

Powys Teaching Health Board
Annual Plan 2026/27 – Everyday version
Year 3 of our five-year Integrated Plan 2024 - 2029

1. Introduction

Welcome to the "everyday" version of the Powys Teaching Health Board Annual Plan 2026/27. This document is a summary of our full Annual Plan, which is available from our website at pthb.nhs.wales/plan2627

In this document you can find: an overview of Powys Teaching Health Board and the population of the county; a summary of our opportunities and challenges; a summary of our long-term strategy for health and care in the county and our plan for 2026/27; and, the detailed actions we plan during 2026/27.

Our Annual Plan sets out our ambitions for patients and communities for the year ahead, drawing on feedback we have heard from PTHB colleagues, patients and communities, Llais and other key stakeholders about "what matters". It is about improving care and outcomes for the people of Powys, whilst living within our financial means. It is ambitious to bring more care closer to home, reduce unnecessary hospital use, and build a stronger, more sustainable health and care system for the future. But alongside this it makes savings, improves productivity, reduces waste and avoidable costs, and sets out the need to making difficult choices.

Quality remains the golden thread throughout the Plan, reflecting our statutory Duty of Quality (pictured right) so that we take a balanced approach that takes into account our quality, performance and financial duties. This includes our continued work to achieve the vision set out in the joint Health and Care Strategy, our response to the Welsh Government guidance including the NHS Wales Planning and Performance Frameworks & Allocation Letter, our journey of improvement to address our current Escalation Status, and our recovery priorities.



This plan is both strategic and tactical in nature, as it includes actions we will take in the short, medium and longer-term. This includes action to address Risk, support Recovery and ensure Sustainability. A key priority in this Plan is our Better Together programme through which we are working with staff, patients, communities and partner organisations to agree the future shape of safe, high-quality and sustainable health services (our "clinical services plan"). Alongside this, there is a renewed emphasis on addressing the underlying drivers of need and demand through our Population Health Strategic Framework and Strategic Commissioning Framework.

As part of Welsh Government's escalation and oversight framework we are current in "routine arrangements" (Level 1) for quality, performance and governance which reflects positive achievement in these areas. However, we are in "targeted intervention" (Level 4) for strategy, planning and finance – and this relates to current challenges including our financial position. Through this plan we aim to stay in "routine arrangements" for quality, performance and governance whilst continuing our improvement journey for strategy, planning and finance which includes the actions agreed in response to our recent independent review by Grant Thornton.

Thank you for your interest in our Annual Plan.

2. About Powys Teaching Health Board

Powys Teaching Health Board is one of seven health boards in Wales. It serves the county of Powys, which is the largest and most sparsely populated county in Wales serving a population of 133,000 people across an area of 2000 square miles stretching from Eryri in the north to Y Bannau Brycheiniog in the south, from the Cambrian Mountains in the west to Offa's Dyke and the long border with England to the east.

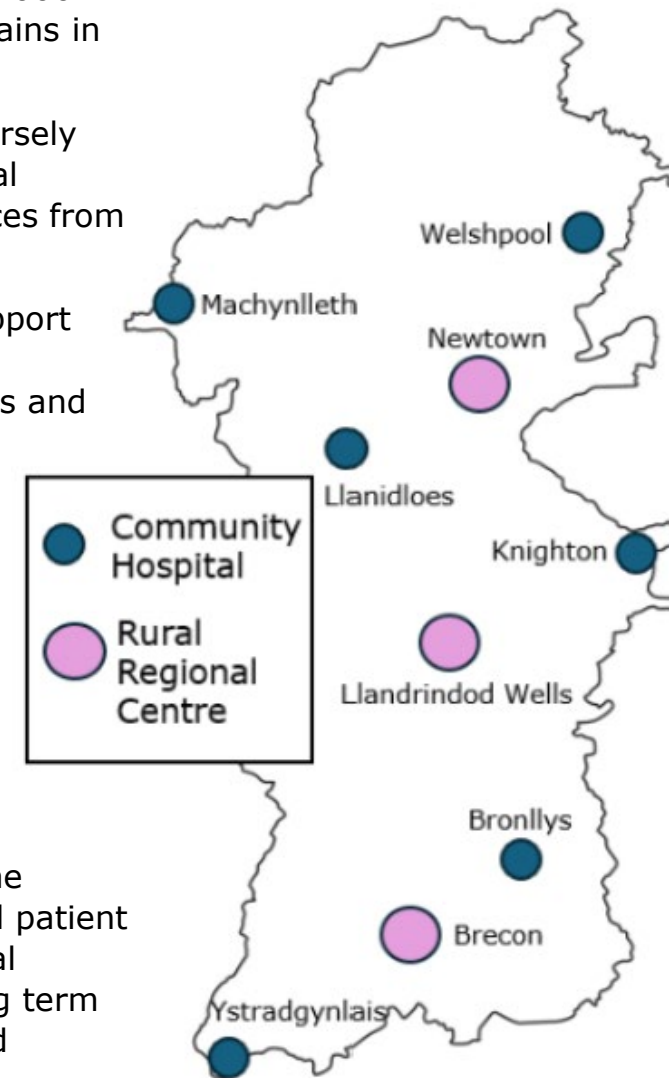
The organisation employs approximately 2,500 substantive staff (alongside around 500 bank workers). The sparsely populated nature of Powys means that there are no safe or feasible options for providing district general hospital services in the county. Powys is therefore unique of all Welsh health boards as our residents access these services from a network of partner organisations around our borders in both Wales as England.

As a provider, Powys Teaching Health Board therefore focuses on a strong primary and community model to support patients in their homes and communities. This includes a network of health service sites across the county, including nine community hospitals. Beyond these hospital locations, care is delivered through community clinics and centres such as GP practices, pharmacies, dental surgeries and optometry services in towns across Powys.

Around a third of our budget is spent on services that we directly provide (e.g. community hospitals and community services in Powys) and a fifth on primary care, which means that over half our annual budget is spent on purchasing health services from other providers including neighbouring hospital in England and Wales, ambulance services, specialist services, Continuing Health Care, Funded Nursing Care, third sector and other services.

Our unique geography and demographics also means that we face a number of workforce challenges - an older population profile, outward migration of younger people, reducing proportion of people of working age, long distances to large population centres, challenges in accessing higher education.

Powys has the oldest NHS estate of any health board in Wales, with most buildings dating from before 1948. The estimated cost of bringing the estate to a satisfactory condition is around £70 million. Investment has improved patient and staff environments and reduced backlog maintenance at some sites, but decisions are needed on the clinical service plan through Better Together in order to target future capital investment where it will have greatest long term benefit. Better digital connectivity now supports virtual appointments, information sharing between primary and secondary care, and access to reliable self-care advice – although challenges remain including in cross-border connectivity so that information follows the patient for appointments outside the county.

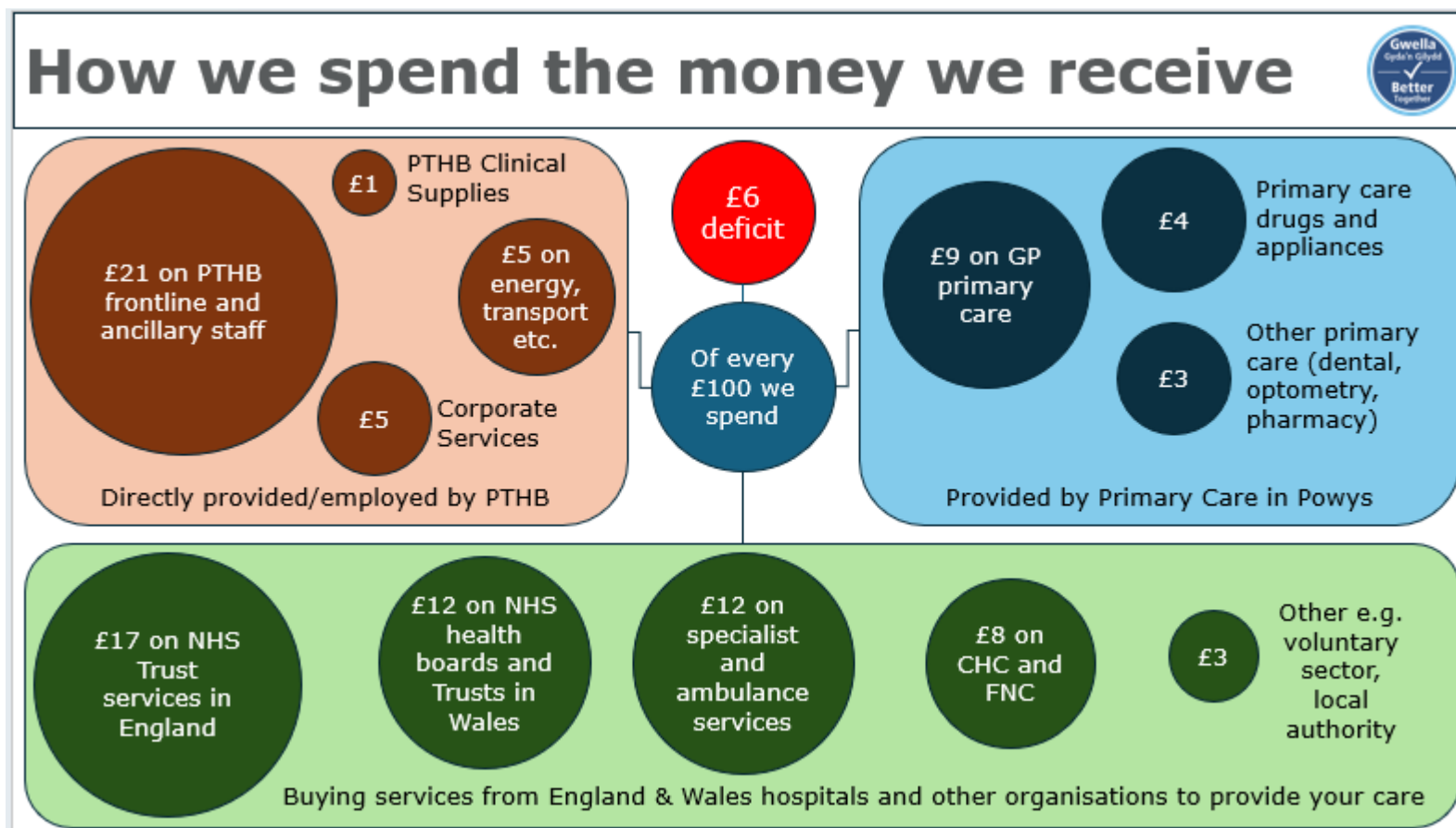


3. Using the resources we receive

During 2025/26 we spent £517 million on providing and commissioning health services for the residents of Powys. However, our expenditure exceeded our budget allocation, and we ended 2025/26 with an overspend of £33 million.

Our plan for 2026/27 is for a year-end deficit of £45m. This assumes savings of £23m will be achieved. Our plan has not yet been approved by Welsh Government.

This diagram shows how the money we spent in 2025/26 was allocated across the range of services we provide and commission for the people of Powys.



4. About the people of Powys

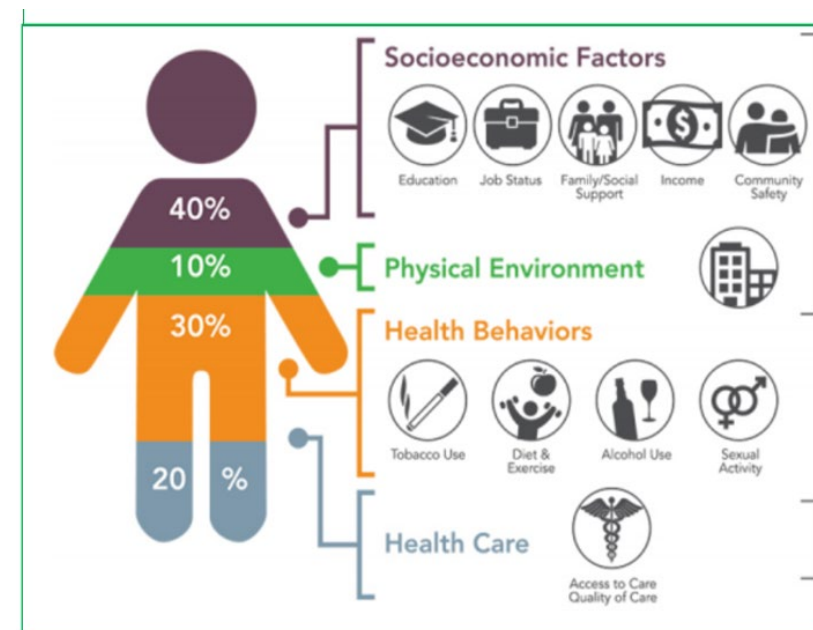
Our plan reflects the unique geography and demography of Powys, for example:

- **Life expectancy for men and women is higher in Powys** than for Wales.
- **People live longer in good health** than the rest of Wales and the UK.
- There is a **strong sense of community** with the voluntary sector providing networks of support
- There is **an increasingly thriving Welsh culture with 19% able to speak Welsh** in Powys.

However, there are inequalities in groups and geographies:

- **28% of the population is over the age of 65** which increases health and care needs.
- **12% of the population are unpaid carers** and this will also increase over time.
- A high proportion of Powys residents live alone.
- **Powys has 9 areas in the top 30% most deprived in Wales,**
- **The average household income is lower in Powys** compared to the rest of Wales.
- **4,088 families live in absolute poverty.**
- **A third of households are single occupants;** predicted to rise by 4.2% over ten years.

Approximately 20% of our health status is influenced by health services. The largest Contributory factor is from socio-economic factors including education and job status, With a further 30% from health behaviours, and 20% from our physical environment.



With regards to healthcare:

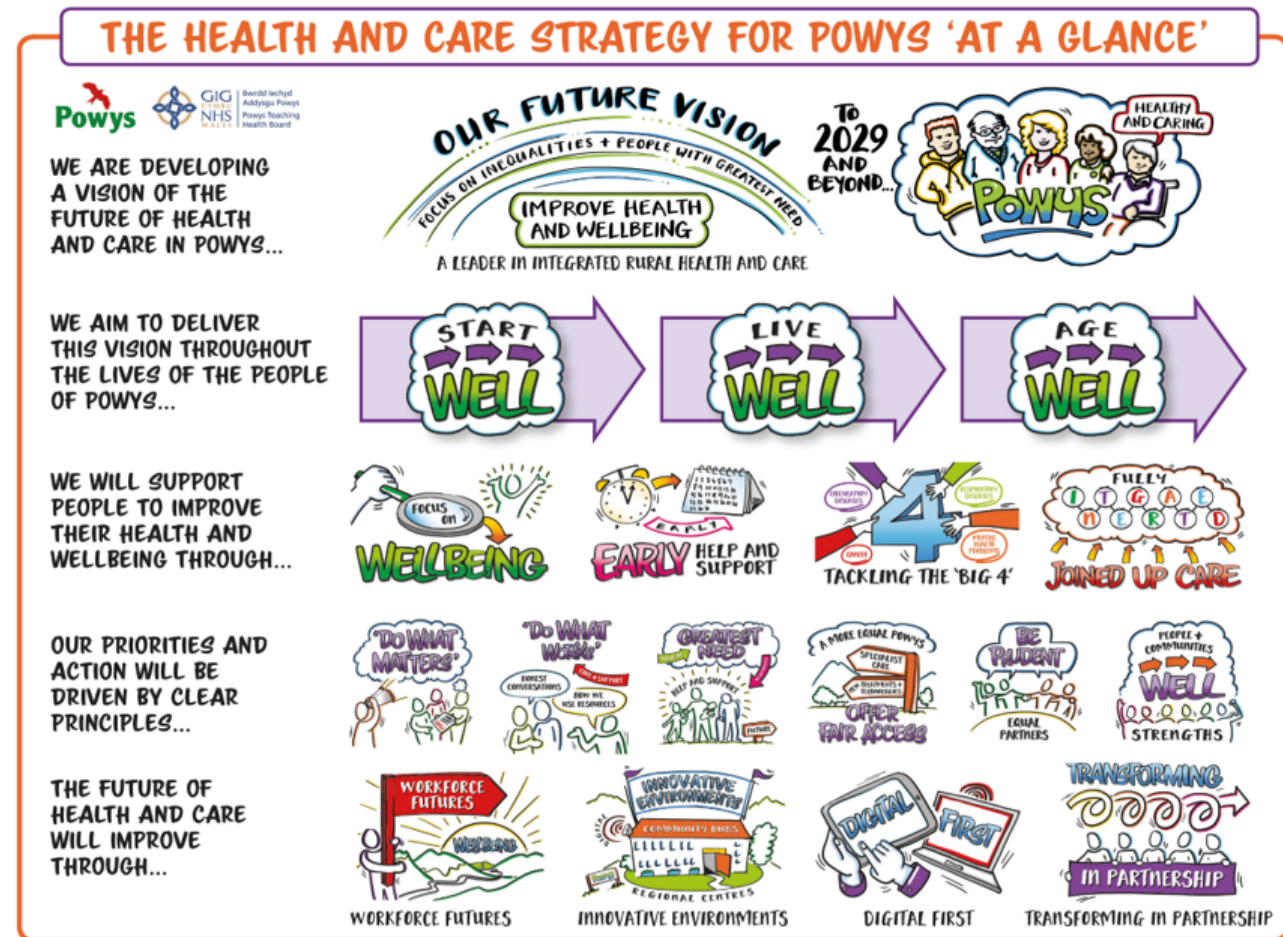
- **People are waiting for treatment** and staying in hospital longer than they should.
- **The complexity of need is intensifying**, across physical and mental health.
- **Demand for mental health services is projected to increase by up to 33%** over the next 10 years.
- There has been a **49% increase for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services** over 4 years.
- There has been a **39% increase in outpatient appointments** between 2014 and 2024.
- The highly rural nature of the county creates a **complex network of services and pathways of care.**

5. Our Strategy

Nationally, responsibility for health and social care services in Wales rests with the Senedd (Welsh Parliament) and Welsh Government. They develop and implement legislation and policy, including the key priorities and performance measures for the NHS that shape the services we provide.

Locally, PTHB works with the people of Powys and local partner organisations to translate national policy into local action. For example:

- **The Health and Care Strategy for Powys** is a 12-year strategy (2017 -2029) agreed jointly between PTHB and Powys County Council, and developed with the people of Powys, third sector and other partners. It sets out a vision for a health and care system that supports people to Start Well, Live Well and Age Well. It supports and encourages action that Focuses on Wellbeing, Ensures Early Help and Support, Tackles the Big Four conditions that limit life in Powys (Cancer, Coronary Heart Disease, Respiratory Conditions, Mental Health) and develops Joined Up Care. It outlines a future vision of delivery of health services in Powys through three Regional Rural Centres and a network of Community Wellbeing Hubs.
- The principles we have agreed at the heart of the Health and Care Strategy – Do What Matters, Do What Works, Offer Fair Access, Focus on Greatest Need, Be Prudent, Work with the Strengths of People and Communities – are vital foundations for this work
- As a Health Board that both provides and commissions services, we rely on strong partnerships with other NHS organisations, local authorities, the third sector, community groups and the population of Powys. Our **Strategic Commissioning Framework** helps to ensure that we are focusing on outcomes and quality in these relationships.
- A preventative approach remains critical to the future health of the nation, and our **Population Health Strategic Framework** sets out priority actions to deliver this.
- During the year we have continued to engage widely with residents, patients and stakeholders, particularly through the Better Together programme and other service developments. These conversations are vital in shaping the future of services and ensuring that they reflect the needs and priorities of our communities.



6. Our Plan On A Page

Our Health and Care Strategy provides a helpful framework to summarise our Annual Plan into a "Plan on a Page":

- Our **Wellbeing Objectives** continue to guide and frame our actions
- Within each of these four wellbeing objectives we have identified **Strategic Priorities** that reflect the most critical areas of delivery and development.
- Our **Enablers** – Workforce Futures, Digital First, Innovative Environments, Transforming in Partnerships – are the underpinning actions that support us to improve safety, quality and outcomes of care.
- The key actions we are taking within each of these areas are summarised on the following pages.



7. Better Together

A key element of our Plan in 2026/27 is the continued progress on our Better Together programme

The 'Better Together' programme is working across the county to find ways to keep delivering quality services that best meet the needs of the people of Powys.

Our ambition is that Powys residents receive safe, quality and reliable health care services. We want to make the very best use of the resources we have whilst ensuring above all that patient care and safety is at the forefront of everything we do.

In recent years the county and its population has experienced lots of changes. Communities are getting older, and as they age, more people are living with multiple health conditions. The legacy of the COVID-19 pandemic still affects services, with rising demand for treatments and growing waiting lists. Large increases in the cost of fuel, food and other bills have had an impact, too.

Better Together pledges to work with local people, our staff and stakeholder organisations, to develop a plan that meets the needs of Powys communities over the next 10 to 25 years.

This plan will help PTHB respond to changes in illnesses and treatment and invest more into preventing ill health. It will also look for ways to build a sustainable workforce, and to improve building and facilities so they can meet our needs into the future.

Our initial focus is on Phase 1 – adult physical and mental health community services – and as part of our plan for 2026/27 we anticipate a period of formal public consultation on options for the future from September 2026.

Alongside this, initial work has taken place on Phase 2 (Planned Care) and this will develop further in the year ahead. Phase 3 will then look at women and children's services.

More information about Better Together is available from **pthb.nhs.wales/bettertogether**





Whole system prevention

- We will work with partners to prevent poor health instead of treating the consequences and implement our Population Health Strategic Framework 'Preventing the Preventable'
- We will lead delivery of population level health improvement ensuring an equitable focus - Healthy Weights and Obesity Plan, Smoking cessation and vaping control
- Work will continue to develop the North Powys Wellbeing Programme Integrated Hub in Newtown

Health Protection and Emergency Preparedness

- We will ensure emergency preparedness and organisational resilience and compliance against Civil Contingencies Act
- We will provide health protection response to all hazards in line with Communicable Disease Outbreak Plan for Wales

Vaccination, Immunisation and Screening

- We will implement respiratory vaccination programme in line with Welsh Government directives, narrowing inequities and maximising uptake in all groups
- There will be implementation of the immunisation schedule in line with National Immunisation Framework and Welsh Health Circulars, narrowing inequities and maximising uptake in all groups
- Uptake of national screening programmes will be promoted in partnership with Welsh Government and Public Health Wales



Better Together and Partnership Priorities

- We will progress the future model for Better Together Women, Children and Families Workstream - interdependent with North Powys Wellbeing Programme
- Key partnership priorities (Regional Partnership Board and Public Services Board) for women, children and families will continue to be developed

Women's Health

- Year 2 actions against the national Women's Health Strategy will be implemented

Family and Children's Health

- The organisation will progress to Stage 2 Unicef Baby Friendly and embed Healthy Weight advice and referral pathway for women, children and families
- The improvement plan for Neurodevelopment services for children and young people will be delivered
- Year 2 of the Business case for Complex and Continuing Healthcare for children and young people (aligning to recommendations by the Grant Thornton review) will be implemented
- Maternity Quality and Safety: there will be implementation of systems and processes known to improve quality and peri-natal mortality rates

Enhanced Primary and Community Care

- Better Together will develop the Clinical Oversight Model including implementation of the Integrated Community Model, proactive prevention and intermediate care including urgent community response, reablement, inpatient care, integrated physical and mental health, fracture liaison service and last year of life
- We will evaluate temporary service changes to inform next stages of Better Together and begin the journey to consultation
- We will continue to work on the North Powys Wellbeing Programme (including the Integrated wellbeing hub and multidisciplinary team approach) and the Primary Care model (including Cluster Collaborative Development)
- Enhancements in Primary Care will include General Medical Services, Out of Hours provision, Optometry, Dental, the Primary and Community Care Academy and Medicines Management & Pharmacy

Planned Care and Diagnostics

- The outcomes of the Getting It Right First Time (GIRFT) Strategic Assessment of Planned Care will be implemented and findings used to explore future options for Non-Obstetric Sonography and Echo-cardiology services in Mid and South Powys
- Service and pathway improvement will include Ophthalmology, Outpatients, Orthopaedics / Musculoskeletal, Waiting Well service, Theatres, Endoscopy
- Reviews of Audiology Service provision and Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) sleep provision services will take place

Complex and Continuing Healthcare

- The transformation plan for Complex Care team (in response to Grant Thornton review) will be implemented and engagement will take place with providers to develop alternative provision offering the least restrictive, safe option for complex care needs
- There will be a review and improvement plan for Learning Disability community Services, monitoring impact on acute and commissioned care



Tackling the Big Four



Diabetes

- We will continue to review the Diabetes High Value High Impact Pathway including prevention and monitoring and targeted improvement of 8 NICE care processes in General Medical Services (GMS)

Cancer

- We will implement post Phase 2 Improving Cancer Journey, progress the Powys Cancer Team (business case development) and review, evaluate and develop a model for cancer prehabilitation and rehabilitation

Respiratory

- Breathlessness pathways will be improved with evidence-based groups/clinics, implementation of Respiratory Vaccination Programme and trial of C-Reactive Protein (CRP) Testing for acute respiratory infections in primary care

Cardiac

- There will be an uptake of Primary Care GMS/Quality Improvement (QI) Projects, implementation of the national Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Plan for Wales and the Advanced Heart Failure Pathway in line with NICE guidance
- Cardiac diagnostics will be via a pan Powys one stop shop/ Multi Disciplinary Team (MDT) approach and we will capture Heart Failure Patient Reported Experience Measures (PREMS) and Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMS) and implement an Arrhythmia Supplementary Service

Stroke

- Targeted engagement in national / regional stroke programmes will continue across Wales and England



- We will improve access to information, advice and assistance, support and build resilience through online therapeutic support including Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT)
- We will improve access to assessment and treatment through self-referral and direct referrals from 111(press2)
- There will be local delivery against the Suicide and Self-harm Prevention Strategy, implementation of the Art in Health Pledge and an improvement in eating disorder/inpatient services including regional and national work
- The Better Together Programme will design and implement the Older Adult Community Model, complete strategic assessment for multi-disciplinary community teams (to inform North Powys Wellbeing Programme Business Case) and implement the next phase of Single Point of Access and 111 Press 2
- The Adult Community Model will be designed in line with 'Demonstrator Area' pilots for Open Access, Stepped Care and One at a Time and include Sanctuary alternative to admission
- Inpatient care will be designed and implemented with alignment to the national Inpatient Safety Programme and Safe Wards
- The Complex Care Service will deliver actions (in response to Grant Thornton review)



System resilience

- We will increase and support further rollout of Falls response pathways with wider prevention activity and establish a Fall Forum in partnership with Powys County Council
- There will be an evaluation of the delivery of Care Home Falls training and a business plan developed for a sustainable Falls offer
- The Single Point of Access model will be embedded and strengthened with scoping for access for local authority and third sector and additional pathways
- There will be an evaluation and pilot of Emergency Department (ED) redirection
- In order to prevent deconditioning, a ward level pilot will be tested and evaluated to develop an approach to early identification and management of risk
- The Optimal Hospital Flow Framework will include the appointment of dedicated roles and strengthened discharge, building organisational readiness through engagement with wards and embedding and evaluating a revised and sustainable approach
- The Minor Injury Unit service will develop a Clinical Advice Network with General Practice participation and support Digital Health Care Wales Emergency Department App

Commissioning for Value

- The Strategic Commissioning Framework (and response to external review carried out by Grant Thornton) will be implemented
- We will commission to NHS Wales waiting times for the whole Powys population to deliver equity and support reduction in growth in commissioning spend
- Joint Commissioning will progress with NHS Wales Joint Committee (JCC) priorities via collaborative management arrangements and collaborative commissioning will be explored via NHS England Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- We will implement the Third Sector review outcomes (due for completion 2027 – 2028)



Workforce transformation and sustainability

- There will be strengthening of the Vacancy Management and establishment control including local adoption plan for national Job Description review process.
- We will plan for 2026 cohort of Aspiring Nurses and Clinical Psychologists, Grow our Own initiative and reduce agency use, optimise bank utilisation and strengthen attraction and recruitment of permanent staff supply.

A Great Place to Work

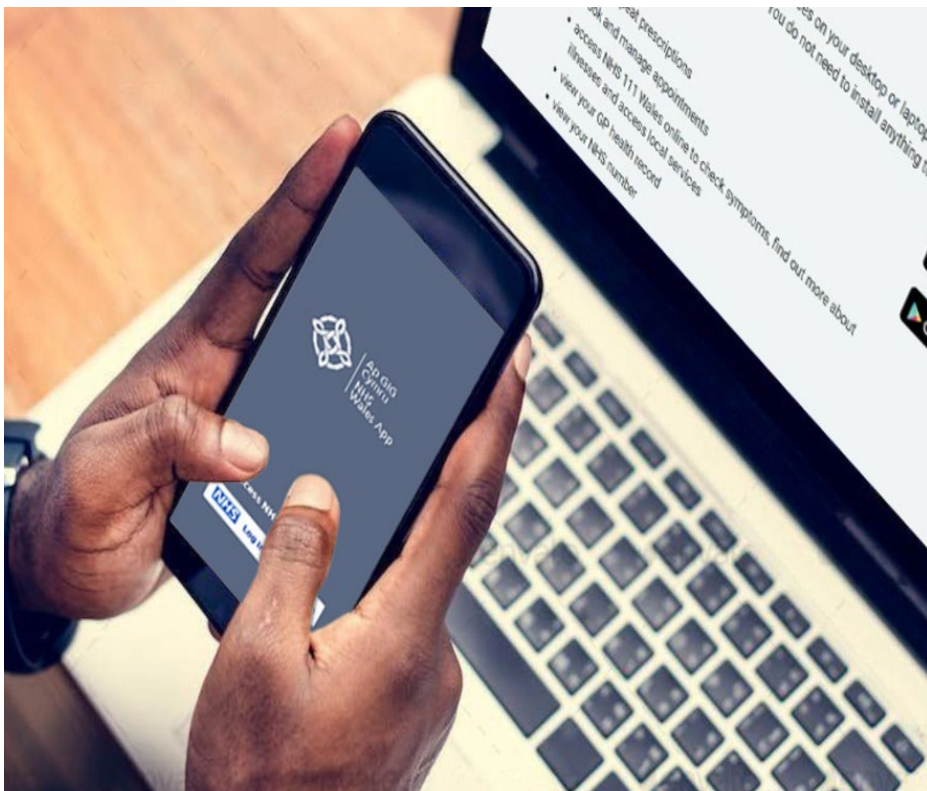
- Targeted interventions will address hotspot/ priority areas from the staff survey, review workforce retention and rollout of Clinical Leadership Immersive Programme and further develop core and statutory training, professional and role requirements.

Employee Health and Wellbeing

- Work will include risk identification, hotspot analysis and support, a programme of staff Wellbeing Roadshows and launching an internal bereavement support toolkit.
- Assurance and performance management of occupational health and wellbeing services will be strengthened against All Wales standards and protocols implemented that support workload management aligned to agile working policy, improving wellbeing and productivity.

Equalities and Welsh Language

- We will continue to review compliance with equality and Welsh Language Standards, Sensory Loss review, (including accessible information e.g. Easy Read, large print, British Sign Language, digital accessibility)
- We will implement the NHS Wales Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy and continue to progress the Anti-Racism Action Plan with Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) staff to explore lived experience, barriers, and enablers to progression



- Citizen Centred Care and Support will be improved via implementation of the Single Community & Mental Health System (Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS) Replacement) and complete implementation of in-scope Digital Maternity Cymru
- We will also complete rollout of the OpenEyes Eyecare system and implement Welsh Emergency Care Dataset (WECDS)
- To enable efficiency and effectiveness, the implementation of EPMA (Electronic Prescribing and Medicines Administration) will be completed and a business case developed for digital communications platform (text, hybrid mail, patient portal)
- Scan4Safety clinical stock management will be completed alongside digital education and inclusion via Clinical Informatics and implementation of Continuing Healthcare software
- Big Data and Artificial Intelligence Support will be provided for Commissioning Services for better data and administrative automation
- Infrastructure and security will be enhanced and monitored through cyber security and Cyber Assessment Framework compliance including Cyber security controls and monitoring and responding to threats
- Leadership, partnership and alliances will include supporting Digital Health Care Wales and Welsh Government national strategy requirements, and actions from NHS audits
- Support will also be provided to the Better Together and North Powys Wellbeing Programmes, the Strategic Commissioning Framework including Referral Optimisation and Digital PROMS platform (Patient Related Outcome Measures).



Transformation, Strategic Capital and Estates

- Work includes the Better Together programme and estate development, North Powys Wellbeing Programme, pan Powys model for Integrated Hubs and place-based approach.
- Development of sites will include Llandrindod Wells Rural Regional Centre (Phase 2 Business Case), completion of Integrated Family Health, Care and Wellbeing Hub at Spa Road and Llanfair Caereinion GP Practice and Community Hub.
- Delivery of discretionary Capital Programme will include Targeted Estates Funding
- Efficiency and productivity of the estate will be improved including developing synergies between Estates and Facilities workstreams and strategic rationalisation of estate in line with Better Together Programme and agile transformation.

Climate Response

- Climate Mitigation such as actions in Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan, measurable reductions in energy consumption, integration of low carbon technologies, embedding sustainable design principles and cleaner environments.
- The publication of PTHB Climate Adaptation Plan is the organisational response to identify and mitigate risks from current and future effects and lead education and assessment of risk.
- Community engagement and Green Health includes green space management - therapeutic environments that support social prescribing and population health and nature based interventions for mental and physical wellbeing.
- The Environmental Management System is continuously improving, maintaining ISO14001 accreditation and developing diversity protection and enhancement

Transforming in Partnership



Finance

- We will implement financial recovery governance focussing on recovery actions and extend monitoring and control across Commissioning and Complex and Continuing Healthcare (CHC) functions. We will establish a financial efficiency and delivery team to identify and deliver savings opportunities.
- We will utilise analysis and drivers of deficit to focus transformation through Better Together and financial control will include grip and control in commissioning contracting, integration of budget strategy in contracting and CHC and engagement of clinicians in financial decision making.

Quality

- A single coherent Quality Management System, implementing the Listening to People National Framework, aiming for 40% complaints by early resolution and implementing the People Experience National Framework will improve quality across the organisation.
- Partnership Development will include working with Regional Partnership Board (RPB) to prioritise greatest system challenges including pathways of care delays and prevention of inappropriate admission to hospital.

Engagement and Communication

- Our annual programme of marketing and communication will be delivered focussing on greatest benefit and risks and continuous / targeted engagement and/or consultation and ensure effective corporate affairs systems and processes, including stakeholder mapping.
- We will develop and deliver Powys Health Charity strategy 2026 – 2029 and continue robust organisational compliance including Annual Report, Annual General Meeting, management of policies, audit, standards of behaviour, Welsh Health Circulars and ministerial directions and delivery of internal and external audit programmes.

Governance

- We will implement the Information Governance and Records Management Development Plan and embed research and innovation as key enabler of change, supporting research awards and growing research in Powys.



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If you would like further information about this
plan please email Planning.Powys@wales.nhs.uk