

Welsh Government Minister joins #DontDanceAlone campaign to help tackle loneliness in Swansea

The local radio station The Wave and Swansea Sound's #DontDanceAlone campaign was launched in 2017 to raise awareness of the older generation, shining a light on the devastating effects loneliness has and to encourage and promote intergenerational relationships through dance.

Its 2018 campaign was launched on October 7, leading to the first official #DontDanceAlone Week from November 12 to November 18.

During the week, community groups, schools and businesses are being encouraged to host or create their own events, where older members of the community can attend and participate with younger members of the community.

The Minister visited Birchgrove Primary School in the Swansea Valley for a day of World War Two-themed activities, including a tea dance party with the pupils and grandparents/local older residents of the community.

He then visited St Nicholas on the Hill and St Jude's Church in Swansea, where he joined a community-led event where older and younger members of the community came together to dance.

The Welsh Government is currently consulting on its plans to tackle loneliness and social isolation across Wales. Around 17% of people in Wales – 440,000 people – reported being lonely in 2016-17.

The consultation will last for 12 weeks (until 15 January 2019) and the consultation document is available on the Welsh Government's website.

Minister for Children, Older People and Social Care, Huw Irranca-Davies said:

“There is a growing awareness of the problem of loneliness and unwanted social isolation across Wales and the UK as a whole. We know from research that loneliness can have a serious impact on our health – which could be the equivalent of smoking 15 cigarettes a day. That's why as a Welsh Government, we've said tackling loneliness and unwanted social isolation is a national priority for us.

“So it's crucial we do what we can to bring communities together. I'm delighted to have been in Swansea today to lend my support to the fantastic #DontDanceAlone campaign being run by The Wave and Swansea Sound. It's proving to be a real hit, bringing young and old together to enjoy tea and dance. This is exactly the kind of thing I want to see more of across Wales.

“In Wales, we have a proud tradition of close-knit communities coming together to provide that strong sense of togetherness. Let’s all do what we can to rekindle that spirit in our communities – in every village, town and city across the country. Together, we must tackle loneliness and isolation.”

[Preferred partner for new GP indemnity scheme in Wales announced](#)

Speaking at the Primary Health Care Conference in Cardiff, Mr Gething said the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership – Legal and Risk Services, who currently indemnify GPs working Out of Hours, is the preferred partner to operate the Future Liability Scheme from April next year.

The scheme, which will be aligned as far as possible to the scheme announced in England, will ensure GPs in Wales are not at a disadvantage relative to those in England and that GP recruitment and cross border activity will not be adversely affected by different schemes operating in England and Wales.

Mr Gething said:

“This new scheme will provide greater stability and certainty for GPs in Wales. It will support GP practices and primary care clusters in their delivery of sustainable and accessible health care.

The Future Liabilities Scheme will cover the activity of all contractors who provide primary medical services. This will include clinical negligence liabilities arising from the activities of GP practice staff and other medical professionals such as salaried GPs; locum GPs; practice pharmacists; practice nurses; healthcare assistants.

I will make a final decision on the delivery of the Future Liability Scheme in Wales following further engagement with medical defence organisations.”

Dr Charlotte Jones, Chair of GPC Wales, commented:

“GPC Wales supports Welsh Government’s decision to announce Welsh Legal and Risk Pool as the preferred partner to provide the future liabilities indemnity scheme for General Practice. The proposed scheme will address one of the biggest financial pressures on GPs

and will help enable all GPs, practice teams and wider cluster healthcare professionals to work more closely together taking forward the transformation of Welsh primary care.”

Rock UK – Adventure Hub for the Valleys

The project received £2.3m of EU funding through the Welsh Government’s Tourism Attractor Destination programme led by Visit Wales.

Rock UK is the first project to be completed under the Tourism Attractor Destination programme – the new facilities were completed and became operational in June 2018. The Tourism Attractor Destination project – which includes 11 destinations, will realise £62 million investment in the tourism sector over the next three years, including £ 27.7 million of European funding.

The project at Rock UK has created a unique proposition bringing together multiple leisure activities with attractive, affordable accommodation which in turn brings welcome employment and first-class facilities for the local community. The team are also working with the local community to identify opportunities to work with local groups to ensure that local people can access the jobs created by this investment.

The work undertaken at the centre includes – new 104 bed en-suite accommodation for groups; 120-cover dining room; meeting rooms; new café with outdoor children’s play area; fitness suite and gym.

Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport, Lord Elis-Thomas, said:

“The team have transformed this site into a first-class residential adventure facility – that creates a new adventure tourism hub in south east Wales. I’m delighted that we’ve been able to assist Rock UK with this development.

“Our aim through the Tourism Attractor Destination programme is to focus efforts and investment on key projects in each region so we have a real impact on Wales’ profile in this globally competitive market, this represents a huge funding boost for the sector, which will make a real difference to the products and experiences that Wales has to offer.

“One of the aims of the Ministerial Taskforce for the South Wales Valleys is to stimulate economic activity in our valleys

communities and create jobs. Attracting fabulous inward investment like this can help us achieve those goals.”

New member of staff Becky Fear, from Quakers Yard, Treharris joined Rock UK Summit Centre in February this year. “The whole ethos of the organisation is so inclusive; it offers people the opportunity to experience something they would never have had the chance to try. It has been great to be part of something from the start and to see this facility fill up with local people and visiting groups. The team have achieved so much in our first few months and I love working somewhere with such a positive atmosphere which has made a real difference to me”. After 8 months on reception, Becky has now moved into the new role of Administrator and is handling the many residential bookings coming into the centre.

New standards to improve school nurse services in Wales’ special schools

The main aim of the new special schools nursing framework is to enable a more consistent approach for children in special schools, by ensuring children have access to both mainstream and specialist services.

The special schools nursing framework describes how special schools nurses work with children, schools and families to make sure that children in special schools receive the same high standard of healthcare as children in mainstream schools.

This means special schools nurses make the reasonable adjustments to help children to get the healthcare they need. Equally important, this framework will ensure children and families receive specialist health care when needed.

It also sets out what’s expected to ensure children with significant additional needs who require health care input within other schools are supported. Part of this is making sure other professionals in community and specialist teams can work in a coordinated manner with the child when in school.

This will involve taking a ‘team around the child’ approach – this recognises the important role that special schools nurses have in making sure this happens. During the early implementation phase of this framework, we will be looking at how children’s community teams operate to help develop a more co-ordinated and cohesive approach to supporting children and their families.

The framework reflects the aspirations of the Welsh Government’s long term plan for health and social care – A Healthy Wales. There is a large focus on the public health role nurses have in schools across the board. Supporting

early identification of health issues that affect children is an important part of the health promotion role of the nurse.

Minister for Children, Older People and Social Care, Huw Irranca-Davies said:

“I am delighted to be able to launch the new framework for nurses working in special schools. This important work builds on the existing school nursing framework which describes the health care for all children in schools across Wales.

“I see the role of the special schools nurse as pivotal in ensuring that care is coordinated, families and carers are included and that children with additional needs have access to the care that they need. I want to recognise and acknowledge the excellent work that special school nurses do.

“The framework I’m unveiling today is designed to support them by providing consistency of approach, ensuring they provide the very best care and support to children in every school across Wales.”

Sustainable drainage compulsory from next year

SuDS make use of landscape and natural vegetation to control the flow of surface water and reduce the risk of flooding. Designs can include ponds, permeable paving and swales, which slow down the discharge of surface water more than conventional piped drainage.

Surface runoff water can also be a major source of pollution, both directly and from overwhelmed sewers discharging into rivers. SuDS are designed to improve water quality while being more resilient and longer lasting than conventional drainage.

As part of the regulations, ‘SuDS Approving Bodies’ or ‘SABs’ will be set up within every local authority to approve drainage plans. The SAB or local planning authorities will have powers to issue enforcement notices to a developer who breaches the requirements. Developers will have a right of appeal to Welsh Government against the decision of a SAB.

The Environment Minister, Hannah Blythyn, said:

“Surface water flooding can have a devastating impact on communities and our economy. The recent flooding we’ve seen in parts of Wales have underlined the need to adapt to the challenges

of climate change.

“Around 163,000 properties in Wales are at risk of surface water flooding. Employing sustainable drainage systems are estimated to reduce flood damage by up to 30%.

“Until now, the uptake of SuDS has been low. These regulations will help reduce flood risk and improve water quality, while also introducing homes for wildlife within new housing developments.”