



## An Update on the Delivery of a Health & Wellbeing Centre for the Llynfi Valley

May 2025

### Healthy Futures Maesteg

Through each of our previous newsletters we have tried to keep you updated on the current status of our plans to deliver a Health and Wellbeing Centre in Maesteg, with a focus on delivering a wide-range of services at a redeveloped Maesteg Community Hospital.

This newsletter is intended to share more widely the current position, following extensive briefings to stakeholders from across the Llynfi Valley.

As a Health Board, we are working hard to develop a Health and Wellbeing Centre project that includes health, local authority and third sector services that meet the needs of the Llynfi Valley, taking into account what we heard from our staff and the community at our January and May 2023 engagement events (*feedback from the January 2023 event is attached*).

Based on this work, the Welsh Government Integration and Rebalancing Care Fund (IRCF) Team has positively advised that there is capital money available for the development of a health and wellbeing centre in the Llynfi Valley, subject to business cases approval (which will take another 2 years to complete).

We can confirm that funding for the proposed health and wellbeing centre in Maesteg is unaffected by the money provided to fix the roof at Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend. These come from different funding sources, albeit all are under the control of the Welsh Government

Unfortunately, the current situation is that the available budget does not cover the necessary redevelopment of the existing Maesteg Community Hospital site, which requires many millions of pounds more than we anticipated to return it to a building that is capable of delivering the modern, accessible and safe healthcare services that the community tell us they want.

In short, the overall redevelopment costs of Maesteg Community Hospital are currently 60% over the funding we anticipate. If we were to reduce redevelopment costs in line with the likely available funding, it would not be possible to provide the quality and type of services that the community want or need.

As such, and as a necessary part of our business case process to demonstrate that we are delivering quality and accessible services, we needed to look at alternatives. Through engagement with Bridgend County Borough Council, we

have identified another site within the Llynfi Valley that could potentially meet the health and wellbeing needs of the community.

This site is located on land close to Ewenny Road, near Maesteg Town Centre, and near Ewenny Road Railway Station. Kier Construction is actively considering the viability of the potential new site to see whether we can deliver almost everything identified by the community for the expected available funding in a purpose-built, modern facility. This site also provides potential options to further develop the building to host additional services in the future.

Services included within the proposed Health and Wellbeing Centre, which will be sized between 3,000-3,500M<sup>2</sup>, include provision of primary care, an Urgent Care Centre for minor injuries and illnesses, a strengthened Outpatient Department with a wider range of specialties, Community Mental Health Services, integrated health and local authority teams covering children and adults services, and a range of third sector services, including those delivered by Bridgend College, Citizens Advice and Mental Health Matters Wales.

In regards in-patient provision, there has been a shift in Welsh Government direction to provide more care at home, rather than in hospital for rehabilitation and reablement patients. A hospital is not necessarily the right place for many of those patients formerly supported at the 'Llynfi Ward' in Maesteg Hospital.

In-community care is often the safest and most effective health service provision for older people and includes rapid discharge and safe alternatives to hospital admission, such as 'Hospital at Home.' This essentially takes the hospital to the patient through a multidisciplinary team, including doctors, nurses, a physiotherapist and occupational therapist and other professionals.

This shift in provision, alongside the very high costs of building a new ward and providing the significant space needed to deliver necessary supporting services, such as therapies spaces and catering requirements (which requires 1,500M<sup>2</sup>), means we will be unable to provide in-patient beds in Maesteg.

We are engaged with staff from the former 'Llynfi Ward' and those still at Maesteg Hospital and we will keep them updated throughout this process.

From an access standpoint, this potential new site has vastly improved public transport options and can be directly accessed (via bus or rail) from all parts of the Llynfi Valley and further down the railway line to Tondy, Sarn and Aberkenfig. This addresses significant challenges patients have in accessing services at the current Maesteg Community Hospital site, which was a key issue identified in our 2023 community engagement events.

In addition, if the potential new site is deliverable within our expected available funding, services would remain open at Maesteg Community Hospital until the new Health and Wellbeing Centre is finished, which would ensure there was no disruption to current services locally.

We expect Kier Construction to provide their initial feasibility report in late May 2025.

We do not underestimate the high-regard in which Maesteg Community Hospital and its founders are held by the community and whatever the decision, we will work with partners to preserve the history of this important building. For example, we are in early discussions with Bridgend County Borough Council about a potential Article 4 Direction that could restrict permitted development rights at Maesteg Hospital to protect the special character of the site, which would help preserve the hospital façade.

However, we must also look to the future to deliver the modern, integrated services the community needs today and for the decades ahead and we do not want the important heritage of the building to be a barrier to the provision of better, safer and more accessible health care services that the people of the Llynfi Valley want and deserve.

*In summary, a redevelopment of Maesteg Community Hospital is not affordable, and we do not wish to miss out on tens of millions of pounds of investment in the health and wellbeing of the Llynfi Valley.*

*If a potential facility at a new site in Maesteg can deliver a purpose-built health and wellbeing centre that will serve the interests of the community for the decades ahead, it's important we look closely to determine if it's possible.*

We must stress that no decision has been taken, but we wanted to be open about the current situation so there are no surprises for our communities.

Once we know more, we will share further information and develop a programme of public engagement, including events held in local communities, to provide opportunities for people to be involved in this exciting, potential investment into their town and their health.

We ask for your patience as we continue to look at the options open to us to deliver the services you identified and the community needs and deserves.

### **Continued investment in Maesteg**

Whilst we continue to review our options, we are still investing in services for the here and now at Maesteg Community Hospital. We have modernised our X-Ray Suite at Maesteg with the latest equipment following funding approval from the Welsh Government. Following final upgrade activities, this will be open 4 mornings a week, and we will share more information once it is fully open and operational.

In addition, we have invested in a new space allocated to Bron-Y-Garn Surgery in the former Llynfi Ward. This was necessary due to water ingress on the first floor above the surgery, which, despite multiple attempts, has proven difficult to address successfully. This small investment will enable the practice staff to work in a more suitable environment.

## **Further information**

Should you have any specific queries, or requests for further information ahead of our next update, please don't hesitate to get in touch:

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**Next planned briefing date – July 2025**