

SUMMER 2022



Employment Special

How Cyfle Cymru is helping people with substance misuse issues and/or mental health conditions into work, education or training...

Cyfle Cymru

Gwasanaeth Mentora Cyfoedion
Peer Mentoring Service



now part of



MENTAL HEALTH WALES

NEWS

Adferiad Recovery responds to report on the impact of the waiting times backlog on people in Wales

Adferiad Recovery gave written and oral evidence to the Senedd Health & Social Care Committee's recent inquiry into waiting times: we stressed that the priority for mental health services must be to 'catch up' in terms of treatment and care for those most in need – people with serious and enduring mental illness.

The Committee has now published its report 'Waiting well? The impact of the waiting times backlog on people in Wales' which makes a wide range of recommendations. Adferiad Recovery welcomes the recognition in the report (Recommendation 15) of the needs of unpaid carers and urges the Welsh Government to recognise both the value of unpaid carers and the pressures that they face.

[Read the full report here.](#)

Only Human campaign in full swing!

Adferiad Recovery's Only Human campaign is now in full swing with events taking place all across Wales and in Lancashire.

Adferiad Recovery has hosted events in Neath Port Talbot, Flintshire, Conwy, Pembrokeshire, Anglesey, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Gwynedd, Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan so far with many still to come in August, September and October.

The Only Human campaign aims to tackle the stigma associated with addiction. Led by a panel of individuals with lived experience of addiction, Only Human encourages people to question what they think they know about addiction and those who experience it.

Keep an eye out on Adferiad's social media for further updates and to stay in touch with everything going on around the campaign.

[Read more at adferiad.org.uk/onlyhuman](http://adferiad.org.uk/onlyhuman)

LGBT+ Britons more likely to report mental health conditions

LGBT+ Britons are more likely to experience mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression and insomnia, a new YouGov survey shows.

Over the last 12 months, half of LGBT+ Britons (51%) say they experienced or were diagnosed with a mental health condition, compared to a third of the general population (32%).

Most common among the mental health conditions described are anxiety, depression, stress, and difficulty sleeping, and in all cases LGBT+ Britons are more likely to say they suffer from them than the wider population.

[Read more at mentalhealthwales.net](http://mentalhealthwales.net)



NEWS

Jo's Blog: "The UK Government's plans to reform the Mental Health Act progress: they have now published a draft Mental Health Bill for pre legislative scrutiny"

So the UK Government's plans to reform the Mental Health Act progress. The UK Government has published a draft Mental Health Bill for pre-legislative scrutiny, to modernise the Mental Health Act for the 21st century.

Meanwhile there is no promise or evident prospect of legislation in Wales on this. If that continues all we may see is Wales keeping pace with reform in England by catching a ride on their Bill but not looking to improve on it or tailoring law to our particular needs.

Meanwhile I note the Welsh Government's eagerness to get more powers from Westminster, in particular over justice matters.

Now this sounds interesting. It would be good to see Wales having a go at sorting out the scandal of sending people with a serious mental illness to prison (if they are actually dangerous they should be detained in hospital). And it would make sense more generally to link up criminal justice with already devolved areas

Adferiad Recovery Cwm Taf EIP team fundraising by walking 10k steps a day in July!

Adferiad Recovery's Early Intervention in Psychosis (EIP) team in Cwm Taf will be raising vital funds for future group activities and adventure therapy sessions by taking part in a challenge to collectively walk 10,000 steps a day throughout the month of July.



Starting on 1st July, all participants will track their daily steps and send them weekly to an Adferiad team member. On the final day of the month, all participants will join together to walk the final 10,000 steps as part of the Taff Trail in the Pontypridd area.

The team will be raising money for future group activities and adventure therapy sessions.

Please donate at:
www.justgiving.com/fundraising/team-adferiad



such as health.

But I'd like to make a suggestion to Welsh Government. If you want to take more powers then demonstrate that you are proactive with the powers which you already have rather than leaving matters to Westminster.

Yes, I'm talking about a Mental Health Bill for Wales!

And if you need some ideas take a look at Jo's Law...

[Read more at adferiad.org.uk/category/jos-blog](http://adferiad.org.uk/category/jos-blog)

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We hope you found the latest issue of our journal useful! To support our work in providing the latest mental health news and information you can make a donation to Hafal at our **JustGiving** page.

JustGiving



INTERVIEW: Lynn Bennoch

Lynn Bennoch is the Programme Lead for Cyfle Cymru, a service which helps people with substance misuse issues and/or mental health conditions into work, education or training. We spoke to Lynn about the aims of the service, and the importance of employment to recovery.

Tell us more about Cyfle Cymru and its aims?

Cyfle Cymru is a service which helps people with substance misuse issues and/or mental health conditions who are in recovery or are towards the end of their treatment programme into work, education or training. It provides the support needed to find the right job, training opportunity or qualifications and offers one-to-one guidance from a peer mentor who can draw on their own recovery and lived experience, plus specialist employment support, including volunteering opportunities, and help and advice on how to search and apply for jobs.

Why do you think training and employment are so important for recovery?

Training and employment are important for recovery as they satisfy a number of needs. Training assists people to socialise in positive thinking groups, it brings out commitment and motivation in a person and makes them more work ready through attaining qualifications. Moving into employment helps people to develop financial independence, they feel that they are making a contribution to society and have a sense of feeling valued for what they have to offer. Being employed also enables opportunities and choices to be made.

Peer mentor support forms a key part of the Cyfle Cymru service. Why is it so effective?

“Cyfle Cymru provides bespoke one-to-one guidance from peer mentors who can draw on their own lived experience.”



Cyfle Cymru provides bespoke one-to-one guidance from peer mentors who can draw on their own lived experience of substance misuse, recovery and/or mental health conditions. They understand what the person is going through, and can be with them when they face new experiences and challenges in a non-judgmental approach.

Many people with a mental illness and/or experience of alcohol/substance misuse lack the confidence they need to return to or enter the workplace. How does Cyfle Cymru work to build that confidence?

We initially provide one-to-one bespoke guidance by peer mentors who have lived experience to build that confidence and trust. We treat each person as an individual and tailor the service to their needs. We use diagnostic tools to ascertain what their strengths and weakness are. We would then guide people towards

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“We treat each person as an individual and tailor the service to their needs.”

social inclusion community voluntary work to broaden their social circle and to increase their feeling of self-worth and confidence. Once a person feels valued then they have more motivation to move forward. Moving into employment helps people to develop financial independence, they feel that they are making a contribution to society and have a sense of feeling valued for what they have to offer.

A disproportionately high percentage of people with serious mental illnesses and/or experience of alcohol/substance misuse are unemployed. What are the main obstacles to them entering employment?

Some of the main obstacles include stigma, discrimination, lack of confidence, lack of opportunities and lack of education and training. In many cases we come across people who don't have a CV or even know how to compile one, and some have never applied for employment before and have difficulties completing job application forms. Then, if they are lucky enough to get an interview, they can be lacking in interview skills. We also find that many people with serious mental illnesses and/or experience of alcohol/substance misuse need encouragement to come off benefits as it can be a daunting process.

As well as working with clients, Cyfle Cymru also works closely with employers. Have you seen a shift in attitude from employers towards mental health and individuals who have experience of alcohol/substance misuse, and what more needs to be done to change employers' attitudes?

Some employers have a charter which outlines their responsibility to local communities and those who live in them and so are more willing to offer an opportunity of employment to someone in recovery. Once an employer has recruited someone in recovery who performs well, they are more likely to repeat the process and offer more opportunities of jobs to our service users.

What more could the Welsh and UK governments be doing to support people with a mental illness or alcohol/substance misuse issues to enter work?

They could encourage or incentivise more employers to give our service users the opportunity to prove themselves in the work place. They could commit to a certain percentage of recruitment opportunities being offered to our clients / those in recovery much in the same way that equality is monitored in many organisations by recording nationality / ethnic minority, etc.

The Cyfle Cymru service is delivered by DACW, a consortium which consists of a number of voluntary sector agencies from across Wales. What do you think are the benefits of partnership working on a project such as this?

Our partnership offers service users a range of co-occurring support which previously was not available and many service users 'fell between the gap'; that is, they were passed from one service to another as individuals made an attempt to diagnose the 'root' of their issues. Often the service users themselves are not aware of which is the more prominent issue. Our partnership brings together staff teams who work closely together and can ensure the gap in services is no longer a barrier to those who are trying to access them. The partnership also offers the sharing of good/best practice and learning from each other to ensure that continuous improvements are made to our offer.



CASE STUDIES: How Cyfle Cymru has helped these individuals...



Tammy

"After struggling with my mental health I decided to join Cyfle Cymru. I was introduced to my Peer Mentor Owain and I needed help with looking for work, training and volunteering to occupy my time.

"Since joining Cyfle Cymru, I have been attending courses to better my education, I also have been keen to do the Volunteer Days monthly as I enjoy them and meeting new people. For the past few months I have been attending various courses to help with my depression and anxiety. Also

I have been attending the Walking Groups as a way of getting out and interacting with other clients in similar position.

"I'm thankful for this opportunity and feel like I have come a long way in the last few months in my recovery and look forward to carrying on with Cyfle Cymru."



Dominic

"Following a referral to Cyfle Cymru I met with both my peer mentor George and the employment adviser Ursula. Both of whom offered help and support in my journey finding employment.

"Whilst at one of the course sessions I was asked by George if I could attend a mock interview at Champions' House with a local employer. This was to help with my confidence when talking to people and answering questions which were often asked at interview. Ursula had helped me with my interview

skills prior to this but meeting at Champions' House meant I would be somewhere that I felt comfortable and knew people.

"I was contacted by George who had been to meet with Lee, and he advised me that Lee wanted me to start a 12-week paid probation period with Paul Bristow Associates. This was the opportunity that nobody else had given me and a chance to start believing in myself. Both George and Ursula had known that the mock interview was in fact an official interview with the company as they had a vacancy arisen which needed filling. I am so pleased that they believed in me. George helped with my health and wellbeing, and I had support from my first day onwards into my new employment.

"Now five months later I am a more confident person, a member of a good team of people that I work with and so thankful for the help and support from George and Ursula."



Ryan

"I left home at 14 with no support from anyone and have been homeless and in and out of prison until this year, which has had a massive effect on my mental health and led me to use substances as a coping mechanism. I have had services in the past try to support me but nothing has helped me and I ended up being back in prison, however when I was in prison last, I found Christianity and got the support I needed to help me start to changing my life.

"Upon release I started engaging with Tim from Cyfle Cymru straight away who has supported me constantly and because of his help I have just started full time employment with Morrisons. I have successfully finished my probation for the first time, I feel better in myself and for once I am finally looking forward to the future. Cyfle Cymru has made a massive difference and because of it I have turned my life around."



Conor

Working with Cyfle Cymru has come at just the right time for Conor. Conor has struggled over the years, balancing living with Asperger's whilst recovering from a difficult period of depression.

Conor is very outgoing and sociable, so really struggled to cope when he became socially isolated. Conor says: "It's great having that support and confidence that coming to Cyfle Cymru gives you. The staff always notice if you're feeling down. It's amazing having the social interaction after

feeling isolated and depressed."

Conor is extremely keen to work in the hospitality industry and has been working hard attending courses and applying for work placements during his time with Cyfle. "I'm nervous about the thought of starting work again, but I like working hard and I know my confidence will improve even more once I start working again."



Anthony

"My name is Anthony and I started working with Cyfle Cymru in December 2017. I was not working and finding it difficult to get work but I found the support I have received from my peer mentor Tania really helpful. She's been helping me to become independent and responsible for managing my own tenancy and managing my health conditions. Cat the Employment Advisor was also helpful in supporting me into employment.

"I now have a paid job housekeeping in Beth Eden Hotel in Llandudno where I am learning new skills and becoming more confident.

"I am also happy that I will be supported for six months into my employment and have regular visits from my Employment Advisor to check all is okay."

INTERVIEW: Lloyd Ashley

We recently sat down with Adferiad Recovery's Young People's Ambassador Lloyd Ashley following the conclusion of a hugely successful rugby career with the Ospreys. Here we catch up with Lloyd, who runs his own wellbeing company 'Living Well with Lloyd Ashley', to speak more about how the past few months have been for him and about his post rugby transition.

So Lloyd, how is everything going since leaving the Ospreys after over a decade of playing professional rugby there?

All very good my end. It's been a bit strange not going back to the same place of work since the beginning of pre-season 15 years ago. The family keeps me going, there's so much going on outside of rugby, some bits I've planned for, some bits I haven't, so it's been really interesting. Normally I suppose most people don't get to 31 without ever having to do an actual formal interview so it's been a very interesting couple of weeks but very exciting – nerve wracking at different points too – but it's been nice to step back, think about my rugby career and how lucky I was able to do that for so long. I've also been able to look at how well Living Well has been going the last couple of years, being an ambassador for Adferiad and all the mental health work so it's been a nice time to reflect – I think in life we don't take those opportunities to reflect so it's been nice to do that.

Throughout the past few years you've been Adferiad's Young People's Ambassador, supporting their various Children and Young People's services a great deal. What have you got out of this role?

I get a great deal. You know you're able to be there for young people and provide a service where they feel safe and I think Adferiad have done such a good job in providing those services over the years. As soon as I even had a conversation with the Adferiad team, I realised I wanted to be a part of it and be able to support in whatever way I could. At times I probably wish I could do more but to see how much it's grown just since I've been on board has been fantastic and to see so many more young people accessing these services they need. It's also been nice to experience some of the alternative things such as the tall ship voyage, seeing the young people with psychosis coming from that with massive smiles on their faces. They wouldn't really get to experience those special moments if it wasn't for an organisation like Adferiad. They've been amazing.

After leaving the Ospreys after numerous years there, what are your plans now?



I suppose this is still something I'm trying to work out exactly. Even though at times it's really scary, it's also really good to see how much is out there and open my eyes to the world outside of professional sport. Going into rugby at 15 years old and staying there until over 30 you haven't had a proper look at anything outside of that. As part of growing Living Well, I will carry on delivering resilience sessions for rugby clubs and in schools and delivering mental health first aid within organisations as well. I'm hoping I can carry that on and that's definitely at the forefront of my mind when looking at jobs because not only has it been beneficial for me to see different environments outside of rugby, it's also something I enjoy doing as well. I've been involved in conversations I never thought I'd be involved in so it's been very exciting to see Living Well grow.

Going through a bit of a career change, how are you feeling about the transition and what would you say to others who may be undergoing a similar change?

It can definitely be daunting. We're all creatures of our environment and we all get used to what's going on around us. A change in any aspect is daunting but I think in rugby we all know it's going to come, you're never sure when and the uncertainty can make it that little bit harder to make the transition as smooth as possible. Being able to do the things I have throughout my career has made this career transition a little bit less stressful, even though I haven't made a decision on what is next it's meant I'm not thinking, 'help I've got nothing but rugby.' It's really important that, whatever job we're in or have had in the past, we take the skills we have learned and apply them into whatever we do next, even if you don't quite know what that place is yet.