

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY 11 JUNE 2025

TIME: 12.15PM – 1.15PM, LOCATION: ZOOM

PRESENT (SENEDD): Jenny Rathbone MS (Chair); Sian Gwenllian MS; Kirsty Rees – Senedd staff; Andrew Jenkins – Senedd staff; Dr Jazz Walker-Baker – NHS Wales; Jodie Phillips-Stojanovic – NHS Wales; Joanne Jones – NHS Wales; Helen Evans – NHS Wales; Christina Tanti – Race Equality First; Sarah Thomas – NFWI Wales; Chrissie Boreham – NHS Wales; Jacky Boivin – Cardiff University; Cathy Larkman – WRN Wales; Fiona Morgan – Verity PCOS; Aimee Grant – Swansea University; Liz Bruen – NHS Wales; Diana Dobrzynska – BPAS; Jan Russell – WAMES; Ian Simpson – MS Society; Rosie Ilett – FSRH; Edward Harrison – NHS Wales; Janet Barter – FSRH; Glenys Vivers – Welsh Government; Victoria Owens – NHS Wales; Hodan Hersi – WAN Cymru; Lucy Cohen – Campaigner; Rachel Joseph – Cardiff University; Joanne Kitt – NHS Wales; Emily Lewis – RCOG; Elizabeth Evans – NHS Wales; Sharon Lovell – NYAS; Lowri Griffiths – Tenovus Cancer Care; Zoe Shoemark – Swansea University; Menaka Kodur – Women Connect First; Rebecca McMahon – FS Wales; Steffan McMahon – FS Wales; Joseph Carter – Asthma and Lung UK; Emma Cox – Endometriosis UK; Bronwen Morgan-Jones – BHF UK; Bronwen Clatworthy – Breastfeeding Network; Jan Paterson – Epilepsy UK; Sarah Anne Evans – FTWW; Sue Thomas – NHS Wales; Willow Holloway – The Awe Project Wales; Debbie Shaffer – FTWW; Viv Rose – BPAS; Andrew McMullan – BPAS; Ben Jones – Endometriosis UK; Sian Griffiths – FTWW; Joanne Pugh – FTWW; Katharine Gale – FluxState; Donna Davies – FTWW;

APOLOGIES: Sioned Williams MS; Julie Richards – RCM; Heatherjane Dangerfield – Endometriosis UK; Kayleigh Williams – Community Pharmacy Wales; Dr Helen Munro – NHS Executive Wales

1. WELCOME, MINUTES, AND MATTERS ARISING

Minutes: Minutes accepted.

2. WOMEN'S HEALTH HUBS

Presentation by Dr Jazz Walker-Baker

- Dr Walker-Baker discussed the Women's Health Plan which was published in December 2024 and was the first ever women-specific health plan in Welsh history
- Stated that there was earmarked funds for women's health research and the creation of women's health hubs across all seven Welsh health board regions by 2026
- Discussed issues like endometriosis, and stated that GPs were being specially trained to deliver better care on that

- NHS Wales emphasising that the new plan and hubs represent a fundamental shift, aiming to give women a stronger voice in healthcare and ensure symptoms are routinely addressed and that 'every contact counts'

3. OPEN DISCUSSION

A number of questions and concerns were raised around endometriosis including:

- 1) How can women's health hubs provide comprehensive care of managing symptoms after surgery, and for supporting long-term well-being?
 - 2) Is there a need for volunteers, such as those who support someone with endometriosis?
 - 3) Will all hubs provide endometriosis services?
- NHS Wales stated that better endometriosis care is a key goal and efforts are underway to identify what is working across boards
 - Meetings are being held with health boards to reduce variation in offerings and share best practice

A question looked at a review of epilepsy in pregnancy and the risks associated. They wanted to know if the Welsh Government would ensure that each person with epilepsy, of reproductive age, would be offered contraception counselling, and if the Welsh Government would address the lack of data around the clinical outcomes and lived experience of birthing people with epilepsy

- NHS Wales stated that this falls under Welsh Government policy so would not be for them to answer
- Noted that in clinical practice, women with epilepsy should be counselled on contraception and referred to a neurologist before pregnancy

A question was asked about the progress in BCUHB on the community hub and wider women's health plan given ongoing issues in that health board

- NHS Wales stated that this area is a priority and is being managed by a clinical lead and responsible officer
- Reiterated that the priorities must be met at the health board despite existing pressures, and that they are being given support
- Stated that one hub is only the beginning in this health board, and that more will follow to meet need

A question was asked about whether the shift to focusing on prevention on illness will mean fewer resources or reduced services for women who are already unwell

- NHS Wales said this was not the case, and that prevention complemented the treatment and did not replace it
- Stated that the focus is on a shift towards public health and lifestyle improvements, and emphasised that women's services will not be deprioritised or diminished

Questions on whether the women's health hubs will be physical and virtual were asked, and what the long-term vision relating to that was

- NHS Wales said that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach to this and that it will depend on local needs
- Stated that virtual may work in some cases, but health boards will tailor hubs to local requirements

A question was asked about the progress in BCUHB on the community hub and wider women's health plan given ongoing issues in that health board

- NHS Wales stated that this area is a priority and is being managed by a clinical lead and responsible officer

A question about the inclusion of autistic people's experiences in the development of hubs was asked

- NHS Wales stated that they are undertaking co-production workshops and that they would circulate the invite
- Stated that a co-production framework has been developed, with six core principles for inclusion that embeds accessibility and inclusion from the start

A question was asked about what the strategic approach to linking community midwifery services with women's health hubs were

- NHS Wales said that the model is inclusive and encourages involvement from as many agencies as possible
- Also said that it is designed to be locally led and shaped by community needs

4. AOB

NEXT MEETING: TIME/DATE TBC, MEETING TO FOCUS ON BREASTFEEDING
