



CTM Health Board

Director of Public Health Annual Report 2024/25

Starting Well, Living Well: Working together to support the Early Years of Life

Dyddiad y Cyfarfod / Date of Meeting	27/11/2025
Statws Cyhoeddi / Publication Status	Open/ Public
	Not Applicable
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Noddwr Gweithredol yr Adroddiad / Report Executive Sponsor	Philip Daniels, Executive Director of Public Health

Pwrpas yr Adroddiad / Report Purpose	For Approval
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Engagement (internal/external) undertaken to date (including receipt/consideration at Committee/Group)		
Committee / Group / Forum Individuals	Date	Outcome
Strategic Development Committee	01/10/2025	Endorsed for Submission to Board

Acronyms / Glossary of Terms	

1. Situation /Background

- 1.1 The Director of Public Health's Annual report is an opportunity to reflect on a key issue to the health of our population here in Cwm Taf Morgannwg.
- 1.2 This year's report focuses on the early years of life, a critical period for laying the foundations of lifelong health.
- 1.3 The report highlights key issues and examples of work being done across Cwm Taf Morgannwg (CTM) to improve outcomes for children and families.
- 1.4 Despite many positives, persistent inequalities remain, with a majority of families living in the 40% most deprived areas of Wales. Among other metrics, in CTM we have:
 - Higher rates of maternal smoking and obesity
 - Higher rates of low birth weight
 - Reduced breastfeeding rates
 - Increased levels of childhood obesity
 - Increased rates tooth decay
- 1.5 Our poorer outcomes in the early years feed through to reduced healthy life-expectancy.
- 1.6 With the national withdrawal of the Early Years Transformation programme in 2023 there has been a gap in regional collaboration and co-ordination to improve health outcomes in the early years.
- 1.7 The Regional Partnership Board's upcoming Babies, Children and Young People Strategy presents an opportunity for renewed focus in this space.
- 1.8 Prioritisation of action on the early years by partners across our regional system is essential if we are to turn the tide on patterns of increasing ill health in our region and reduce health inequalities.

2. Specific Matters for Consideration

- 2.1 The report emphasizes the importance of prioritising the health of the youngest members of society.
- 2.2 Action to improve health and wellbeing of children and families in the early years is essential for reducing health inequalities and improving long term health outcomes.
- 2.3 The report covers key opportunities for improving health and wellbeing in the early years, including:
 - Preconception and the first 1000 days, including maternal health, family bonding, and breastfeeding



- Health improvement and protection, including vaccination, healthy weight, and oral health
- The foundations of health, including child poverty and collaborating between health and education.

2.4 Overall, we highlight the need for a coordinated, system wide approach to address these issues and reduce health inequalities.

3. Key Risks / Matters for Escalation

- 3.1 There is currently a lack of prioritisation of action to improve outcomes in the early years across CTM.
- 3.2 There is currently a lack of regional co-ordination to improve outcomes in the early years across CTM.

4. Assessment

Objectives / Strategy	
Dolen i Nod (au) Strategol BIP CTM / Link to CTMUHB Strategic Goal(s)	Creating Health
	If more than one applies please list below: Inspiring or people, improving care
Dolen i Feysydd Strategol BIP CTM / Link to CTMUHB Strategic Areas	Starting Well
	If more than one applies please list below:
Dolen i Ddeddf Llesiant Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol – Nodau Llesiant / Link to Wellbeing of Future Generations Act – Wellbeing Goals 150623-guide-to-the-fg-act-en.pdf (futuregenerations.wales)	A Healthier Wales
	If more than one applies please list below: Cuts across all domains
Dolen i Hwyluswyr Ansawdd (Canllawiau Statudol Dyletswydd Ansawdd (Ilyw.cymru)) / Link to Enablers of Quality (Duty of Quality Statutory Guidance (gov.wales))	Whole-systems Perspective
	If more than one applies please list below:
Dolen i Feysydd Ansawdd (Canllawiau Statudol Dyletswydd Ansawdd (Ilyw.cymru)) / Link to Domains of Quality (Duty of Quality Statutory Guidance (gov.wales))	Effective
	If more than one applies please list below: All
Effaith Amgylcheddol/ Cynaliadwyedd (5R) / Environmental /Sustainability Impact (5Rs)	No - Not Applicable
	If more than one applies please list below:



Impact Assessment		
Ansawdd <i>Ydych chi wedi ymgymryd â Sgrinio Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Ansawdd? /</i> Quality <i>Have you undertaken a Quality Impact Assessment Screening?</i>	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Outcome:	If no, please include rationale below: Not relevant
Cydraddoldeb a'r Gymraeg <i>Ydych chi wedi ymgymryd â Sgrinio Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Gydraddoldeb a'r Gymraeg? /</i> Equality and Welsh Language <i>Have you undertaken an Equality and Welsh Language Impact Assessment Screening?</i>	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Outcome for Equality (delete as appropriate): POSITIVE/NEUTRAL NEGATIVE Outcome for Welsh Language (delete as appropriate): POSITIVE/NEUTRAL NEGATIVE	If no, please include rationale below: Not relevant (Translated version will be published simultaneously)
Cyfreithiol / Legal	There are no specific legal implications related to the activity outlined in this report.	
Enw da / Reputational	Yes (Include further detail below)	
	Working with partners to strengthen our approach in the Early Years will have a positive reputational impact	
Effaith Adnoddau <i>(Pobl / Ariannol) /</i> Resource Impact <i>(People / Financial)</i>	Yes (Include further detail below)	
	No direct impact, however the report is an opportunity to reflect how we resource and support work on the Early Years as a health board.	

5. Recommendation

5.1 The Board is asked to **Approve** the Annual Report, following which the report will be launched in collaboration with communications colleagues.

5.2 Our annual report makes a set of key recommendations, though these are not an exhaustive set of recommendations they provide an indication of opportunities for improvement across the system.

5.3 Recommendations include:

5.3.1 Cross Cutting Recommendations

- Reinvigorate and prioritise system-wide work across the early years, focusing on co-production, collaboration, and integration.
- Match collaborative action with joint commissioning and sustainable models of funding.
- Advocate for national action, where levers lie beyond CTM.

- Maximise long-term benefits by considering early years in wider programmes (e.g., smoking cessation in pregnancy).
- Explore better sharing and utilisation of existing data across the early years, linking data to system priorities.

5.3.2 Pre-conception and the first 1000 days:

- Develop a Maternity Public Health plan to take a systematic approach to prevention and equity.
- Review provision of long-acting reversible contraception across CTM to improve access, focusing on priority groups.
- Learn from the preventative approaches developed by the CHOICE and Local Authority pre-birth programmes to build sustainable models of preventative care in the first 1000 days.
- Deliver the CTM infant feeding strategy, and ensure that breastfeeding rates are monitored at a strategic level.

5.3.3 Health Improvement and Protection in the Early Years:

- Take a whole system approach to healthy weight, working alongside the PIPYN programme to understand the lives of young families.
- Work to expand access to healthy, affordable food for children and families.
- Continue to work for high levels of vaccination for mother and child in CTM, with a focus on reducing inequalities.
- Learn from Designed to Smile access to dentistry pilots, sharing progress with educational colleagues.

5.3.4 Foundations of Health – Child Poverty and Education:

- Prioritise action on child poverty as part of regional collaborative working on the early years.
- Consider how system-wide efforts to benefits maximisation can work with families with young children.
- Strengthen partnership working between health and education, and consider how data can be better used to understand challenges such as school readiness.
- Continue to lobby for clear national and UK level commitments to action on child poverty, including the lifting of the two-child benefit limit.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 The report will be socialised across relevant stakeholder forums as part of our work advocating for action across the Early Years.