

WHAT'S NEW IN CWM TAF?

Welcome to the latest newsletter!

We highlight the new Care Navigation system in Taff Ely which aims to signpost patients to the best service to help them.

We look at the work of MIND in Cynon and Taff Ely.

How £1.7m funding will improve Tonypanydy Health Centre.

And how pupils from across Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf became part of NHS 70 celebrations.

*** Don't forget to contact us with your stories!**
tom.bodden@wales.nhs.uk

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Primary Care Newsletter

ISSUE 4

SUMMER 2018

Signposting our services

Reception staff in GP surgeries in the Pontypridd to Pontyclun area will soon offer patients a choice of services when they ask for an appointment.

The aim is to help callers get to the right service which can also mean they receive advice or treatment quicker.

Patients are being urged not to be offended if the receptionist asks what the problem is when they call the surgery.

This new 'care navigation' system is due to start from September 3 in the Taff Ely area. Staff have been specially trained to suggest other services that could help patients better, like opticians, pharmacists, dentists, MIND, Department for



Work and Pensions, or local authority.

A senior GP at the practice will record a phone message to tell patients about the service when they ring the surgery.

Dr Lisa Thomas is a GP at Parc Canol Medical Practice, in Church Village. She said: "When patients call they will be speaking to our trained care navigators who can direct them to the most appropriate health care service to deal with their problem. By giving a brief description of their problem they can ensure

they are given the best way to meet their needs because sometimes the GP isn't the best person to see."

Callers can still choose to see a doctor but the care navigator might suggest they see someone else that could help them better and provide the right support and care in the first instance. This would help them and other patients.

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DOCTOR ONLINE

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ITV Wales News showcases Walking Rugby



Dr Mair Hopkin, left, from Taff Ely cluster and Paul Nagle from Men's Sheds interviewed by ITV Wales on the Walking Rugby project at Pontypridd RFC

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For example, the Common Ailments Service available from your local pharmacist offers patients access to free NHS advice and treatment for 26 common conditions that cannot be managed by self-care – such as acne, hay fever, sore throat, teething, or constipation.

Patients could be seen and treated quicker by a nurse or a physiotherapist and in some cases, the GP practice might not be the right place at all for the query.

If someone has an eye problem they can see a high street optician, also known as an optometrist, as part of the Wales Eye Care Service. Most GPs lack the specialist equipment to examine eyes which an optometrist has.

Receptionist at the Old School Surgery in Pontyclun Victoria Done said: "We are looking forward to being able to help patients further and sign post them to the best service, saving time for them and for our GPs."

GPs recommend Walking Rugby to patients



Healthcare professionals in the Pontypridd to Pontyclun area are recommending a new form of exercise to patients in a Walking Rugby project.

The sessions are supported by the Taff Ely primary care cluster to benefit people mainly aged over 50.

The project is a collaboration with Shednet which works to establish Men's Sheds as clubs where older men can get together to share their interests and beat isolation.

Walking Rugby organiser Paul Nagle said the sessions run every Thursday from 11am to 12 noon at Pontypridd RFC's Sardis Road ground.

"We have been going for about 10 weeks and we have attracted up to 12 people to come along to the session," he said. "We will welcome more to come along, whether they hear about us via their GP or just turn up on the day."

The aim of the cluster and Men's Sheds is to

create a social activity and opportunity to meet up for men who may in some cases face isolation of loneliness in communities. The physical exercise in a sporting group also encourages players to improve their fitness and diet, watch what they are drinking and smoking.

The group gets expert coaching from Mark Hutton, a WRU registered coach. The sessions can help people with health issues and their fitness, with Paul admitting he had lost five pounds in weight over the 10 weeks so far. The Pontypridd club is the second one of its kind in Wales and the only one linked to a rugby club.

GP Oliver Williams said: "The cluster is working with the local Men's Sheds to support the set-up of other men's and women's shed groups."

More information www.taffelycluster.com

Video https://youtu.be/dUBI_g_KC_0

NHS chief visits 'virtual ward'

Dr Andrew Goodall, Director General and Chief Executive NHS Wales spent the day in Cwm Taf meeting staff across the organisation on August 15. He was able to meet staff involved in the Cynon Cluster's virtual ward in Aberdare and the Multi Disciplinary Team including GPs, pharmacists, occupational therapists, practice and district nurses, third sector colleagues, GP surgery staff and Welsh ambulance colleagues. The team meets once a week to discuss sick or vulnerable patients who may require a more intensive input from the Primary Care Team to continue to live and function safely at home.



Occupational therapist Alex Gigg explained his role to Dr Goodall

£1.7m to upgrade Tonypandy Health Centre

Health Secretary, Vaughan Gething, has confirmed almost £1.7m in funding to re-develop Tonypandy Health Centre.

The funding will support the existing GP practice to create one new integrated health and care centre, leading to improved services for patients.

The current building will not accommodate the changes needed to modernise services.

The accommodation is constrained and rooms are small, with just one treatment room, which is also used by the community nursing team.

The investment will allow the Health Board to increase the number of clinical rooms and create secure accommodation and private space for clinical staff and patients.

The Health Secretary said: "Having two separate GP surgeries within the health centre no longer made sense.

"For one thing, a large amount of space within the building was being duplicated, which meant facilities were cramped for staff and patients, while recruitment of staff for both surgeries was also a challenge.

"Our long-term plan for health and social care in Wales focuses on providing better care, closer to home.

"The refurbishment to Tonypandy Health Centre will do just that. I'm pleased we've committed £1.7m funding for the centre, which will help improve access to local services for patients."

The funding will also be used to improve the infrastructure of the building, with upgrades to water, drainage, electrics, plumbing and heating, creating a modern building which will serve the community for years to come.

Alan Lawrie, Director of Primary, Community and Mental Health for

Cwm Taf University Health Board, said: "We very much welcome this announcement of funding for the Tonypandy Health Centre by the Welsh Government.

"It will provide the GPs, staff and patients with a new improved primary care environment, which will allow for enhanced services for the population. The investment means a wider integrated multidisciplinary team can be accommodated in the refurbished building which will be fit for the future of healthcare in Tonypandy."

The announcement forms part of the biggest targeted investment in primary and community care infrastructure by the Welsh Government.

Earlier this year 19 projects were approved to deliver health and care services closer to people's homes.

Help with common mental health problems



Hundreds of people have been given help to cope with a range of common mental health problems as part of a programme delivered by MIND practitioners via some surgeries in Cwm Taf.

The scheme – known as active monitoring – offers support to those who face anxiety, stress, mild depression, worry, low confidence, anger or grief.

Primary Care Clusters in Taff Ely and Cynon have agreements in place with Merthyr and the Valleys Mind to provide active monitoring within the GP practices.

The programme involves five face to face sessions of up to 40 minutes with a trained practitioner over eight weeks.

Practitioner Linda Allen, pictured, said: "The role of the practitioner is to help people to recognise that they have the power to change the way they're thinking, which enables them to change their thoughts and behaviours. "Quite often they need someone to listen to them and to validate their experience is really

affecting their life. The biggest issues we get through the door is anxiety."

The sessions teach people proven techniques to cope with their feelings."

In the 12 months up to March this year, the service received over 1,000 referrals in Taff Ely alone, with 814 people attending the 'drop in' session.

From 173 completed patient questionnaires, some 169 said that active monitoring had helped them in the short term with 153 thinking it would help them in the long term too.

Measurements of wellbeing showed overall improvements in feelings of anxiety, depression and general wellbeing and confidence.

Carrie Francis, from Aberdare, was referred to a Mind practitioner by her GP. The 28-year old secretary at a software company, and mother of a four year old boy, had suffered previously from postnatal depression and was feeling low and unsure

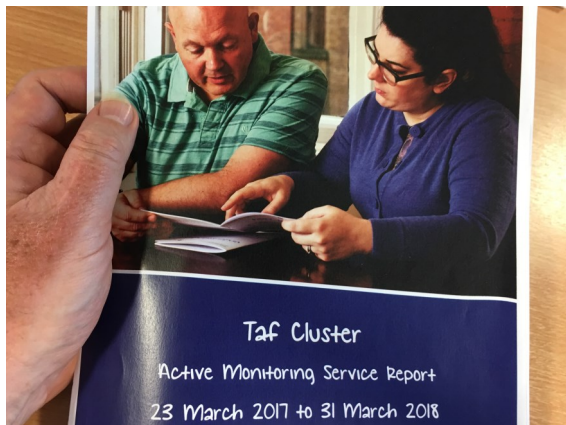


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what was happening to her.

"It turned me into a totally different person," she said. "I struggled with it for months. It is a cruel thing."

strategy to overcome them during six sessions. By the second week her mental wellbeing scores were improving and continued to improve.



The depression returned at the end of 2017 when alongside medication, her GP recommended an active monitoring course.

I decided to give it a go because nothing was working and I went along for an assessment, spoke about what I was struggling with and my daily routine. I was struggling even to take a shower, I was thinking I can't do this."

It had been a relief to meet the practitioner who described her negative thinking patterns and a positive thinking

"Before I was really low and suffering from depression. I wasn't active at all and I didn't understand what was wrong with me as such and I needed help.

"I went to active monitoring and she told me what was wrong and said that she could help me. She gave me the techniques and strategy that was required. It was a massive relief.

"I can use the techniques in my day to day life so anytime I felt in a downward spiral I could practise what she had given me.

"Now I feel great. Unrecognisable to the person I was just seven or eight months ago. I feel more like who I was before the whole situation began. It really worked for me."

Dr Kurt Burkhardt from Parc Canol surgery, in Church Village, said that increased pressures in modern life could be

The benefits are improved access to GPs and the right professional seeing the patient and sign posting them to other services that may help.

"The patient gets continuity of service, longer appointment times, and they report more satisfaction with

"I feel great.

Unrecognisable to the person I was just seven or eight months ago."

part of the reason for the rise in patients coming into surgeries with low or mild anxiety or depression. "People can't cope and they come to us to help. It can be that they don't need a referral to the mental health service but just some more time with someone to listen to them.

"The practitioners can still refer back to us if necessary."

the service because there is more time for them."

Carrie gave her take on the service on YouTube

<https://youtu.be/gTH2LRdbMNo>

Work experience pupils joined **NHS 70** celebrations at Keir Hardie Health Park

Year 10 pupils from schools in Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf joined in the NHS 70 celebrations at Keir Hardie University Health Park, Merthyr Tydfil during their work experience week on the Healthcare Taster Programme.

During the programme, the students engaged with staff at Prince Charles Hospital, Keir Hardie University Health Park and Ysbyty Cwm Cynon, and took part in 'hands-on' activities and tours of departments such as Pathology and Pharmacy.

The programme was also an opportunity to showcase Primary Care to our future workforce, where the students spent time at the Academic Centre with a GP, Dentist and Optometrist among others.

The dentist provided a demonstration of placing a filling into a dummy mouth, allowing the students the opportunity to complete a filling on a demonstration kit. Many of the professional staff shared their routes to their profession, mapping out the learning, experiences and various directions they had taken during their journeys.

Day 4 of the programme enabled the students to participate in the NHS at 70 celebrations at Keir Hardie. The students wrote cards explaining why they had chosen to attend the Taster Programme



and what their ambitions were for the future, which were then placed in to a time capsule. They then helped Vaughan Gething, Cabinet Minister for Health and Professor Marcus Longley the University Health Board's Chairman, to plant the capsule and one of the 70 trees which commemorate the NHS milestone.

The students are photographed at the celebrations below.



Web doctor service saves appointment times

Patients in the Church Village area will soon be able to consult their GP via computer or smartphone.

Parc Canol Group Practice, responsible for 17,500 patients, is adopting a 24-hour E-consultation system.

The web-based consultations are conducted via the practice website and offer medical advice, prescriptions or sick notes, or a referral to a face-to-face appointment when necessary. *A similar scheme which has run at Pontcae Medical Practice in Merthyr Tydfil for the last two years is now saving an average of 30 surgery appointments a week.*

Patient satisfaction with that service is also high at 98%. Some 80% of patients reported that they did not need to contact the surgery or other health service for the same problem.

Parc Canol Group Practice GP Dr Lisa Thomas, pictured, said: "The aim is to deliver a service to all our patients while freeing up face-to-face appointments for the most complex cases who need to be seen and examined. Patients who, for example, may need a sick note or advice don't need to take time out to come into the surgery."

Patients can access the system from the practice website

www.parccanolgrouppractice.co.uk at any time of the day or night.

One section details how to explain their symptoms for an E-consultation, a section gives general advice or



information on self-care, and another on how to contact administrative help. If they need help with a medical problem, the patient answers some questions on-line. Patients are told they will receive a response by the end of the next working day. They can use this service if they are registered at the practice and if the problem isn't an immediate emergency.

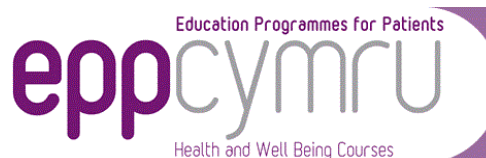
Experienced staff co-ordinate the requests for an E-consultation for the doctors, who then take the action necessary, such as a prescription, referral for an appointment or a sick note.

Pontcae practice manager Kevin Rogers said: "We were the first in Wales to bring in E-consult. For us it has worked brilliantly and is probably one of the best innovations we have had so far."

All the information collected is available in the patient's records later. Safeguards are built in so that if the symptoms a patient describes are concerning they can be directed towards A&E or to make an acute appointment with the practice.

Chronic Pain

Dealing with long term pain: Education Programmes for Patients (EPP) Cymru deliver FREE Health and Well Being courses for adults across Wales



The Chronic Pain Self Management course was developed for people who have a primary or secondary diagnosis of chronic pain. Pain is defined as being chronic or long term when it lasts for longer than 3 to 6 months, or beyond the normal healing time of an injury.

Examples of Chronic Pain conditions are: musculo-skeletal pain, such as neck, shoulder or back pain. Fibromyalgia, whiplash injuries, chronic regional pain syndromes, repetitive strain injury, chronic pelvic pain, post-surgical pain that lasts beyond 6 months, neuropathic pain, post stroke or central pain. The Chronic Pain Self Management course may also benefit those who have conditions such as persistent headache, Crohn's disease, irritable bowel syndrome, diabetic neuropathy, or those who experience severe muscular pain due to conditions such as multiple sclerosis.

Topics covered include: **ways to deal with problems** such as restricted movement, fatigue, pacing and planning and tense muscles; **exercise for staying healthy; flexible, and strong making decisions** about treatment and complementary therapies; **ways to talk about chronic pain** with family, friends, and health professionals; **healthy eating; setting goals; relationships.**

Each person who attends will receive a copy of the book, *Living a Healthy Life With Chronic Pain* (on loan for the 6 weeks), and a relaxation CD, **Relaxation for Mind and Body**, to keep.

It is the way in which the programme is run that makes it effective. Through group discussions, mutual support and

learning, and practicing new techniques, participants will finish the course with more confidence in their ability to manage their own health and maintain active and full lives.

Does the Programme replace existing programmes and treatments?

The Self Management Programme will not conflict with existing programmes or treatment. It is designed to enhance regular treatment. The programme gives participants the skills to coordinate all the things needed to manage their health, as well as to help them keep active in their lives.

How was the Programme developed and evaluated?

Like the other Self Management Resource Centre Self Management programmes, the Chronic Pain Programme has also been rigorously evaluated in two randomised clinical trials funded by Health Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). The research studies found that, on average, people who have participated in the Chronic Pain Programme have more vitality or energy, less pain, less dependence on others, improved mental health, are more involved in everyday activities, and are more satisfied with their lives compared to those who have not taken the programme.

Contact Debra Moore EPP Coordinator Cwm Taf, Keir Hardie Health Park, Aberdare Road, Merthyr Tydfil CF48 1BZ. 01685 351025 / 01685 351032

debra.moore@wales.nhs.uk

Janice.davies21@wales.nhs.uk www.eppwales.org

CHRONIC DISEASE SELF-MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME 2018 DATES - SIX SESSIONS PER COURSE

SESSION DATES 2018	DAY	TIME	VENUE	PLUS 1 WEEK
3/9, 10/9, 17/9, 24/9, 1/10, 8/10	Mon	12-2.30pm	Mountain Ash Day Centre Chronic Pain DM	
11/9, 18/9, 25/9, 2/10, 9/10, 16/10	Tue	12-2.30pm	Royal Glamorgan Hospital Training Room 2	**
5/9, 12/9, 19/9, 26/9, 3/10, 10/10	Wed	12-2.30pm	Ysbyty Cwm Rhondda Boardroom	
20/9, 27/9, 4/10, 11/10, 18/10, 25/10	Thur	10.30-1pm	Keir Hardie Health Park Group Room 1	**
24/10, 31/10, 7/11, 14/11, 21/11, 28/11	Wed	10.30-1pm	Ysbyty Cwm Rhondda Boardroom	
25/10, 1/11, 8/11, 15/11, 22/11, 29/11	Thur	10.30-1pm	Royal Glamorgan Hospital Training Room 9	

Key: ** = 1 extra session one week before start of course, should those want to meet beforehand over a cuppa and a chat.

New taffelycluster.com website keeps patients up to date



A new website has been launched to help to keep patients from Pontyclun to Pontypridd up to date with information about their primary care health services.

The site – taffelycluster.com - has been created by the local Taff Ely Primary Care Cluster which represents GPs, optometrists, dentists and pharmacists, social care and community services.

The aim is to establish a one stop shop for patients needing information about how to access the services from a range of professionals, and not only GPs.

Dr Oliver Williams, based in Pontypridd, who designed the site, said: "People are contacting our surgeries all the time asking for help with how to access various services.

"We wanted to give them something available 24/7 where they can find this information without having to wait to phone or visit the surgery."

Sections cover health and wellbeing support, and projects which improve wellbeing or combat isolation and loneliness by including links to third party sites.

"People will be able to find out about local walking rugby sessions, free courses to help to control stress, as well as other resources, all within the Pontyclun to Pontypridd area," Dr Williams said. "There is information on the range of cluster professionals available, local surgeries, useful contacts and news updates."

There are links to help people 'Choose Well', as well as self-referral NHS physiotherapy service and the Common Ailments scheme which enables local pharmacists to treat certain conditions. Support to quit smoking, access to alcohol and drug services, depression resources, sexual health advice as well as links to the health screening services available.



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Cwm Taf
University Health Board

Primary Care Clusters

Cwm Taf University Health Board

Ynysmeurig House

Navigation Park

Abercynon

CF45 4SN

Email Newsletter Editor

tom.bodden@wales.nhs.uk

CWM TAF CARES



Merthyr Tydfil GP Lead Dr Mary Franklin. Practice Manager Leads Kate Francis; Kevin Rogers. Primary Care Development Manager Imran Gilani 01685 351357.

Cynon Valley GP Lead Simon Gray. Practice manager leads Lynwen Francis and Lucy Evans. Primary Care Development Manager Tess Raybould 01685 351387.

Rhondda GP leads Dr Westley Sauders; Dr Rachel Bennett; Dr Rachel Jeffries; Dr Neeraj Singh. Practice Manager Lead Sarah Simpson. Primary Care Development Manager Hayley Pugh 01685 351341.

Taff Ely GP leads Dr Oliver Williams and Dr Stephanie Foulkes-Moran. Practice Manager Leads Rachael Baker and Ian Dodd. Primary Care Development Manager Janet Kelland 01685 351483.

Antiphospho ... what?

Antiphospholipid syndrome (APS) is an under-diagnosed autoimmune disease that carries an increased risk of thrombotic and obstetric complications. APS causes approximately 15% of strokes, heart attacks and DVTs in the under 50s. In pregnancy, APS is the most important potentially treatable cause of recurrent miscarriage. Currently, on average, it takes three years for someone to be diagnosed with APS.

There is now a Royal College of GPs online course for the diagnosis and treatment of APS. The antiphospholipid syndrome eLearning module takes 30 minutes to

complete and is free to both members and non-members of the RCGP. On successful completion, you will be awarded 0.5 Continuing Professional Developments and will be issued with a certificate. Click here to access the course:

<http://elearning.rcgp.org.uk/aps>

Whilst it is usually diagnosed in secondary care, the Royal College states that GPs need to be aware of APS in order to make appropriate referrals in those who meet the clinical diagnostic criteria.

The charity, APS Support UK, has a list of APS consultants throughout the UK: www.aps-support.org.uk which GPs may find useful.

