

# Age Alliance Wales

*working together to support older people in Wales.  
cydweithio i gefnogi pobl hŷn yng Nghymru.*



Welcome to the 17th Age Alliance Wales e-newsletter - November 2015

Where possible, briefings will be bi-monthly, so if you have an item you would like included in the next newsletter, please send it to Mal Andrews before January 6th.

## Age Alliance Wales Activity

### Dates for diary:

**November 24th: Deadline for nominations for Vice Chair**

**December 9th: AAW meeting to discuss the outcome of the Provider Consortium bid to Sustainable Social Services Grant**

**February 22nd: AAW meeting with Sarah Rochira (OPCW) 2pm-4pm**

**March 23rd: AAW Chief Executives summit 10am-1pm**

Rachel Lewis  
Age Alliance Wales Manager

### RNIB

#### **Cwm Taf Community Engagement Project**

This been an extensive three year pilot project between RNIB and Cwm Taf Health Board, set up to improve access to treatment times for patients with stable glaucoma and ocular hypertension.

The project involved piloting a community based clinic, called an Ophthalmic Diagnostic Treatment Centre (ODTC) to treat patients with stable of simple glaucoma. The clinic was set up in a community hospital in the Rhondda Valley and led by optometrists rather than a consultant ophthalmologist.

The project was evaluated by London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and the findings show positive results. These include: reduced waiting times between appointments for patients, patients having to attend fewer appointments as more than one examination was carried out at a single appointment, and overall greater patient satisfaction. Increased capacity was also seen in both consultant led glaucoma clinics and the pilot clinics due to the additional facility.

Glaucoma is the second most common cause of certified sight loss in the UK. However, with early detection and treatment of ocular hypertension and glaucoma, sight loss can often be prevented or minimised. Access to treatment times is therefore crucial in order to reduce preventable sight loss.

The summary/briefing of the Cwm Taf Ophthalmic Diagnostic Treatment Centre is now available on the RNIB website at the link below.

[www.rnib.org.uk/expanding-community-eye-care](http://www.rnib.org.uk/expanding-community-eye-care)

The results will be shared across Wales and the rest of the UK, through articles, media, relevant events and conferences, so as to inform the development of eye care service delivery.

A priority within the Welsh Government eye health care plan is to introduce ODTCs to all health boards in Wales. The results of the evaluation will therefore be extremely useful to provide learning and inform the implementation of additional ODTCs across both Wales and the UK.

For more information, please contact [Sian.Biddyr@rnib.org.uk](mailto:Sian.Biddyr@rnib.org.uk)

## **New shuttle service at UHL**

A courtesy shuttle service has launched at a local hospital to assist patients and visitors around the site.

University Hospital Llandough (UHL) has received funding from the Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) to run a 12 month pilot courtesy shuttle service to transport patients to and from the car parks and main entrances of the hospital site.

The volunteer led service initially ran Monday to Friday between 9am and 11am and has now expanded its times due to the help of local Royal Voluntary Service volunteers.

Peter Welsh, General Manager at University Hospital Llandough said: “We offer free parking at UHL but as the site is quite large sometimes patients and visitors can be parked further away from the hospital entrances than they wish. In recognition of this we welcomed the funding from the RVS which has enabled us to pilot this courtesy shuttle service to assist patients and visitors around the hospital site.

“We welcome feedback from any users of the service which will help us to improve what is offered with a hope to extending the pilot next year.”

The Royal Voluntary Service is working to coordinate a number of volunteers to help continue to expand the service throughout the week. Any volunteers that would be willing to assist or would like to find out more should contact The Royal Voluntary Service on 02920 027855 or you can email

[cardiffvalehub@royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk](mailto:cardiffvalehub@royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk)

Royal Voluntary Service is a registered charity founded in 1938 as the Women’s Voluntary Services for Air Raid Precautions. Today we work successfully alongside hospitals, local authorities and other organisations, providing much-needed support for older people – delivered with warmth and friendliness by our dedicated volunteers.

The RVS donated £15,000 to Cardiff and Vale University Health Board to provide the service at its UHL site. RVS and Cardiff and Vale UHB have worked in partnership on a number of initiatives starting in 1938.

## Care & Repair Cymru

### Winter is the Biggest Killer for Wales' Ageing Society

Care & Repair Cymru is shining the spotlight on the scandal of excess winter deaths as it launches its winter Fighting Fuel Poverty campaign. The Wales-wide campaign aims to highlight the huge problem of fuel poverty and save the lives of thousands of older people in Wales, who might otherwise die this winter due to the cold weather.

Find out more about the campaign [here](#)

To help raise awareness of this problem and raise money to help keep older people in Wales warm this winter, we've launched [#Scarfie](#).

### Please join in and help us spread the word

1. Take a photo of yourself in your favorite scarf - the sillier the #scarfie the better.
2. Share the photo with your friends on social media using the #scarfie hashtag
3. Visit our [website](#) to donate to the Care & Repair Winter Hardship Fund

We'll be sharing our favorite #scarfies on our Twitter and Facebook pages.

[Let's all Knit Together](#) is also part of Care & Repair's 'Fighting Fuel Poverty' campaign. Everyone is invited to join our sponsored knit a scarf with 100% of money raised go into a hardship fund to help keep older people in Wales warm this winter.

### NEA Warm & Healthy Homes Fund

Care & Repair Cymru have been successful in securing £25,000 small measures grant funding from NEA for Care & Repair agencies across Wales. The funding will be targeted at interventions that address fuel poverty for vulnerable older people being discharged from hospital into a cold living environment. This funding award will also provide accredited 'energy advice' and 'fuel debt' training for frontline staff and awareness information targeted towards Health & Social Care professionals and older people's groups.

Vera Brinkworth

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## Age Connects Wales

Age Connects Wales is aware of the significant money worries older people face and this is reflected in the numbers of people being supported by our members across Wales. Here we give a flavour of the work Age Connects organisations do to tackle money poverty. During the period 1 April to 30 September 2015 we supported over 11,000 people to access a range of Welfare Benefits through Welfare Rights Projects and Information and Advice Teams, raising a total of £3.5m in welfare benefits that helped older people stay active, live independently and take control of their finances.

We know that the services we provide make a real difference to the quality of peoples' lives, giving them new opportunities to improve their health, wellbeing and living conditions. Mr P came to Age Connects because he was struggling to cope on a low fixed income, his physical health was deteriorating due to a poor diet and he felt depressed. With the help of an Age Connects Welfare Rights Advisor, Mr P was supported to apply for Employment Support Allowance, Council Tax Benefit, Housing Benefit and Personal Independence Payment resulting in an increase in his annual income of £5,852.60.

Mr P received an Enhanced Mobility award of £57.45 and a Standard Daily Living Award of £55.10 per week via his PIP claim. He reduced the debt on his rent, council tax and water rates by £485.63 which meant that he was back in control of his finances and feeling more positive about the future.

When asked what difference our support had made to his life he said "I cannot thank you enough. I was desperate and didn't know where to turn. The extra money I have will help me pay the money I owe which is a huge weight off my shoulders. I can now plan to move to somewhere else, somewhere much better for me, somewhere I will be happy".

For more information about Age Connects services please visit

[www.ageconnectswales.org.uk](http://www.ageconnectswales.org.uk), email [enquiries@ageconnectswales.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageconnectswales.org.uk) or telephone 01443 490650.

## Alzheimers Society

### **Diagnose or disempower? Receiving a diagnosis of dementia in Wales**

On 15 October, Alzheimer's Society launched 'Diagnose or disempower?', a new policy report looking at the experience of receiving a diagnosis of dementia in Wales today.

The report reveals that more than half of people living with dementia in Wales have still not received a formal diagnosis. The national diagnosis rate for Wales is 43%, but this figure varies widely within Wales; no Local Health Board has a diagnosis rate above 50% and the lowest is 37.2%. Wales has some of the worst diagnosis rates in the UK and has seen very little improvement to these figures in recent years.

The report captures the experiences of people living with dementia and their views on their diagnosis and identifies a number of barriers to receiving a diagnosis of dementia in Wales, including;

- Low public awareness

- Fear and stigma

- Poor understanding of dementia by health and social care professionals

- Under resourcing of memory services

- A disinclination to diagnose where support services are not available.

Receiving a diagnosis empowers people with dementia to make decisions and choices, it opens the door to accessing services and, in some cases, enables access to medication which can help manage their condition. Timely diagnosis can bring benefits to the health and social care system through improved clinical management and reductions in crisis admissions. Treatment and care can be more effectively planned to meet the needs of the patient throughout all stages of their dementia.

'Diagnose or disempower?' also reveals that many people who have received a diagnosis may still not have had adequate information and support needed in order to live well with dementia. Good post diagnosis care is essential as evidence shows that with the right support, people with dementia can still enjoy a good quality of life and remain a part of their community. It also helps to change perceptions and the stigma that surrounds dementia, helping people to feel confident, understood and supported as a valuable part of society.

The Diagnose or Disempower? report identified some excellent services for people affected by dementia in Wales. However, it also shows substantial variation in the quality of services received. People with dementia and their carers shared stories of support, or lack thereof. Nearly 1 in 10 people reported receiving no support at all in the first year after they received their diagnosis.

The report makes a number of recommendations, including the urgent need for an appropriately resourced National Dementia Strategy in Wales.

More information can be found at [www.alzheimers.org.uk/diagnosisWales](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/diagnosisWales)

## Cwm Taf Older People's Network Launch

9.30am - 12.30pm Monday 14th December 15

Hawthorn Leisure Centre Nr Pontypridd CF37 5LN

WE WILL BRING REFRESHMENTS, YOU BRING THE IDEAS!

To book your place, please contact: Kath on 01443 846200 /  
kprice@interlinkrct.org.uk

Or contact Simon sjames@interlinkrct.org.uk / 01443 846221 to discuss the event.

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