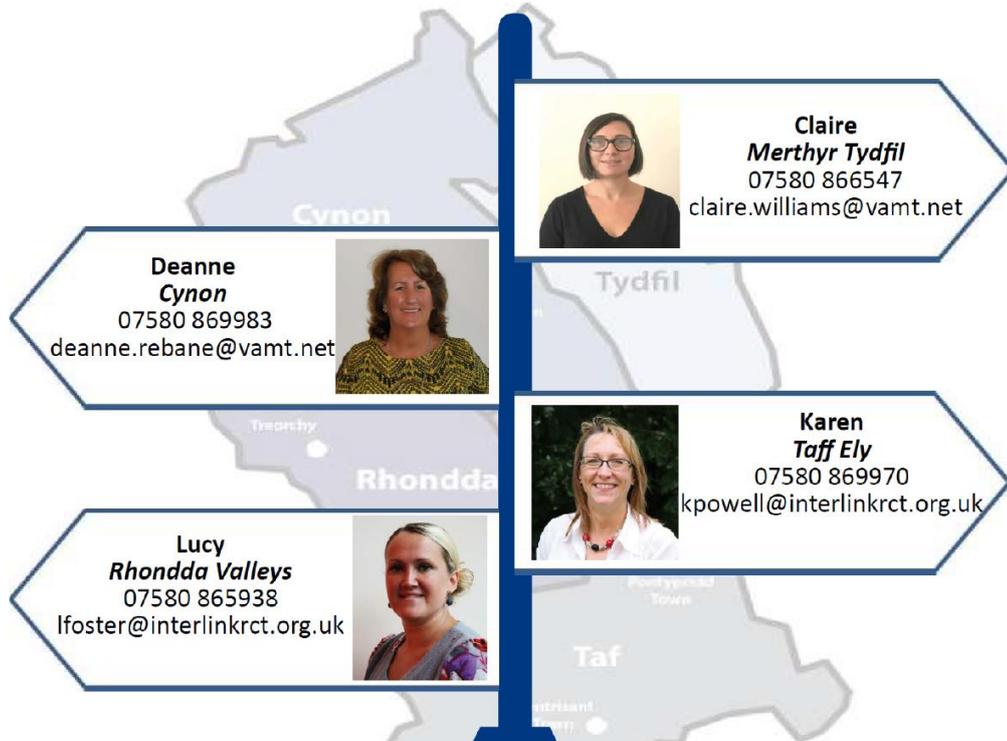


August 2020

COMMUNITY COORDINATOR BULLETIN



Coronavirus - What have we been doing?

Despite the Covid 19 outbreak our service has continued to support many people in need. Between April - June 2020 we received 254 referrals relating specifically to coronavirus and 33 generic referrals.

During this period we provided advice and information for a significant amount of people who were shielding or in isolation. This included emergency support for some individuals who needed either food shopping or medication on the very same day. We were able to respond to this demand because of our knowledge and excellent links to existing and newly developed Covid-19 support groups in communities throughout RCT and Merthyr Tydfil. We were able to signpost 226 people into the community with confidence and refer a further 145 people to a specialist service to meet their specific needs.

"In these challenging times where patients are unsure where to turn, I feel confident that we have you to turn to for advice and support. I have had numerous calls from my community patients regarding services that can support them with daily tasks like shopping and medication collection. I have been able to signpost these individuals to yourself, and you have provided them with links to appropriate services" - Angela Ralph, Occ Therapist.

Our work includes providing information directly to the Older People's Commissioner for Wales, enabling her to share older people's experiences and concerns with the Welsh Government. If you have any comments that you would like us to raise on your behalf please get in touch.

We operate as a conduit to third sector support, providing information, advice and recommendation on services and activities within our communities. We have an open referral policy and would be pleased to help you. Contact details are shown on the front page or on Page 7.

Age Connects Morgannwg is pleased to announce that their service at the Post Office, Pontypridd is back in operation. Keep up-to-date with all of the latest updates on their website: <https://www.ageconnectsmorgannwg.org.uk/coronavirus-information>

Opening hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday, 9:30am – 3:30pm by appointment only.

Appointments can be made by phoning 01443 490650 and choosing Option 1.

Entrance to the office is at the side door, to the right of the Post Office's main entrance (this is signposted).

In order to comply with social distancing measures, there are limitations on the number of people allowed in the office at one time. You may need to queue outside, so remember to bring a brolly!

Anyone making/attending an appointment will be asked to confirm that they are not displaying symptoms of COVID-19 or living with anyone displaying symptoms, as per NHS guidelines

A hand-sanitising station is provided but anyone wishing to wear a mask will need to provide their own

There is limited waiting space and we ask that you do not arrive too early for appointments, as we may have to ask you to wait outside

The **Age Connects Simply Together Project** aims to help older people of the **Rhondda** who have not been in hospital and who do not require medical care, to access community activities, remove barriers to participating in their communities, and staying safe and well in their homes. The overall aim of the project is to reduce the demand on Primary Care services, reducing isolation and loneliness.

The project adopts a coaching and mentoring approach via telephone and video calls, in trying to assist individuals to achieve personal goals, helping to empower them to overcome barriers and improve wellbeing. Individual bespoke support plans, tailored to meet specific needs will be used with each contact made, tracking an individual's personal journey, and ensuring that a fully comprehensive package of emotional support is effectively delivered.

For more information please contact Nia.williams@acmorgannwg.org.uk or call 07926 038902

The **Stroke Association** is currently offering the following support for stroke survivors:

The first is the **Community Steps Project**. The project is delivering Zoom sessions for stroke survivors and their carers during this time. A variation of sessions are available including working age group, choir, mindfulness and general peer support. For more information or to make a referral please email CommunityStepsWales@stroke.org.uk or contact Lauren on 07932 265274.

The second thing is the **Here For You** telephone befriending service for stroke survivors and their carers. All information about the service and how to refer in can be found here <https://www.stroke.org.uk/finding-support/here-for-you>

Listening Event

This joint national project between Age Cymru and Carers Trust Wales, funded by Welsh government, are hosting listening events during August.

If you're aged 50 or over and caring for someone, including caring for someone living with dementia, or caring for someone who has since moved into a residential or nursing home, then please share your views.

They are asking carers to get in touch with the project to let them know about your experiences of caring and to help them shape their support.

This event will help them:

- Gather views and feedback
- Help develop a national survey for unpaid carers aged 50 and over
- Develop discussion for future feedback
- Your caring experiences during COVID-19

If you have any questions about this event or would like to be part of the conversation then please contact danielle.welsh@agecymru.org.uk or call 0798 915 2529.

Free Online Managing Anxiety Course

Starting 11th August 2020 – End of Course 8th September 2020

The course is run in partnership with **New Horizons Mental Health** and **Adult Learning Wales**.

Each person will be given a log in for the moodle with Adult Learning Wales where you will find work sessions with links or powerpoint for information regarding that session, you can then email your completed work to the Tutor who will give you feedback. Plus, there will be 2 vscene sessions for the group with the tutor, so you can discuss how the course is going and any queries you have.

Information on what the course covers:

Know the terms 'anxiety' and 'panic attack'. Know causes of anxiety. Know symptoms of anxiety. Know how anxiety can affect the individual and the individual's friends and family. Know how different ways of thinking and behaving can affect anxiety. Know how anxiety can be managed.

To enrol on the course please send your name and email to:

tracy.thomas@newhorizons-mentalhealth.co.uk or telephone 01685 881113

Demand for courses is high, so please contact us as soon as possible if you wish to have a place.

Personal Protective Equipment For Unpaid Carers

The Welsh Government has announced that unpaid carers who provide personal care when social distancing is impossible, may be eligible for PPE supplied by their local authority.

You may be eligible to receive a supply of PPE from your local authority if:**Personal care may include helping someone to:**

- wash or bathe
- use the toilet
- get dressed and undressed
- eat and drink
- take medication

If you want to request PPE you can:

- Contact your social worker if you or the person you care for have one.
- Contact the Carer Support Project on 01443 281 463 or by e-mailing carerssupportproject@rctcbc.gov.uk

Some personal details may be asked from you and about your caring situation. Once your request has been approved, you will be contacted to arrange convenient pick up or delivery arrangements for your equipment.

Fflecsi Travel: The 152 Bus service in the **Rhondda** has been replaced.

Stagecoach have teamed up with Transport for Wales and Rhondda Cynon Taf Council and replaced bus service 152 with 'Fflecsi'. The service is really easy to use, you can either book through the [app](#) or call **0300 234 0300**.

So rather than wait at a bus stop for a bus to turn up, you simply book a journey when you need it and the app will show you where to catch the bus and when it will be arriving. You can even track the bus as it approaches the pick-up point. Most importantly they will work out what size vehicle is needed to ensure everyone on the bus can maintain social distancing to ensure their safety.

Rhondda Fflecsi 152 covers Hendreforgan, Tonyrefail and communities to Tonypandy. You can travel anywhere within the zone. Your usual bus fares apply, you can pay with contactless, mobile tickets or exact fare and concessionary travel card holders travel for free. Already got a smartcard ticket? You can just tap & go.

For more information visit: <https://www.stagecoachbus.com>

British Deaf Association: Have an advocacy team who can support those in need. You can find out more about their services and contact details on <https://bda.org.uk/wales-office/>

Action on Hearing has a care and support service which would benefit people who are lonely and isolated with hearing impairments. For more information - <https://beta.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/information-and-support/care-and-support-services/>

Macmillan Telephone Buddy scheme - We know cancer can be an isolating experience at any time, but even more so during these potentially challenging times of shielding and social distancing, and can lead those living with cancer to feel lonely, overwhelmed or anxious due to the current uncertainty.

A Macmillan Telephone Buddy volunteer can provide a listening ear at the end of the telephone to help ensure nobody faces cancer alone by being there to discuss how they're feeling. Macmillan Telephone Buddy volunteers will also be able to signpost service users to relevant, helpful, local and national sources of support, including those provided by Macmillan Cancer Support, as well as providing information about other groups, organisations and charities who could help to meet some or all of their needs.

People living with cancer can be referred for the support service by a medical or social care professional or can self-refer at macmillan.org.uk/telephonebuddies. We are ready to take referrals right now and aim to contact any potential service user within 3-5 working days of the referral enquiry being received.

Cruse Bereavement Support - Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, Cruse has moved all support to telephone support only (and can provide telephone support to young people if they are aged 14+). Adults can access support via the national helpline - 0808 808 1677 (free to call) or phone/email locally to request telephone support. (For young people, please call/email locally to request telephone support, 01685 876020). The Cruse website – www.cruse.org.uk and www.hopeagain.org.uk for young people - are full of invaluable resources to help at this time as well.

Power Up: Is a partnership between Western Power distribution, your electricity network and the energy saving trust.

Their aim is to help those who could potentially be vulnerable in the event of a power cut across south wales to save money and keep warm. They are offering a range of income, tariff and energy efficiency support and advice. They can also refer people to the correct grants and schemes on replacing old, inefficient boilers and loft insulation. Email WPDpowerup@est.org.uk or Call 0808 8082274.

Merthyr and RCT Service Support - Is the new name for the Positive Steps Service led by the British Red Cross.

This service works together to support people over 50 years of age in the Merthyr and RCT area who are experiencing loneliness or need to access support in their own community. Their aim is to help the individual take charge of their situation and improve their confidence so they can live a more fulfilled life.

The British Red Cross have a team of staff, volunteers and placement students who are trained to access the community and connect with groups and organisations in order to find practical solutions for their service users. They can help with a range of concerns and obstacles. The support is delivered weekly and with a clear course of action, they can support the individual to achieve their goals. This support can last for 8 weeks.

With Covid in mind - They are unable to take people out to community groups. Most of their time is spent rebuilding confidence, going out if possible, taking people to GP appointments or going for a walk.

For further information Email: NinaAT@redcross.org.uk

Sight Life is the new name for Cardiff Institute for the Blind. The service still provides local services and lifelong support, so that blind and partially sighted people in South Wales can enjoy an independent, active, social and fulfilling life. The service is still part of RNIB and continues to work closely with them to ensure people can quickly access national as well as local services.

For more information please contact Carys Groves on 07753 305631 or email carys.groves@sightlife.wales

Website address: www.sightlife.wales

Facebook: www.facebook.com/SightLife.Wales

Many of us are gradually adjusting to the way the world has changed following Covid19, and the challenges that we have faced. Lots of us will be anxious about our health and the health of our loved ones for a long time to come.

The **Your Medicines Your Health (YMYH)** campaign has advice which will help you:

- Manage and store your medicines safely and effectively
- Get the best from your medication for yourself and those you care for
- Get more advice and support if you need it.

At this time it is more important than ever to take all available steps to keep yourself well, and the YMYH campaign is urging you to get your Flu Vaccination as soon as it is available from your GP surgery.

For more information go to the [Your Medicines Your Health](#) website or [Beat flu](#)

FREE ONLINE INPUTS - South Wales Police Cyber Protect Officers

Do you know what constitutes a cyber crime? Can you tell the difference between fake and real emails? Do you know where, when and how to report cyber crime? How safe do your staff and stakeholders feel online?

The South Wales Police Cyber Crime Unit is a dedicated unit which responds to and investigates all cyber crime affecting South Wales. Part of their remit is to reach out to communities to help better protect them by way of information and education. The novel Coronavirus pandemic has allowed criminals to exploit some of the vulnerabilities and fears of the public and as a result, Action Fraud UK has reported a 600% increase in reported cyber crime so far.

One of the challenges has been thinking about how to continue to engage with the public despite the social distancing restrictions placed on us all. Also, as a result of more and more people working from home, remotely and agilely, the unit has produced an online input to respond to some of the concerns.

These include but are not limited to:

- Phishing emails that look genuine
- Social Media compromises
- Telephone scams
- Online shopping scams

This can be delivered over platforms such as Zoom and MS Teams and are delivered FREE. These sessions usually take around 1 hour and are intended for ALL levels of capability.

Contact the Cyber Protect Officer Claire Perrin to book your free input by emailing Claire.Perrin@south-wales.pnn.police.uk or ring 01656 869211 Ext: 42623.

DWP

Complaints Handling

[News story on GOV.UK \(link\)](#) - The Department for Work and Pensions is improving the way it handles complaints and making it simpler. The changes mean that from July 2020 a new centralised team, made up of experienced complaint handlers, will triage the complaints and prioritise those that are the most serious or from vulnerable claimants.

Coronavirus and the Impact on Caring

A [report by the Office for National Statistics \(link\)](#) shows

- of those providing help or support to others around one third were helping someone new in the first month of lockdown.
- 47% who said their caring responsibilities had been affected said they were unable to care for someone they usually supported.
- 10% of adults said they were providing care to someone they lived with who was sick, disabled or aged over 70 years.

Disabled People's Organisation (DPOs) Forum

The Disability Unit has established a [new DPOs Forum \(link\)](#) to strengthen its engagement with disabled people. Membership will include national disabled people's organisations, regional organisations and chairs of our Regional Stakeholder Networks. Members will be from DPOs, have lived experience of disability themselves, or represent others that do.

Finally - a note from us:

We very much hope that you continue to keep safe and well during these difficult times. However, if you need any advice, support or help, then we are only a phone call or email away. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with any of us on the numbers below:

Your Rhondda Coordinator Lucy can be contacted via email on: lfoster@interlinkrct.org.uk or telephone: 07580 865938

Your Cynon Coordinator Deanne can be contacted via email on: deanne.rebane@vamt.net or telephone: 07580 869983

Your Taf Coordinator Karen can be contacted via email on: kpowell@interlinkrct.org.uk or telephone: 07580 866970

Your Merthyr Tydfil Coordinator Claire can be contacted via email on: claire.williams@vamt.net or telephone: 07580 866547