

Economy Secretary calls on leaders of the Welsh Economy to be the spark for innovation and entrepreneurship

Economy Secretary, Ken Skates launched BeTheSpark – a Wales-wide movement aimed at unlocking the potential for greater collaboration between entrepreneurs, corporate leaders, risk capital, academia and government to support the creation of more home grown profitable businesses.

In 2015 Wales successfully applied to join the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program (REAP).

BeTheSpark is a direct result of Wales' participation in REAP and aims to connect all key partners to support the right conditions for innovation driven entrepreneurship in Wales. [BeTheSpark](#) (external link) provides a designated way to share world class ideas, exchange tips and identify suitable solutions to deliver change.

With simplicity, connectivity and visibility at its centre, the programme is seeking to drive job creation and provide a boost to regional economies through increased innovation and entrepreneurial activity.

Delegates at the event had the chance to engage with the Economy Secretary, Ken Skates as well as with a panel of successful leaders and entrepreneurs including Gocompare founder Hayley Parsons, Alacrity Chairman, Simon Gibson, IQE CEO, Drew Nelson OBE and James Taylor founder of the child development organisation SuperStars.

Education Secretary, Kirsty Williams, and Skills and Science Minister, Julie James also addressed delegates at the event.

Ken Skates said:

“I was pleased to be joined by 300 leaders in the Welsh economy for this launch of BeThe Spark.

“BeTheSpark provides key figures with an interest in driving forward entrepreneurship and innovation with a genuine opportunity to work together in meaningful partnership through the sharing of ideas and knowledge.

“Entrepreneurship and innovation driven enterprises are crucial to the health and future of our economy. This event and programme is about harnessing our collective power and doing all we can across the economy to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship so that it flourishes across Wales.”

First Minister in Gibraltar to discuss common Brexit priorities

While in Gibraltar, the First Minister will also meet with the Governor Lieutenant General Edward Grant Martin Davis, Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia, the Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses.

Gibraltar's economy is thriving, with the 4th highest GDP per head in the world at £54,979. However, it is highly dependent on its unique relationship with the EU and UK – with 40% of its workforce entering Gibraltar from Spain each day.

The First Minister said:

“While Gibraltar is in a unique position, we in Wales share common ground on the UK's future relationship with Europe and our approach to leaving the EU.

“We share their determination to secure a path in the Brexit negotiations which protects our ability to trade. We also recognise the positive contribution EU citizens make to life in Wales and, like Gibraltar, Wales will continue to need workers from EU countries to help sustain our economy and public services.

“This visit is also an opportunity to learn from Gibraltar's experience of operating outside the Customs Union and understand the potential risks and issues we would face if the UK took the same path post-Brexit.

“As we prepare to leave the EU, it is essential all parts of the UK and Gibraltar work together to map out a way forward that meets all our needs.”

“People who suffer out of hospital cardiac arrest must be given the best chance of survival” – Health Secretary

Vaughan Gething

The Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest (OCHA) Plan sets out the key actions that should be taken to improve a person's chance of survival from cardiac arrest.

Called the Chain of Survival, actions include:

- Prompt recognition and call for help;
- Early CPR to buy time;
- Early defibrillation to restart the heart;
- Rapid access to advanced resuscitation;
- Prompt, high quality post resuscitation care;
- Transport to the nearest appropriate hospital;
- Co-ordinated rehabilitation services.

In addition to the Chain of Survival, the OHCA plan highlights the positives of promoting life saving skills within schools and confirms all learners in Wales can learn about emergency aid procedures through Personal and Social Education (PSE).

The plan also encourages the use of fire crews and other rescue services to attend and respond to OHCA until the arrival of ambulance services. This has been shown to improve response times and patient outcomes

As part of the on-going implementation the plan, further work will be undertaken to map out organisations that provide CPR training within communities across Wales. This will help ensure that people Wales are not only given every opportunity to survive a cardiac arrest, but they also have access to CPR skills and resources such as defibrillators enabling them to save lives.

Vaughan Gething said:

"I would like to thank all of those who have worked together and been involved in the development of this plan.

"A patient's chance of surviving an out of hospital cardiac arrest decreases by an estimated 10% with every passing minute. Between April 2016 and March 2017, the Welsh Ambulance Service responded to 5,800 OHCA of which 2,832 resulted in a resuscitation attempt.

"Survival rates are currently low but there is the potential for many more lives to be saved if cardiopulmonary resuscitation and early defibrillation were undertaken more often. This is why this plan is so important.

"We never know when we might come across situations where action needs to be taken to help save a family member, friend, colleague, neighbour or stranger. Providing skills and knowledge would enable people to start the chain of survival as early as possible and give

individuals who suffer an OHCA the best chance of survival.

“We need to ensure these opportunities are available to all people, in all communities across Wales.”

Joanne Oliver, Health Services Engagement Lead for BHF Cymru said:

“We are delighted at the commitment demonstrated by the Welsh Government to those who suffer from and those at risk of a cardiac arrest”.

“Cardiac arrest is a serious medical emergency, where the heart stops pumping blood around the body and unless treated immediately, it leads to death within minutes. The overall UK survival rate for those suffering a cardiac arrest out of hospital is currently less than 1 in 10”.

“There is still a lot of work that remains to be done and investment in research into the diagnosis and treatment of cardiovascular conditions must remain a priority in Wales. We look forward to continuing our work together with the Welsh Government to implement this plan and measure its outcomes.”

Dr Brendan Lloyd, Executive Director of Medical and Clinical Services for the Welsh Ambulance Service, said:

“Every minute counts when someone goes into cardiac arrest, and we believe this plan represents an important step forward in improving out of hospital cardiac arrest survival rates in Wales.

“Our new clinical response model, work with partner agencies and our dedicated volunteer network of Community First Responders are aimed at providing the earliest possible intervention for patients with life-threatening conditions, including those in cardiac arrest.

“We are committed to improving clinical outcomes for patients across the country and are delighted that the plan will allow us build on this by carrying out further research and innovation and collecting standardised data to measure the quality of care being provided.

“We will also continue to promote the key links in the chain of the survival such as early CPR and defibrillation within our communities.”

[UK Chief Medical Officers issue advice for health professionals on physical exercise during pregnancy](#)

The new recommendations aim to reduce issues such as obesity, diabetes and other health concerns during pregnancy. The latest evidence suggests pregnant women should carry out around 150 minutes of 'moderate intensity' activity every week.

This is described as 'activity that makes you breathe faster' while still being able to hold a conversation.

This new advice is being issued in the form of an infographic, aimed at providing midwives, nurses, GPs, obstetricians, gynaecologists, as well as the leisure sector, with the latest evidence on physical activity during pregnancy.

Chief Medical Officer for Wales, Dr Frank Atherton, said:

"There is strong evidence that shows that regular, moderate exercise during pregnancy can offer women significant benefits. This includes reducing high blood pressure problems, helping to control weight gain, improving sleep, reducing the risk of diabetes, and improving mood. That's why we want to ensure pregnant women, and the health professionals who support them, are aware of the benefits of physical activity throughout pregnancy.

"Pregnant women who are not currently active, should build up their activity levels slowly, while women who already take part in regular exercise should stay active but listen to their body and adapt their exercise regime if necessary. A general rule for all pregnant women is, if it feels pleasant, keep going; if it is uncomfortable, then stop and seek advice."

Women who have not been active before pregnancy are recommended to follow a gradual progression of exercise—beginning with 10 minute bouts of moderate intensity exercise, gradually building up to 150 minutes. The activity should be spread throughout the week, and it is important to remember that 'every activity counts'.

The new advice was constructed by the CMO Expert Committee for Physical Activity and Pregnancy, which included midwives, obstetricians, exercise physiologist, GPs, Public Health Consultants, Sports Medicine, exercise professionals, nursing and research scientists. The project was led by

Professor Marian Knight and Dr Charlie Foster from the University of Oxford. The aim was to produce evidence-based messaging for health professionals to use with the public. The infographic was developed and tested with panels of health professionals and pregnant women before consultation with more than 250 UK based doctors and midwives.

Health professionals are encouraged to use this infographic to discuss the benefits of physical activity with all pregnant women, to help them maintain a healthy lifestyle, with approximately 1 in 20 women being recorded as obese during pregnancy.

The key points are:

- Pregnant women who are already active should be encouraged to maintain their physical activity levels
- Women may need to adapt their activity throughout their pregnancy. For example, replacing contact sports with a non-contact sport or an appropriate exercise class
- Importantly, the evidence supporting this infographic found no evidence of harm for maternal or infant resulting from moderate intensity physical activity
- Those who were not active before their pregnancy are advised to avoid intense exercise, such as running, jogging, racquet sports, and strenuous strength training. But some activities can be adapted
- The final safety message is a common sense 'don't bump the bump', referring to all activities which place pregnant women at an increased risk of injury through physical contact
- The study recommends pregnant women avoid activities where there is an increased risk of falling, trauma or high impact injuries. These include skiing, water skiing, surfing, off-road cycling, gymnastics, horse riding and contact sports such as ice hockey, boxing, football or basketball. They are also discouraged from exercise that requires lying flat on their back after the first trimester
- If you experience breathlessness before or following minimal exertion, headaches, dizziness, chest pain, muscle weakness affecting balance and calf pain or swelling, seek medical advice. Women may also be advised to reduce/stop physical activity following pregnancy complications such as vaginal bleeding, regular painful contractions or amniotic fluid leakage.

£200,000 to engage communities across Wales in cultural activities

The Economy Secretary confirmed that eight separate organisations across Wales, including local authorities and housing associations, had been successful in their applications to the Welsh Government's Fusion programme.

Since its inception in 2015, the [Fusion: Creating Opportunities through Culture programme](#) has worked with over 5,000 people and 150 partners to deliver a huge range of projects to young people and adults across Wales. Fusion has enabled community members to widen their horizons and increase their confidence, skills and qualifications by taking part in cultural activities. It has seen young people taking over the running of museums and castles, famous artworks taken out to primary schools and professional opera performances on school buses. Adults have volunteered and gained qualifications to help improve employability, and taken part in schemes to boost health and digital inclusion.

This latest round of Fusion funding will enable innovative partnerships to transform many more lives in some of Wales' most economically disadvantaged areas. Local authorities, housing associations and employment programmes will link directly with museums, theatres, libraries and other cultural sites, ensuring that cultural programmes are accessible to all.

The Economy Secretary, said:

“Fusion is an innovative, low-cost intervention that promotes collaboration to better serve the needs of the people of Wales. Since the launch of the Fusion we have worked with Local Authorities, heritage sites, theatres and others to encourage thousands of people who might not normally have engaged in cultural activities to get involved. I am very pleased to be able to allocate more than £200,000 to eight new projects across Wales that will enable this important work to continue.