SPOC) via the national 111 service. This is a regional pilot in conjunction with Swansea Bay University Health Board and Aneurin Bevan Health Board. The structure of the pilot means that local care is provided by locality-based teams via the national number, which was highlighted as service need from the Transforming Mental Health consultation. The pilot is operating Monday to Friday 6.30pm – 10.30pm and Saturday and Sunday 2.00pm – 10.00pm with a view to going 24/7 by April 2022. In line with this, a Task & Finish group has been established with local authorities and will be extended to include Third Sector, WAST, GPs and Police partners to agree a model of service that allows individuals to be directed to the most appropriate service for their needs following consultation/triage by SPOC professionals drawn from health and social care
- Responding to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, partners are developing digital mental health interventions to reach people in socio economically/ geographically/culturally disadvantaged groups and in the new financial year will be launching a new 'Brain in Hand' initiative providing individuals with access to support and coping strategies via their phones.
- In the wake of the pandemic we have also established Carers' Champions in all the social work teams in Adult Social Care in Carmarthenshire. These Champions ensure that the profile of Carers is raised in the teams and that carers assessments are prioritised and act as central points for information and advice relating to carers. We will look for opportunities to roll this model out across the region if shown to be successful

- The co-location of all of our Crisis Resolution Home Treatment Teams (CRHTs) and Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs) has taken place to deliver intensive home treatment or a community assessment. This extended service allows for increased access to the team for service users and for staff to work more flexibly with reduction numbers of staff in our building in order to adhere to social distancing requirements. We are increasing social work capacity within the CMTs to promote connections with community support for people with Mental Health needs
- A Psychiatric Liaison Service is being developed across the four District General Hospitals. The Service provides a single cross age/speciality liaison team across the Hywel Dda footprint for adult, older adult and learning disability individuals
- Welsh Government has provided funding to establish a 6-month conveyance scheme across the health board footprint to support service user flow to and from inpatient settings. The service is being operated by St. John's Cymru and provides 1 full time vehicle with crew. It operates from 10.00am – 10.00pm 7 days per week, outside of these hours (10.00pm – 10.00am) there is an on-call system in place. Feedback to date has been very positive with over 72 conveyances undertaken since 1st May, which has greatly reduced NHS and partnership organisations staff time in having to provide transport. The pilot is being evaluated by Welsh Government in order to determine future need and funding requirements
- Following the success of the 'Twilight Sanctuary' Service in Llanelli an initiative led by Carmarthenshire County Council which delivers an integrated service with Hywel Dda UHB, Dyfed Powys Police and Third Sector partners, a second pilot has been established in Pembrokeshire. These Services offer a place of sanctuary for adults at risk of deteriorating mental health, at a time when other services are closed and are vital in helping us to meet our growing service demands. In January 2021, both Sanctuary Services have extended their service provision to include a Hospitality Bed service. The Carmarthenshire Sanctuary Service was the first of its kind in Wales and has been highlighted by Welsh Government as an area of good practice and it is hoped that the model will be adopted across Wales
- Building on our review of specialist accommodation for Learning Disabilities and Mental Health, we are embarking on an ambitious programme of change which will reduce reliance on residential care and provide more community-based options promoting choice and independence. To date we have enabled 20 individuals to step down from residential care into supported living environments. This will continue to have a profound effect on outcomes for individuals. As one community nurse said after speaking with a patient who had stepped down from residential care:

"I just spoke to Mr T. It was so lovely. He is so happy 'Joyo, Joyo', he said. He has been 'everywhere' he says. He has been playing football outside with the staff, he happily shares chores like drying and washing up with X. He is looking forward to the future and talking about returning to all his jobs and clubs. He is also looking forward to going on holiday."

Partners across Mid and South West Wales are also working together to develop a collaborative approach to reducing suicide and self-harm, reflecting priorities within the Welsh Government's 'Talk to me 2' Prevention Strategy. Once again, this work is hugely important in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Older people

Major transformation programmes supported through the Transformation Fund and ICF, details of which are provided elsewhere in this Report, have been instrumental in bringing partners together to provide care and support to older people in integrated and innovative ways.

Although not exclusively, older people have also been the main beneficiaries of schemes supported through additional Discharge funding over the past twelve months. Together, the range of initiatives help ensure that older people can remain at home, where appropriate with low level and proactive support and, in those cases where they have to be admitted to hospital, are able to return home or to a residential setting as quickly as possible.



Examples of our approach, operating under shared regional principles, include:

- Partnering with the third sector to help keep people at home for longer, for example through the Carmarthenshire United Support Project and Pembrokeshire Intermediate Voluntary Organisation Team (PIVOT), both funded through the ICF
- Supporting elderly and other vulnerable citizens through promoting volunteering and Kindness – more information is provided in Section 2
- Enhancements to intermediate and long-term care through establishment of integrated teams comprising health and social care practitioners, such as Porth Gofal in Ceredigion and Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT) in the other counties in the region continuing to deliver seamless, person-centred care
- Development of crisis response services through the Fast Tracked, Consistent Integration transformation programme – including enhanced Acute Response (ART) teams in Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire - with further expansion of integrated models made possible through Welsh Government funding aimed at supporting effective discharge
- Provision of front of hospital services, helping prevent admissions from Emergency Departments and providing a cross-agency approach to accelerating discharge

We have been working collaboratively to support care providers to maintain services throughout the pandemic and to draw on the experience of the past 12 months in planning for recovery. Specifically, we have:

- Agreed a Care Homes Action Plan for the region, building on local examples of good practice, reflecting the recommendations of a national review commissioned by Welsh Government into how homes had responded to the first wave of Covid-19 and identifying improvements for the future
- Developed a Care Home Failure Contingency Plan for the region, designed to mitigate against the risk of system failure in subsequent waves
- Adopted regional frameworks for Discharge to Recover and Assess and Care Homes Risk Escalation – these have been invaluable in making practice consistent across the region and upscaling effective practice

In addition to this, we have also continued to produce regular, combined reports on older people's care homes as part of our virtual pooled fund arrangement, helping partners identify inconsistencies and areas for improvement and supporting an integrated approach to development of the sector moving forward. We have also agreed a regional action plan to address the areas for improvement identified by KPMG in their review of our pooled fund arrangements; this will help ensure we optimise opportunities for joint working in this area. A regional Pre-Placement Agreement for older people's care homes will be consulted on early in the new financial year and implemented from September 2021.

Over the course of the year we have continued to embed our ground-breaking 'Findaplace' bilingual platform which provides citizens and commissioners with real-time information on vacancies and facilitates reporting against our shared regional data set for care homes.

Sensory impairment

In 2020-2021 we made further progress in delivering against our commitment to raise the profile and understanding of sensory impairment and to make sure that appropriate access to a range of information, advice and support is available to people with sensory loss across our region. Specifically, we have:

- Ensured that Covid-19 information and vaccine guidance was available in a range of formats
- Introduced online interpretation services that could be used with other platforms, including Attend Anywhere
- Continued to incorporate awareness raising into induction for new staff
- Monitored the impact of Covid-19 restrictions on people with sensory impairment, working proactively to ensure that emerging difficulties are addressed
- Introduced new mechanisms enabling information on social care to be available via audio and can be disseminated rapidly upon request
- Worked with individuals to help them identify the help they need, focusing on individual strengths and ensuring that community-based support is available to support the delivery of personal wellbeing outcomes

We will continue to learn from new developments and improve support further over the coming year.

Unpaid carers

It has been a busy year in terms of developing support for unpaid carers in our region. The West Wales Carers' Development Group (WWCDG) has continued to coordinate work and in spite of a number of planned initiatives not being able to proceed due to Covid-19, we have been able to progress important areas of work, including:

- Issuing of 305 Carers' ID Cards in Ceredigion as part of a national initiative, providing young carers with access to a comprehensive information service and enabling them to notify supermarkets, pharmacies, teachers and others that they have caring responsibilities. There are plans to roll the initiative out across the region
- Continued roll-out of the Investors in Carers' Scheme, increasing the awareness of professionals across sectors including primary, community and acute health care, schools,

libraries, social care, Job Centre Plus and third sector organisations of the needs of carers. The scheme also enables people to register as a carer with their GP, leading to a referral to the local Carers' Information Service which can provide additional information, advice and support

- Deployment of Carers Officers (employed by the third sector) within hospitals to support health professionals to identify unpaid carers, improve their involvement in the discharge process and provide information and support. During the pandemic this role was delivered remotely to 303 families
- Continued delivery of the Introduction to Looking After Me (I2LAM) programme for carers across West Wales, helping carers learn new skills and take care of their own health while looking after someone else.
- Roll-out of the Carers' Resilience and Wellbeing Programme, providing carers with a 'what matters' conversation and appropriate support including preventative interventions and respite
- Establishment of the regional Carers Support Innovation Fund offering third sector organisations with short-term funding to deliver support for carers. Initiatives supported include physical fitness sessions, sports reminiscence events, online craft and social sessions and targeted support for older carers
- Roll-out of the Employers for Carers (EfC) scheme supporting statutory partners in reviewing policies and procedures through a carers' lens and offering practical support to employees with caring responsibilities
- Various digital inclusion initiatives to assist carers during the pandemic, including the Pembrokeshire Digital Connections Partnerships supporting people, including carers, to access digital equipment and technology

In November 2020 the RPB approved a new, 5 year strategy 'Improving Lives for Carers'. Informed by a comprehensive engagement exercise in which more than 500 people took part, the strategy sets a clear vision and priorities for the region moving forward. It contains four key aims:

- Improve early identification and self-identification of carers including young carers and young adult carers
- Ensure a range of services is available to support the wellbeing of carers of all ages, in their life alongside caring
- Support carers to access and maintain education, training and employment opportunities
- Support carers to become digitally included

More information about the work delivered through the carers programme is available in the WWCDG's annual report, which can be accessed here: <https://www.wwcp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/WWCDG-Annual-Report-2021-21-FINAL.pdf>

Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)

As required by Welsh Government, under the VAWDASV ACT 2015, the Mid and West Wales Region published the Safe Lives, Healthier Families VAWDASV Strategy in November 2018.

The Regional Strategy and Annual Delivery Plans are overseen by the Regional Adviser and VAWDASV Strategic Board.

Throughout 2020-21 the region had to make significant changes to the intended annual delivery plan, as a result of the pandemic. However, this also enabled us to be innovative and exploit opportunities in addressing barriers to service delivery that are specific to Mid and West Wales.

Key areas of activity in 2020-21 included:

- Analysis of existing good practice in relation to survivor engagement, across the region and nationally, to inform a recommendations report which will inform our framework for survivor engagement across Mid and West Wales
- Contribution to the National Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) via Welsh Government. This will ensure a consistent and best practice model to support and guide how Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) are conducted across Mid and West Wales
- Work with education safeguarding leads to ensure vulnerable children and young people and families had access to IT and other essential equipment throughout lockdown. This ensured safeguarding processes and access to specialist support was maintained
- Delivery of three specialist Domestic Abuse (DA) perpetrator interventions across the region. This included piloting virtual delivery options and a stalking specific intervention developed with Professor Jane Monckton-Smith
- Work to establish a consistent regional response to Child to Parent Abuse (CPA), including a regional policy, regional training and a regional access to support document
- Scoping a regional pilot of the IRIS I programme across GP clusters across Carmarthenshire in response to regional DHRs. This will improve earlier identification of DA and links between primary care and specialist VAWDASV support provision
- Delivery of the National Training Framework, adapting our regional training package for online delivery across the region. We also completed a training needs analysis for our specialist service staff teams
- Work to establish a Regional VAWDASV Service Specification that will shape and inform region-wide VAWDASV commissioning activity. This will support innovative and holistic provision of VAWDASV support

We were successful in securing over one million pound of additional funding in the 2020-21 financial year. This enabled us to increase the capacity across VAWDASV specialist services to meet the increased demand for VAWDASV services as a result of the pandemic

Over the coming year we will explore opportunities for close working between the VAWDASV strategic board and the RPB, to help ensure that the principles of the strategy are embedded within our work programme and to facilitate shared learning around key areas such as commissioning and prevention.

Further information on the VAWSAV in Mid and West Wales can be obtained via the following link: <https://www.cysur.wales/vawdasv/>

4. Research, innovation and improvement

As mentioned in Section 2, the WWCP has been allocated funding from the Welsh Government's Transformation Fund to support the establishment of a Research, Innovation and Improvement Coordination Hub (RIICH) in the region. One of seven being set up across Wales, the West Wales RIICH has been established in response to one of the ten design principles set out in A Healthier Wales, namely 'Evidence driven – using research, knowledge and information to understand what works; learning from and working with others; using innovation and improvement to develop and evaluate better tools and ways of working'.

With the core purpose of bringing together all research, innovation and improvement (RII) activity within the region and supporting an evidence-based approach to change, RIICHs will be a key resource for regional partnerships in supporting the implementation of new models of care.

Our hub went live in August 2020 with the establishment of a small, specialist team which has made considerable progress in taking this agenda forward for the region. Key achievements in its first eight months of operation include:

Developing an RII culture for West Wales:

- Completion by Swansea University of a comprehensive mapping exercise, informed by extensive engagement with a wide range of partners, to identify current RIIC activity across health and care in the region, current assets, barriers and opportunities for expansion. The resulting report will be a key driver for improvement over the coming period and will be the subject of a major learning event early in the new year

'There appears to be an opportunity for a central coordinating body to play a role in overseeing and effectively managing RII activity across Health and Social Care domains in West Wales. Such intervention could reduce RII complexity at project, organisational and ecosystem level ...

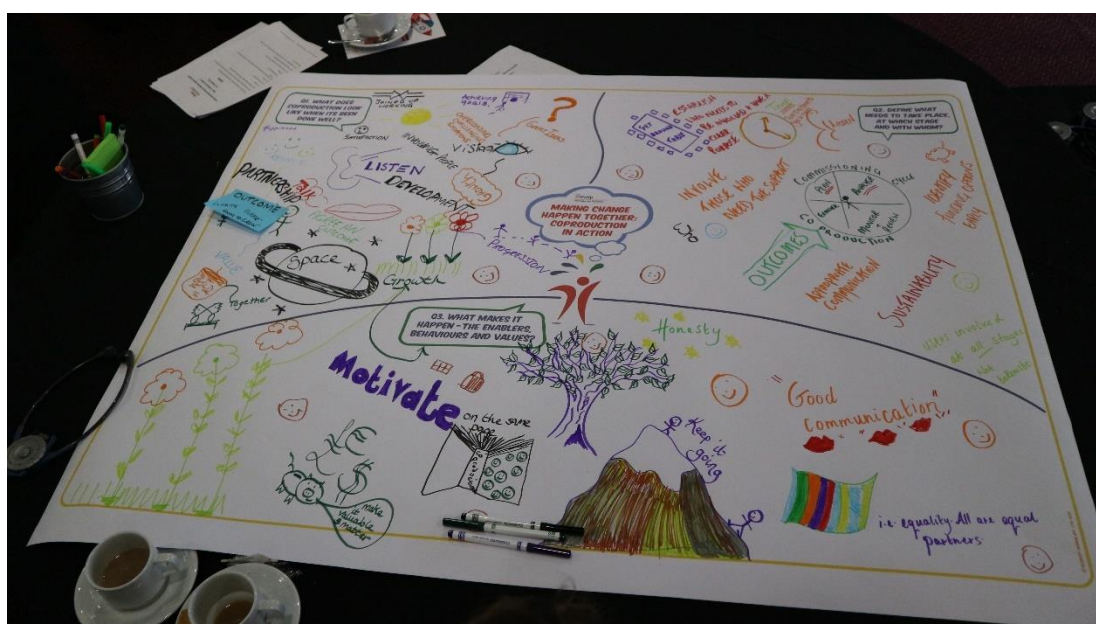
Roles ... might include; identifying examples of good RII practice within the region with the capacity to be spread and scaled; improving communication across all stakeholders within the regional ... ecosystem and further afield; providing a consistent and reliable point of contact for all partners ...; and building a horizon scanning capacity as a means of importing good practice from other regions alongside communicating and exporting high quality examples of RII from the West Wales region'

Health and Social Care Research, Innovation and Improvement Landscape report, Swansea University, 2020

- Launch of an RII website hosted by the WWCP and providing links to a range of relevant organisations and materials; see following link: <https://www.wwcp.org.uk/the-research-innovation-and-improvement-coordination-hub/riic-hub-asset-listing-academia/>
- Establishment of a regional 'Bevan Exemplar' network to promote and support innovation and improvement in West Wales and support 'adopt and spread' of successful approaches
- Establishing strategic partnerships:

- Initial work with Rural Health and Social Care Wales and North Wales and Powys RIICs to enhance support for research and innovation in rural areas
- Development of links with Life Sciences Hub Wales, which supports collaboration across health, social care and research organisations to drive innovation and improvement, to secure greater engagement of social care in the region
- Contribution to A Regional Collaboration for Health (ARCH) research and evaluation activity
- Regional discussions with Accelerate – a national initiative supporting enterprises in taking forward innovation, translating ideas into solutions and linking them with academic partners
- Reviewing and evaluating practice:
 - Review of social prescriber and community connector roles across the region as part of the Creating Connections for All Transformation programme
 - Analysis of care home deaths during the first wave of Covid-19
- Assessing the impact of Covid-19:
 - Contribution to report for RPB on anticipated impact across population groups
 - Completion of staff experience exercise within the NHS to understand working practices during the pandemic and capturing lessons to inform future working

Towards the end of the year we appointed external partners to work with the WWCP in developing an RII framework for West Wales, building on the recommendations from the mapping exercise and aimed at embedding all aspects of RII in the future work of the partnership and improving advice and support for partners. This work will begin early in 2021-22 and will be a critical step in realising the RIIC's aims over the coming period.



5. A high performing, sustainable workforce

The experience of the Covid-19 pandemic over the past 12 months has brought into sharp focus the challenges faced on a daily basis by our health and social care workforce and the critical importance of skilled, adaptable and resilient staff to the effective delivery of care and support to our population. As we emerge from the pandemic, we need to think creatively and collaboratively about how we harness the commitment, energy and creativity of our staff, support them and look after their wellbeing and continue to attract high calibre individuals into a sector that, through recent intensive and sustained exposure, has been seen to present challenges and opportunities in equal measure.

Our regional workforce board, jointly chaired by the Director of Social Services for Pembrokeshire County Council and the Director of Workforce and Organisational Development for Hywel Dda University Health Board, has continued to oversee our ambitious regional programme. Despite pressures due to Covid-19 we have continued to make progress in each of our four priority workstreams. Highlights are provided below.

Recruitment and attraction:

- Good practice audit of HR practices across the region, which has been used to produce a resource pack to support partners in recruitment activities
- Stakeholder engagement leading to the identification of specific priority areas, including review of online recruitment methods and the impact of incentive schemes used by care providers
- Development of a wellbeing toolkit to help providers improve and maintain the wellbeing of their staff
- Production of an engagement tool to help partners assess perceptions of careers in health, social care and early years, to support future planning
- Specific support for partners in the context to Covid-19, including support for online recruitment and webinars for independent providers focusing on staff retention and helping staff to thrive under pressure
- Work with the Open University and Swansea Higher Education Institute to provide 16 social work students with online placements

Learning and development:

- Development of a regional workforce plan to improve support for people with dementia and their carers
- Delivery of Covid-safe 'dementia experience' sessions for key partners to improve knowledge and understanding of how to provide appropriate support
- Roll-out of the second year of our innovative accredited Professional Development programme for commissioners, delivered by the Institute of Public Care, with 18 participants from across social care and health
- Development and delivery of a pilot level 3 accredited course for social prescribers and base level course for others involved in social prescribing, as part of the Creating Connections for All Transformation programme. These will be reviewed in 2021-22 to inform the development of a Wales-specific programme

- E-learning modules delivered for health and social care staff in the light of Covid-19, including specific programmes relating to infection control and bereavement and introduction to care and personal care for redeployed staff. Face to face courses have been retained where necessary, for example on manual handling

Apprenticeship programme:

- Recruitment of five apprenticeships and three trainee social workers through focused advertising campaign which included promotional videos from potential line managers

Workforce planning:

- Redeployment of staff into health and care positions in response to the pandemic

Funding via the Social Care Wales Workforce Development Programme (SCWWDP) and Facilitation Grant, provided by Social Care Wales, has been instrumental in supporting the above activities. Our priority programmes will be continued in 2021-22, aligned as appropriate with the roll-out of the national workforce strategy for health and social care.

6. Continuous engagement and co-production

Part 9 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 requires RPBs to promote and support engagement with a wide range of stakeholders in developing its priorities and delivering programmes of change.

A key priority is ensuring that citizens have a voice around the RPB table. Our current membership includes two service users and one carer from across the region and we remain committed to ensuring that their voice is heard and valued in our discussions and as we take decisions. The following comments and observations have been provided by our user and carer representatives:

'I have been a member of the West Wales RPB since 2017. I have a rare condition called Ataxia, which affects the cerebellum of the brain and causes problems with balance, coordination and speech. As someone that needs to access a range of health and care services, I know the importance of collaboration between different agencies, sharing information and co-production. I feel privileged to have a seat 'at the table' so that I can bring a service user's point of view at meetings. It's been a challenge getting my head around the jargon, abbreviations and technical nature of what's being discussed, but it's really good to be involved in making decisions that affect people in West Wales.

Having people like me on the RPB means a change in mindset for the professional members. Here in West Wales we have seen the introduction of easy read versions of documents which have also been welcomed by other members! Also, under the influence of other citizen representatives and in line with the LD Charter, we have seen changes in the way meetings are run, reducing their length, allowing for breaks and making sure everyone has the chance to contribute to the debate.

Undoubtedly there is more to be done in making our contribution as effective as it can be, but I think in West Wales we have strong foundations to build on.'

Alan Thomas, user representative



'I became a service user rep on the RPB in 2017. It has been good sitting on the Board. The information can sometimes be complicated to understand but Karen from Pembrokeshire People First, who attends with me, helps explain it to me.

People can talk quite fast in meetings and I can't always keep up so I have to ask if they can slow down. I think professionals need to learn to slow down and explain information in simple words, not using big hard words.

I have enjoyed being on the RPB and I get on well with everyone. I will just say though that during the pandemic it has not been easy to be able to attend the meetings because they have been online more tricky for me.

James Tyler, user representative



'As a carer representative, I try my best to represent the voice of the estimated 47,000 Carers in West Wales. This is quite a challenging task however the West Wales Care Partnership have made me feel very welcome and have offered support to enable us to contribute to discussions.

I think that things could be improved by widening engagement with service users and Carers and I feel that representatives could be included more in the working groups that sit beneath the RPB. However, I understand that this may not always be possible and would also like to add that we're volunteering our time and have lots of other commitments so we may not have the time to be able to do this. On the whole, I feel encouraged that the views of people with lived experiences are being included on the board and that this will result in improved services and outcomes for the region's population'.

Joanne Silverthorne, carer representative and Autism Champion

The voice of users and carers on the Partnership is further strengthened by user and carer engagement in various sub-groups of the RPB, notably the Regional Improving Lives Partnership for Learning Disability which is co-chaired by the Dream Team of people with learning disabilities and the Stakeholder Reference Group for Hywel Dda University Health Board which also now scrutinises the work of the RPB.

We continue to look for opportunities to engage citizens in planning and reviewing current services and our various transformation programmes. Our recent acquisition of the 'Engagement HQ' digital engagement portal will enable us to engage virtually with a range of geographical communities and communities of interest and we plan to pilot this in a range of different areas over the coming year. We want to ensure this tool and other approaches are used to interact directly and effectively with traditionally 'hard to reach' groups and those with protected characteristics.

Conscious of the impact of restrictions over the past year such as having to hold meetings virtually, and the added significance of the user and carer voice in assessing the effects of Covid-19 and their implications for future delivery of care and support, we plan to revisit the role of users and carers on the RPB and other regional groups, identify areas for improvement and consider where support can be enhanced (for example, by providing pre-meeting briefings, producing easy read versions of papers and ensuring that all members are able to put items forward for discussion at meetings). We will provide an update on progress in our next Annual Report.

Last year we provided information about our Innovations Forum which we established in 2019 as a key mechanism for bringing both groups and all sectors together to discuss strategic and operational issues and promote social value in the planning and delivery of care and support in West Wales. Unfortunately, due to the considerable pressures on providers and commissioners in the wake of the pandemic, we have not been able to progress the work of the Forum as we had originally envisaged. However, we will prioritise the reconvening of the group in the coming months and ensure that it comes to play a full role in collaborative discussions around lessons learnt and what they mean for the future of the sector in our region.

Appendix 1

Current members of the RPB are:

Margaret Allen (to March 2021)	Carer representative
Jonathan Griffiths	Director of Social Services and Housing, Pembrokeshire County Council
Judith Hardisty	Vice Chair, Hywel Dda University Health Board
Estelle Hithchon	Director of Partnerships and Engagement, Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust
Councillor Tessa Hodgson	Cabinet Member for Social Services, Pembrokeshire County Council
Sian Howys	Statutory Director of Social Services & Corporate Lead Officer: Porth Cynnal, Ceredigion County Council
Sarah Jennings (to August 2020)	Director of Partnerships and Corporate Services, Hywel Dda University Health Board
Ros Jervis	Director of Public Health, Hywel Dda University Health Board
Hilary Jones	Chief Executive, Bro Myrddin Housing Association
Hazel Lloyd Lubran	Chief Officer, Ceredigion Association of Voluntary Organisations
Jake Morgan	Director of Communities, Carmarthenshire County Council
Jonathan Morgan	Head of Homes and Safer Communities, Carmarthenshire County Council
Gareth Morgans	Director of Education and Children, Carmarthenshire County Council
Jill Paterson	Director of Primary Care, Community and Long Term Care, Hywel Dda University Health Board
Malcolm Perret	Vice Chair, Care Forum Wales
Donna Pritchard	Deputy Director of Social Services & Corporate Lead Officer: Porth Gofal, Ceredigion County Council
Joanne Silverthorne	Carer representative
Alan Thomas	Service user representative
Cathryn Thomas	Assistant Director, Social Care Wales
Gaynor Toft	Chief Housing Officer, Pembrokeshire County Council
Councillor Jane Tremlett	Executive Board Member for Social Care and Health, Carmarthenshire County Council
James Tyler	Service user representative
Councillor Alun Williams	Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Ceredigion County Council

For further information:

Visit the West Wales Care Partnership's website at www.wwcp.org.uk

Email us at wwcp@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Or

Phone us on 01267 228765

West Wales Care Partnership

August 2021

