

# Fewer people in Wales dying from heart disease – new report

Cardiovascular (heart and circulatory) disease is the biggest killer in Wales, causing more than a quarter (27%) of all deaths, or over 9,000 deaths each year – an average of 25 each day.

There are an estimated 375,000 people living with cardiovascular disease in Wales – 4% of the population.

The Welsh Government's Annual Statement of Progress on Heart Disease reveals the rate of deaths for all heart conditions has fallen over the past five years. It shows:

- Over the last 20 years in Wales, there has been a 68% reduction in the rate of people dying from premature coronary heart disease, before the age of 75; Since 2009 alone, there's been a 20% reduction, due in part to the improved detection of heart disease amongst GPs, the ban on smoking in public places and other public health interventions, and better treatments within the NHS
- The number of people dying from a heart attack has fallen by 134 over the last five years, to 1,478
- The number of people dying from heart failure has reduced by nearly 40% in the last five years (by 192 deaths, to 332 deaths in 2015)
- There has been a steady reduction in the number of people dying from cardiovascular disease – with 1,000 fewer people a year dying compared to 5 years ago. In 2010 just over 10,000 people died from cardiovascular disease, by 2015 this had fallen to just over 9,000.

The report also shows:

- The Welsh NHS is treating patients quicker and closer to home: Through investments in community cardiology, health boards have all developed innovative approaches that allow patients to be diagnosed, assessed and where appropriate treated in their local community.
- A reduction in the number of people being treated for coronary heart disease: &nbsp;The number of people being treated by their GP for coronary heart disease has fallen gradually in recent years. Since 2008-09 there has been a reduction of 10,105 patients being treated by their GP for coronary heart disease
- More patients undertaking cardiac rehabilitation than ever before: Cardiac rehabilitation offers lifestyle advice and support, including guidance on diet and exercise. It helps people with heart disease to manage their condition and reduce the risk of repeat attacks and hospital readmissions. In 2015-16, 59% of eligible patients sought support following a procedure. This is a 17% increase on the previous year, when 42% of the patients eligible in Wales took part.

Health Secretary, Vaughan Gething said:

“Heart disease is a major killer in Wales, particularly affecting our poorer communities, with 1 in 7 men and nearly 1 in 10 women dying from the disease.

“The report shows the Welsh NHS has made continued progress in improving the care of patients with heart disease. We’ve seen a steady decline in the rate of people dying from all cardiovascular disease, thanks to advances in the field of medicine and improvements in lifestyle behaviours which reduce the risk of developing or dying from cardiovascular disease. But the biggest reduction has been in the rate of people under the age of 75 dying early from coronary heart disease, with a 68% reduction over the last 20 years.

“But we’re determined to improve this further. One avoidable death is one too many – we know there’s more to do in treating and preventing heart disease.”

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## [First Minister appoints new Ministerial team](#)

Dafydd Elis Thomas will join the Government as Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport, with Ken Skates remaining as Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport.

Vaughan Gething remains Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services, with Huw Irranca-Davies as his deputy as Minister for Children and Social Care.

Mark Drakeford remains Cabinet Secretary for Finance. Responsibility for Local Government moves to Alun Davies as Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services, supported by Rebecca Evans, Minister for Housing and Regeneration.

Lesley Griffiths remains Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs, with Hannah Blythyn joining the Government as Minister for Environment.

Kirsty Williams remains Cabinet Secretary for Education, with Eluned Morgan joining the Government as Minister for Welsh Language and Lifelong Learning.

Julie James joins the Cabinet as Leader of the House and Chief Whip, with responsibility for digital infrastructure and equalities.

Jeremy Miles will be nominated for the role of Counsel General, the Welsh

Government's chief legal advisor.

First Minister Carwyn Jones said:

"I am proud to announce my new Ministerial team, which provides a balance of experience and stability, with new drive and energy.

"This strong team will drive forward our ambitious plans for Wales – focusing on growing the Welsh economy, creating jobs, supporting our public services and improving the day-to-day lives of the people of Wales."

Ministerial portfolios and responsibilities:

- **First Minister of Wales**, Rt Hon Carwyn Jones
- **Counsel General Designate**, Jeremy Miles
- **Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services**, Alun Davies
- **Cabinet Secretary for Finance**, Mark Drakeford
- **Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services**, Vaughan Gething
- **Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs**, Lesley Griffiths
- **Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport**, Ken Skates
- **Cabinet Secretary for Education**, Kirsty Williams
- **Leader of the House and Chief Whip**, Julie James
- **Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport**, Dafydd Elis-Thomas (Deputy to Ken Skates)
- **Minister for Housing and Regeneration**, Rebecca Evans (Deputy to Alun Davies)
- **Minister for Environment**, Hannah Blythyn (Deputy to Lesley Griffiths)
- **Minister for Welsh Language and Lifelong Learning**, Eluned Morgan (Deputy to Kirsty Williams)
- **Minister for Children and Social Care**, Huw Irranca-Davies (Deputy to Vaughan Gething)

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## [Funding for CSOs to be extended](#)

£16.8 million has been allocated during 2018-19 to extend the project beyond the original commitment to fund 500 CSOs in addition to warranted police officers until March 2018.

The funding will be split amongst the four Welsh Police Forces and British Transport Police to cover the costs of the additional CSOs in their areas.

The Cabinet Secretary said:

“The Welsh Government has been providing funding for an additional 500 Community Support Officers for several years and the scheme has been a success.

“The officers are highly visible in their communities, engaging with people, providing reassurance and tackling anti-social behaviour. They are playing a pivotal role not only in making our communities safer, but in making them feel safer.

“Continuing this funding beyond the original commitment represents a significant investment in community safety at a time of unprecedented pressure on public sector budgets, and on police funding in particular.”

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## Report reveals 8 out of 10 shoppers prefer Welsh

These are some of the key findings of [a new report by Food and Drink Wales](#) on the ‘Value of Welshness’. Others include:

- Shoppers outside of Wales believe Wales is known for good quality food and drink and would like to support Welsh food and drink. 29% would like to see more Welsh food and drink in their shops.
- Wales is more associated with naturalness than GB.
- The scope for growth in Welsh products is substantial and there is strong shopper support for food and drink from Wales. The evidence suggests Welsh branding sits well with, and enhances GB branding.

Promoting Welsh food and drink, both nationally and globally, is a top priority for the Welsh Government and increasing numbers of Welsh brands are being recognised around the world. This was highlighted by the recent BlasCymru / TasteWales event, which featured buyers from as far afield as Hong Kong, the UAE and the USA.

The Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths welcomed the findings of the report. She said:

“In recent years Welsh food and drink has gained a growing and well-deserved reputation for uniqueness and high quality. This is reflected in the fact fourteen Welsh food and drink products have now been awarded coveted ‘Protected Food Name’ status.

“We have an ambitious target to grow the industry by 30% to £7bn by 2020. Although there are undoubtedly major challenges ahead, not

least our impending exit from the European Union, I am confident we can overcome them if we continue to promote the unique, special nature of our produce.

“This report shows there is strong support for food and drink from Wales and there are definite benefits for Welsh brands by using “Welshness” to enhance their proposition inside and outside of Wales.”

Andy Richardson, Chair of the Food and Drink Wales Industry Board said:

“It is very encouraging for us as an Industry Board to see that this research highlights the importance of Welsh provenance and underpins the confidence we have in our food and drink sector. We are proud of what our businesses produce and the research findings from the Value of Welshness is testimony that consumers feel the same.”

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## [Avian Influenza – Winter 2017 / 2018](#)

The UK is currently free from Avian Influenza (H5N8), but there is a constant risk the disease may arrive, especially now the bird migration season is underway. The current risk of incursion in the UK is **medium** for wild birds and **low** for poultry, although this depends on levels of biosecurity on individual premises.

The Chief Veterinary Officer is advising all poultry keepers in Wales, from small backyard flocks to large commercial premises, to review their biosecurity, sign up for disease alerts and register their birds with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA). Keepers are also reminded they must report any unexplained deaths or sickness to their vet.

The advice from Public Health Wales is the risk to public health from Avian Flu remains very low and the Food Standards Agency has made clear the disease does not pose a food safety risk for UK consumers.

The Chief Veterinary Officer said:

“The wild bird migration season is well under way. This means birds will be arriving into the UK from areas where we know Avian Flu is present.

“I can not stress enough the importance of poultry keepers continuing to practice the very highest levels of biosecurity. Even

when birds are housed, there remains a risk of infection and keepers of poultry and other captive birds should ensure every effort is made to prevent contact with wild birds. The movement of poultry should be minimised, and clothing and equipment should always be disinfected.”

“If you are concerned about the health of your birds you should seek advice from your veterinary surgeon. If you suspect your birds have AI, you should report it to your local [Animal and Plant Health Agency](#) (external link) office immediately.”

If members of the public find dead wild waterfowl (swans, geese or ducks) or gulls, or five or more dead wild birds of other species in the same location, they should report them to the Defra helpline on: 03459 33 55 77 or email: [defra.helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:defra.helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk). This service covers the whole of GB.

All keepers are encouraged to register their poultry. It is a legal requirement to register if keepers have premises with 50 or more birds. Keepers of premises with fewer than 50 birds are encouraged to [register voluntarily](#) (external link).

Keepers are advised to sign up for [disease alerts](#) (external link).

More information on Avian Influenza, the current situation in Wales and across the UK and advice for backyard keepers, including on biosecurity is available on the [Welsh Government's website](#).