



IECHYD A GOFAL GWLEDIG CYMRU
RURAL HEALTH AND CARE WALES

Rural Health and Care

- the need to do things differently



Ceredigion
Population 79,488
Population density* 45 ppl/km²

Powys
Population 132,642
Population density* 26 ppl/km²

Meirionnydd
Population 33,175
Population density* 22 ppl/km²

* Office of National Statistics, 2017



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Rural Health and Wellbeing

– the good, the bad and the ugly

Health and Social Care challenges facing people in rural areas:

- Access to health and care:
 - Access to GPs / hospitals/ consultants / care facilities
 - Transport links
 - Broadband infrastructure
- Logistical issues relating to care in the community (distance / time)
- Demographics - elderly population (also potential benefit?)
- Recruitment and retention of health and social care professionals
- Access to “local” education / training and Continuous Professional Development opportunities
- Lack of recognition and integration of skills required by rural health and care practitioners

Health and Social Care opportunities in rural areas of Wales:

- Maximise health and wellbeing benefits from living in rural areas
 - Green / blue / social prescribing
 - Build on strong communities (e.g. Solva Care)
 - Attract professionals looking for work / life balance
- Better integration of health and social care provision with community / third sector services – integrations and collaboration
- Focus on Social Determinants of Health and Prevention Agenda
- Advancements in telehealth and virtual solutions, AI etc – a *model of Virtual Rural Healthcare?*

On average girls born in rural areas have a higher life expectancy than girls born in Urban areas

There was 1 fewer infant deaths in every 1,000 live births in Rural areas compared to Urban areas

Registered suicide rates are slightly higher in Rural areas than Urban areas

On average people living in Urban areas rated their satisfaction with life in 2022/23 as 7.4 out of 10

On average people living in Rural areas rated their satisfaction with life in 2022/23 as 7.6 out of 10

On average people living in Urban areas rated their happiness in 2022/23 as 7.3 out of 10

Wellbeing measures showed slightly higher wellbeing in rural areas than in urban areas (by 0.2 out of 10 on average)

On average people living in Rural areas rated their happiness in 2022/23 as 7.5 out of 10

Activities linked to the Preventative Agenda

A mixed methods study to investigate health and well-being outcomes for patients referred to a Social Prescribing Link Worker in Mid Wales (2018)

- Collaborative project with PHW, Aberystwyth University's Wellbeing and Health Assessment Research Unit
- Link worker employed by RHCW to deliver non-clinical social prescribing services
- 17 patient referrals, 35 onward referrals to community assets / SP interventions
- Early project on the role and value of the Link Worker

Activities linked to the Preventative Agenda

Wellbeing Walks

- To emphasise the health and well-being benefits of walking in nature
- Worked with Greener Aberystwyth Group in Aberystwyth – launched 4 leaflets December 2021 (£2k grant from CAVO)
- Wellbeing Walks leaflet launched in Machynlleth (Bro Ddyfi Community Hospital) in October 2023; collaboration with Coed Lleol
- More planned for Tywyn and south Ceredigion
- Desktop research / review of health and well-being benefits of walking in nature

A CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY: MID WALES COMMUNITY HOSPITALS

1837
Kington Hospital opens on the site of the Kington Union Workhouse

1838
Llanfynydd Hospital opens on the site of the Llanfynydd Union Workhouse and Infirmary

1860
Aberystwyth Hospital opens on the site of the Aberystwyth Union Workhouse

1868
Machynlleth Hospital opens on the site of the Machynlleth Union Workhouse

1876
Montgomeryshire Private Cottage Hospital opens

1920
Dolgellau Hospital opens on the site of the Dolgellau Union Workhouse

1926
Llanfynydd Cottage Hospital and Infirmary opens

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2030
Llanfynydd Cottage Hospital and Infirmary opens

Community-based Projects

Sustainable Communities

- UK Shared Prosperity funded project (£30k)
- Taking forward learnings from Cardi Care
- Two land-locked rural communities – Llanidloes and Lampeter
- March – November 2024, short-term project
- Social Events / Activities
- Exchange visits
- Residents survey
- Individuals supported

Supporting the Recruitment and Retention of the Health and Care workforce

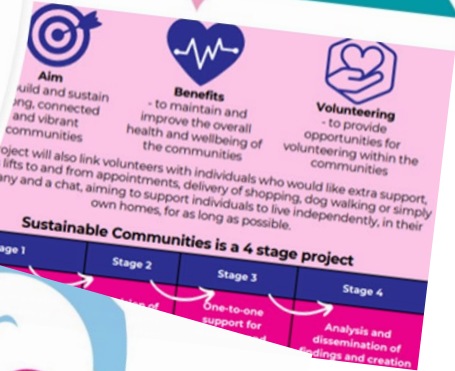
- Train, Work and Live in Mid Wales
- Regional recruitment brochure to attract healthcare professionals to Wales
- Aligned with the Welsh Government's Train, Work, Live campaign
- Available in hard copy and printed format



Health in the Hinterlands: the Welsh Rural Nurse Recruitment and Retention challenge



RHCW Research Series



Annual Rural Health and Care Conference

- Started in 2017, 9th Conference on 11 & 12 November 2025
- Initially 1-day, moved to 2-days in 2019
- In person only event 2017-2019
- Virtual event 2020 (Covid-19)
- Hybrid event 2021-current day
- Growing international audience / presentations
- Popular Poster competition
- Only Health and Care conference in Mid Wales
- Only Rural Health and Care Conference in Wales



Gwlad, Gwyl
Hyfforddai, Gwyl
Cymunedau, gwybodaeth
This is Wales
Train, Work, Live in

<https://ruralhealthandcare.wales>
<https://iechydagofalgwledig.cymru>