

Jim Edwards

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‘There seemed to be a brick wall between me and the professionals. I had people saying ‘Sorry, I can’t help, you need to contact this person.’ Then they would say ‘No, you need someone else’. Then, when you did get to the right person you have to wait for six months for an appointment.’

Beresford B

Expert opinions: a survey of parents caring for a severely disabled child
(1995)

Requirement

Effective, family friendly, early intervention support to give deaf children the best chance of developing language, communication and speech abilities in line with the developmental pattern and time frame for hearing children. Effective support for families will empower parents to make informed decisions and take positive action on behalf of their child before language and communication deficits become established, dramatically improving the child's chances of successful inclusion in a mainstream schools and in society.



RNID ● |||

i bobl byddar a thrwm eu clyw
for deaf and hard of hearing people
CYMRU

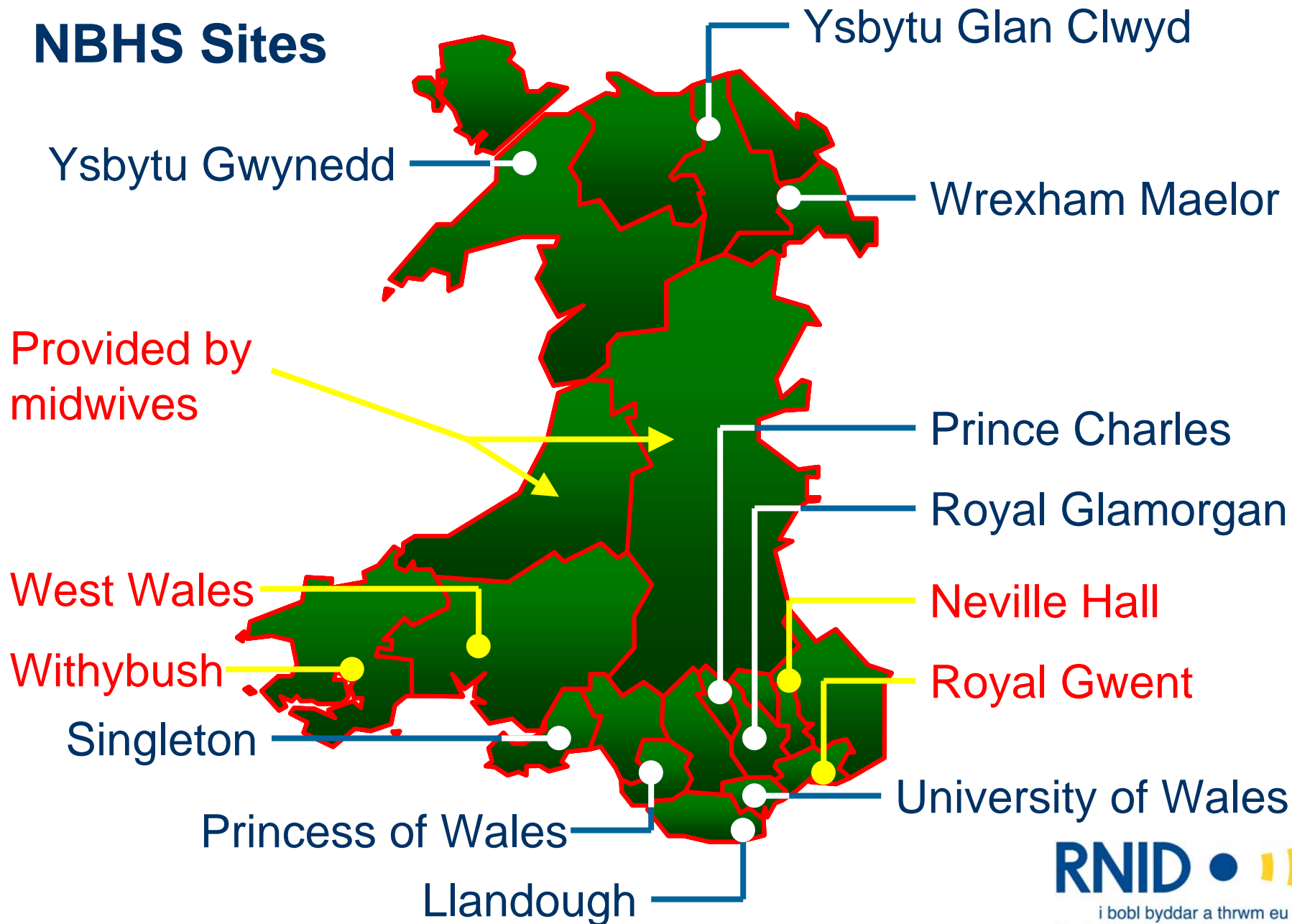
Early identification

- Newborn Hearing Screening is an extremely significant initiative
- Identification at the earliest opportunity is desirable, because:
 - hearing loss has a potentially devastating effect on language development
 - linguistic difficulties then affect educational attainments as well as social and emotional development

Introduction of Newborn Hearing Screening

- NHS Newborn Hearing Screening Programme in Wales is mid-implementation
- Wales 3 north, 5 south west & south central sites are currently screening
- 4 more site will be screening by Oct 2004 with provision through midwives in Mid Wales
- An estimated 34,000 babies will be screened per annum

NBHS Sites



Evidence?

Children whose hearing losses were identified before 6 months of age are reported to have expressive and receptive language development quotients significantly higher than children whose hearing losses were identified after 6 months.

‘The early intervention effect is significant across all obvious factors’

Christine Yoshinaga-Itano et al

Language of early- and later-identified children with hearing loss

Pediatrics November 1998

www.infanthearing.org

Intervention Services

- Newborn Hearing Screening presents the opportunity to:
 - significantly reduce the effect hearing loss has on language development
 - lessen the impact of linguistic difficulties on educational attainments as well as social and emotional development
- Early diagnosis enables more children to achieve better linguistic skills
- If appropriate intervention services are available

‘A major reason for the problems families face with services is the multiplicity of agencies and professionals involved with families of disabled children, the lack of co-ordination between different agencies and the burden on the family in term of multiple contacts.’

Sloper P et al

Real change not rhetoric: putting research into practice in multi-agency services (1999)

Current situation

- No specific resource to harness the potential benefits offered by early identification
- Good service coverage is patchy and uncoordinated
- More Teachers of the Deaf required at a time when the number practicing in Wales is set to fall dramatically
- Professional specialism in working with under 3s and their families is limited

Development Solution

- Specialist family friendly education support services for children under 3
 - commitment and resources from government
 - co-ordinated delivery through a national service framework with clear standards
 - Wales-wide, Co-ordinated training & resource planning for Teachers of the Deaf 5 now, 8–12 per year
 - early years specialist training for professionals working with families

Opportunities

RNID Cymru has completed an audit of services available to very young deaf children and their families and is consulting on a proposed set of guidelines for supporting this group

Department for Education & Skills piloting a set of tools (ESPP) to assist parents and professionals which WAGSEN has agreed to review

RNID Cymru has responded to Welsh Assembly Govt consultations on SEN

RNID Cymru Training Day for professionals working with very young deaf children

Requirement

A national framework to:

- delivering effective, coordinated, family friendly, early intervention services to give deaf/disabled children and their families the best developmental support
- Adapt and adopt Department for Education & Skills ESPP tools to assist parents and professionals
- particular focus early years provision as a multi disciplinary team
- ensure that the best support is available at all locations in Wales

“to capitalise on the potential advantages Newborn Hearing Screening will bring, early identification and early intervention must be developed in parallel within a single, co-ordinated development strategy”

Developing Early Intervention/Support Services for Deaf Children and their Families (DfES May 2003 Ref: LEA/0068/2003)