



Gofal Cymdeithasol **Cymru**  
Social Care **Wales**



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Addysg a Gwellu Iechyd  
Cymru (AaGIC)  
Health Education and  
Improvement Wales (HEIW)

# Updates November 2023 Implementation of the Strategic Workforce plan



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## 1 ~ New starters



Lisa Jay

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Attraction Campaign Specialist



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Workforce Project Manager

## 2 ~ AHP pathfinder projects

**Action 7** of Strategic Mental Health Workforce Plan

At present, nine projects have been approved for funding.

It is expected that most of the projects will commence in Q3/Q4 after any necessary advertising and recruitment processes have concluded.

Projects are funded until March 2025.

## Arts therapy for older adult mental health

### Aneurin Bevan UHB

#### What is the project:

We will provide funding to employ two HCPC registered Arts Therapists and also Arts Therapist Professional Lead to develop an Arts Therapy Strategy across ABUHB and surrounding areas. This will allow increased provision for Arts Therapy sessions which include painting, drawing, and other artistic discipline which are tailored to the individual person. Funding will allow for and necessary staff and art supplies, thus reducing high referral waiting times.

#### Why is it important:

Arts activity and more specifically, arts therapies, represent an evidence-based approach that benefit both those living with Dementia and their carers. These creative sessions provide a safe and supportive environment for important social interactions and connections, allowing for the nurturing of relationships that are crucial to delivering effective health and social care. Arts therapies are particularly important for some older adults who are unable to access existing forms of therapeutic intervention and for service users with severe impairment and/or communication challenges.

#### Target group:

This project will improve the lives of older adults (aged 65 years and above) that are under the care and support of CMHTs or within the inpatient units of Aneurin Bevan UHB service area and also those diagnosed with dementia. The project also positively impacts those caring for individuals living with dementia.

**To find out more about Arts Therapists in Wales, please visit:**

[Art Therapy - HEIW \(nhs.wales\)](https://nhs.uk/health-education-and-improvement-wales/art-therapy)

#### What is ArtsTherapy:

Arts Therapy is a collective term which describes a number of professions including Art Therapists also known as Art Psychotherapy, Drama therapy, music therapy and dance movement psychotherapy. These professions offer therapeutic services where the specific arts medium is used as a main mode of communication and expression. Within this context, 'art' is not used as diagnostic tool but as a medium to address emotional issues which may be confusing and distressing or difficult to express.

The various modes of Arts therapy can be practiced in groups or individually, depending on clients' needs. The Arts activities will improve the following:

- ✦ exercising individual agency
- ✦ building a sense of connection
- ✦ encouraging conversation
- ✦ encouraging memory recall
- ✦ increasing confidence
- ✦ using motor skills
- ✦ providing stimulation

**Link to a video about Art Therapy for older adults:**

<https://youtu.be/lrxJw1ybg9w>

**Link to a video about Art Therapy for Dementia:**

<https://youtu.be/XpglJ13ro9k>

## 'Recovery Through Sport' project Aneurin Bevan UHB

### What is the project:

Working in partnership with 'Recovery through Sport' and local sports clubs, this project will build upon and enhance existing referral pathways to expand the provision of combined physiotherapy, activity through movement, coaching and mental health support, improving the physical health and mental health of people in ABUHB area.

The funded Physiotherapist will provide dedicated leadership, planning, coordination and management of the project, facilitating a variety of physical activities, including but not limited to, group gym session, walking football, walking rugby, group rambling and hikes and Pilates. These physical activities will take place in a variety of settings and locations in the ABUHB service area and surrounding areas.

Scheduling of the sessions / events will be tailored to service user demand and availability.

### Why is it important:

Many people find that physical activity helps them maintain a positive mental health, either on its own, or in combination with other treatments., and there are many studies that have shown that doing physical activity can improve mental health; improving sleep, positive mood changes due to feel-good hormones, improving self-esteem, and managing stress and anxiety, reducing depression, improving social inclusion and social connection (Mental Health Foundation, 2023: [How to look after your mental health using exercise | Mental Health Foundation](#))

Also, individuals with SMI are more at risk of developing diabetes and heart disease due to the side effects of many of the medications for this client group. This project provides a 'whole person' approach, integrating physical health and mental health, as recommended by Kings Fund Report, 2016:

[Bringing together physical and mental health | The King's Fund \(kingsfund.org.uk\)](https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/bringing-together-physical-and-mental-health)

The impact of physiotherapy intervention on mental health and wellbeing is well evidenced. A wealth of published research shows physiotherapy intervention can reduce symptoms of depression in older adults (Perez-Sousa et al 2020), reduced anxiety and enhanced memory (Imboden et al (2020) and improve health outcomes in patients with musculoskeletal pain (Silva Guerrero et al 2018).

### Target group:

All adults (18+ years) in ABUHB area who have been referred via Forensic services, CMHTs, in-patient wards, Learning Disability Teams and also individuals cared for in the private sector. Also open to ABUHB staff who wish to offer support to service users or if they themselves wish to benefit from social interaction and gentle physical activity in a supportive and encouraging environment.

### Benefits of Project:

Increased number of service users being referred to the project  
Ability to attribute positive impact on service user mental health to their physical improvement via the project. An efficient and effective service delivery model that demonstrates the need for permanent funding, which other UHB areas may consider adopting as best practice.



## Art therapy (CAMHS) Swansea Bay UHB

### What is the project:

We have approved funding to employ an Arts Therapist for four sessions per week to enable increased provision for Arts Therapy sessions for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services within Swansea Bay UHB area to meet increasing demands of the service.

Group Art Therapy is offered as a treatment option from within the Part 1 team. Children and young people are assessed at a Choice meeting following referral to CAMHS from their GP, or following contact with our Single Point of Access Team.

Following a Choice assessment, CYP can be offered 1:1 therapeutic Intervention, a Group intervention or may receive signposting information and discharge.

### Why is it important:

Arts therapies are particularly important for young people who struggle to engage in cognitive talking therapies.

Dyadic art therapy is a joined-up approach to art therapy, involving children and their parents or carers. The make-up of the dyad varies with different children and different family set-ups. It usually involves the child and an adult with whom the child has a significant and enduring relationship.

Using this approach there is an opportunity to observe the relationship between caregiver and child at first hand, to facilitate joined up creative and playful activities between caregiver and child and to enhance caregiving skills to facilitate reflective discussions between caregiver and child which improve the parent-child relationship, parental sensitivity, and also improves parental mental health and self-esteem.

### Target group:

Therapy is specifically designed for young people who struggle to engage in cognitive talking therapies, and their parents or carers.

## Music therapy (older adult mental health) Cardiff and Vale UHB

### What is the project:

Employ a fulltime Music Therapist to enable increased provision for Music Therapy sessions for older adults in mental health within Cardiff and Vale UHB service area. Improved mental health and wellbeing of older adults and their care supporters.

Enhanced social engagement and connection for older adults in CandVUHB area.

Care pathways for older adults in CandVUHB area will be expanded to include a variety of therapeutic options

### Why is it important:

Over the last two years, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on many people's physical and mental health. Music played a pivotal role during the pandemic in helping people through the daily challenges of isolation, loneliness, uncertainty and loss.

Research shows that brain activity and memory are enhanced by listening to music, and music therapy has been proven to ameliorate symptoms of dementia, such as anxiety, apathy, depression and agitation. The direct, emotional connection music can make with people is equally important.

Music therapy has been shown to be the BEST type of therapy for reducing behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia as it reduces agitation and need for medication.  
([Resources – Music For Dementia](#))

These creative music sessions provide a safe and supportive environment for important social interactions and connections, outside of a medical environment, allowing individuals much needed time away from their diagnosis. Nevertheless the Music Therapist is able to observe any changes to an individual's physical health and emotional wellbeing.

**Video link showcasing how music therapy helps dementia patients: improving memory recall in patients, reductions in anxiety and depression:** [Music therapy may help dementia patients - YouTube](#)

### Target group:

This project will improve the lives of older adults (aged 65 years and above) that are under the care and support of CMHTs or within the inpatient units of CandVUHB service area and also those newly diagnosed with dementia. The project also positively impacts those caring for individuals living with dementia.

**Fact sheet (Right) about music and dementia (taken from Music for Dementia UK available at:**  
<https://www.musicfordementia.org.uk/resources>

Video links showcasing how music therapy helps dementia patients: improving memory recall in patients, reductions in anxiety and depression:  
[Music therapy may help dementia patients - YouTube](#)  
<https://youtu.be/ymEct8PePMY>

## Physiotherapy / rehabilitation project (young person) Cardiff and Vale UHB

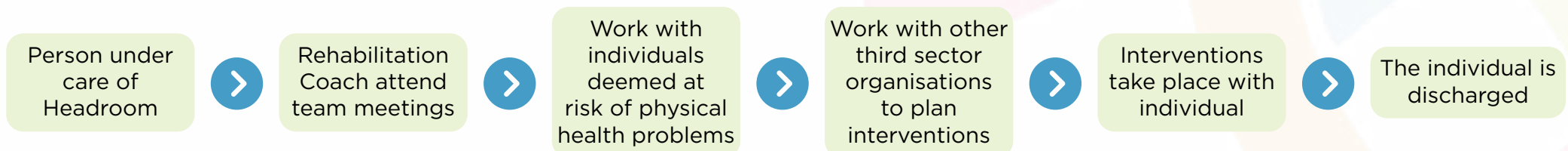
### What is the project:

This project builds upon existing model of care within Physiotherapy Mental Health Team, working with input from SHAPE in Worcester sharing best practice from their larger-scale pilot project to improve the rehabilitation model in Cardiff and Vale UHB area.

The new Physiotherapy Technical Instructor will work collaboratively with the Headroom team and third sector partners to expand the current service to include physical health and rehabilitation for 14-25 year olds who have experienced their first episode psychosis, enabling a seamless care pathway, integrating mental and physical health. Project will be reviewed in March 2025

The project will integrate physical health and wellbeing interventions to the existing 'Headroom' Service to support sustained recovery, including maintaining a healthy lifestyle whilst simultaneously actively managing medication, empowering individuals to live hopeful and productive lives.

### How it will work:



### Why is it important:

NICE guidelines recommend individuals should be offered a healthy eating and physical activity programme

To support young people experiencing a first episode psychosis to make lifestyle choices informed by an understanding of their greater risk for obesity, cardiovascular diseases and metabolic disorders.

Evidence suggests that there are improved outcomes within mental health settings of tailored exercise programmes being delivered by a trained professional compared to other programmes

To encourage peer support through tailored group exercise to support sustainable health behaviour change.

### Our scope:

We will work collaboratively with 'Headroom', which is an NHS service based within Cardiff and Vale UHB service area, and also in partnership with Barnardo's and other third sector organisations to support early intervention with a focus on sustainable change.



## Dietetics community nutrition project Cardiff and Vale UHB

### What is the project:

To provide early intervention, to improve prognosis, reduce deterioration and progression to Tier 2 services and support admission reduction. Access in a more timely, local manner with a rehabilitation focus.

Implement an Integrated approach across physical and mental health, with clinical services and public health services working in partnership to improve the nutrition, physical health and mental health of people in CandVUHB area. This project will Provide nutrition training and education for patients, carers and other MDT members as part of a whole person-centred approach.

We will facilitate practical sessions via 'Get Cooking', which is an 8-week cookery course to develop skills to enable healthier, safe and economical meals. This initiative involves hands on cooking and activities promoting healthy eating, food safety and budgeting. The programme is accredited through Agored Cymru (Level 1, 2 credits) so supporting the wider determinants of health such as education and employment.

### Why is it important:

COVID has had a significant impact on peoples mental and physical health and has resulted in significant weight loss for some and significant weight increase for others.

Services are reporting difficulties in effectively supporting individuals with low body weight and excess weight linked to poor self-care, depression, trauma related food issues and ADH related food issues.

Overweight is becoming an increasing problem, yet weight gain is a side-effect of many of the medications for this client group. Support is required for guided self-help for bulimia and binge eating disorders.

individuals with mental illness are often neglected in Public Health initiatives that are targeted at general population (Clark et al 2015) and there is a call for health promotion interventions to be developed to address the populations specific needs including nutrition and cooking skills.

Evidenced based cooking interventions have been used to improve nutritional status, weight related outcomes and cooking skills as well as positive influences on socialisation, self-esteem and quality of life (Farmer et al 2017).

### Target group:

ALL Adults in CAVUHB Area, referred via primary care and CMHT

## Arts therapy for early onset dementia Cardiff and Vale UHB

### What is the project:

The aim of the project is to improve the mental health and wellbeing of dementia patients and those with younger onset dementia (YOD) .

The project will involve cross-organisational collaboration with input from colleagues such as Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists and other members of the MDT to expand the range of therapies in CandVUHB area to develop and promote the referral pathway for Arts Therapy.

### Why is it important:

Younger people living with dementia are more likely to present with rarer forms of dementia e.g. Frontotemporal dementia or Primary Progressive Aphasia. Changes in communication skills may often be one of the first signs/symptoms a person may experience (Rare Dementia UK, 2023).

Art therapy may enable individuals to express themselves in alternative ways by accessing the creative right side of the brain, when skills on the left side of the brain are lost.

Art therapy is understood to be used with people across all ages with a range of conditions to enhance emotional, physical and cognitive wellbeing, and can be delivered to individuals or in groups (British Association of Art Therapies, 2023).

### Target group:

Dementia patients in CAVUHB area, with particular focus on younger onset dementia (under 65 years of age) and their unique client needs, within inpatient and community mental health teams.



## Gender identity speech and language therapy Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB

### What is the project:

Employ a specialist Speech and Language Therapist for 8 sessions per week, to improve access to the service, reducing waiting lists to positively impact the consequences of gender dysphoria and its associated mental health conditions.

The specialist speech and language therapist will provide bespoke voice coaching to help the individual change their voice including pitch, resonance, intonation and expression, voice projection and also other voice-related behaviours such as coughing and laughing.

### Why is it important:

Voice / Communication incongruence increases the experience of gender dysphoria and mental health concerns are well documented. The co-morbidity for transgender individuals as outlined in The Welsh Government LGBTQ+ Action Plan 2021 state they are more at risk of suicide.

Improved access to services will positively impact potential consequences of gender dysphoria, including significantly increased risk of suicide, substance use, and other mental health conditions.

### Target group:

This project will improve the lives of those undergoing gender transition in Cwm Taf UHB Area.



## Tailored mental health promotion and advice Betsi Cadwaladr UHB

### What is the project:

The funding will enable improved Community Mental Health provision to include a variety of one to one interventions and workshops to support improved physical health as identified in the patients' intervention plan. This will include advice on healthy eating, physical health and exercise, good mental wellbeing and practical skills and activity groups such as hiking and cookery, encouraging patients to develop healthier lifestyles, identify coping strategies whilst fostering positivity and selfcare.

### Why is it important:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE, 2004) guidelines for the treatment and management of Psychosis and Schizophrenia in adults place emphasis upon the physical wellbeing of these individuals who are prescribed antipsychotic medication (1.1.3 physical health).

Health promotion and advice forms an important aspect of mental health service provision for it can affect early intervention and prevention and educate patients on self-care. This project will help bridge the gap between mental health and physical health, with emphasis on those with serious mental illness (SMI).

### Target group:

Any patient experiencing mental health issues in the Denbighshire area, under the care and support of CMHTs or within the inpatient unit. Particularly, targeting SMI patients with psychosis and schizophrenia who are most likely to experience a decline of physical health, exacerbated by medication such as clozapine.





## 3 ~ Get in touch

<https://heiw.nhs.wales/SMHWP>

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