

# Welsh women's charity receives UK Government funding

Welsh Women's Aid 'Sector Strength Cymru' is among 14 women and girls' charities confirmed to receive a share of the final round of the Government's £11.25 million Tampon Tax Fund.

The UK-wide grants generated from the VAT on period products, will be directly invested in vital projects tackling issues facing women and girls.

Over the last six years, the Tampon Tax Fund has awarded £79 million, with this final round bringing the total to £90.25 million.

In March last year, the Chancellor announced that following the UK's departure from the EU on 1st January 2021, the EU 5% VAT charge on period products would be removed, permanently reducing associated costs for these products.

Welsh Women's Aid are receiving a grant of £507,512 towards their project, which provides targeted support and open grant giving opportunities for Women's Aid members across Wales that enable the development, testing and delivery of new high-quality services, activities, approaches, research, or technologies that have the overarching aim of improving the quality of life for women and girls impacted by violence against women.

Best Beginnings and White Ribbon Alliance UK are also running their project, Safer Beginnings, across the UK, including in Wales.

At the same time, the Prime Minister has announced the latest Points of Light award is being awarded to Molly Fenton, for exceptional contributions towards reducing period poverty. Molly runs the Love Your Period campaign, which reduces stigma and period poverty in schools across Wales. She has been recognised for her inspirational work through the Prime Minister's prestigious award.

Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Nadine Dorries, said:

I'm delighted that Welsh Women's Aid is among the 14 organisations receiving grants towards their exceptional projects helping disadvantaged women and girls.

Over the last six years, the UK Government's Tampon Tax Fund has supported charities right across the UK, and I'm extremely pleased that we were able to use VAT on period products for these important causes.

I'd also like to congratulate Molly on her very well deserved award, and thank her for her selfless hard work.

Secretary of State for Wales, Simon Hart said:

Supporting organisations such as Welsh Women's Aid, who do such vital work on behalf of survivors of domestic abuse, is so important. And I'm proud that the UK Government's Tampon Tax Fund is being used to directly tackle issues facing women and girls in Wales.

And I'd like to pay tribute to Molly Fenton, whose work has been recognised by this prestigious award. She has done an incredible job of raising awareness of period poverty, and starting an important conversation that affects so many women in Wales. Huge congratulations to her.

Molly Fenton said:

I am honoured to be receiving such an award, and I am honoured to see the amazing changes being made to eradicate period poverty and stigma for all across the country. My work isn't done, and I won't stop until every single person that menstruates has the dignity they deserve.

Sara Kirkpatrick, Chief Executive, Welsh Women's Aid said:

We are delighted to be receiving funding from the Tampon Tax Fund. The Sector Strength Cymru project will enable our specialist member services to respond to the needs of survivors, and develop or deliver new high-quality activities and approaches that will improve the quality of life for women and girls impacted by violence against women in Wales.

## **Notes to Editors**

Best Beginnings and White Ribbon Alliance UK's 'Safer Beginners' – Safer Beginnings aims to improve maternity outcomes and the postpartum safety of 70,950 women of whom 13,350 are women from ethnic minority communities in England, Wales and Scotland by 2023, by developing specialist information, services and interventions that enable self-advocacy in maternal safety from obstetric and domestic abuse/violence and FGM/FGC.

## **Points of Light awards**

- The Points of Light awards recognise outstanding individual volunteers, people who are making a change in their community and inspiring others.
- The Prime Minister makes daily announcements of the winners to celebrate, encourage and promote volunteering and the value that it brings to the country.

- If people know someone who could be a Point of Light they should write to the Prime Minister at 10 Downing Street.
  - For more details visit the [Points of Light website](#)
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## [UKHSA invests in new system to support response to health threats](#)

In response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the government pledged to strengthen health protection systems. The delivery of the new CIMS platform is an important part of building on the UK's excellent track record in dealing with health protection situations and events and will enable the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) to effectively monitor, identify and be ready to respond to health threats, now and in the future.

UKHSA will be deploying a system called [Maven®](#), developed by [Conduent Incorporated](#) (Nasdaq: CNDT), as its primary platform for case, outbreak and incident management. Initially the platform will be used to track and monitor acute respiratory infections, including COVID-19, but will expand its use for case and incident management of other communicable diseases and health hazards by winter 2022.

Since the flu pandemic in 2009, the current system has been a vital tool in public health management. It has been a critical part of England's public health management capabilities, enabling teams across the country to manage cases, identify outbreaks and work with local partners to deliver public health interventions. However, since its deployment there have been significant advancements in technology that are now available in the market. The new system will deliver in-house configurability providing greater autonomy, advanced integration capability, greater efficiency in data entry and centralised reporting functionality as well as streamlined workflows and many other features.

Dr William Welfare, Pan-Regional Director at UKHSA, said:

UKHSA is on the frontline protecting the nation from infectious diseases and other public health threats.

Throughout this pandemic, it has been critical for us to rapidly and effectively detect and track COVID-19, share information, and respond to protect the public.

Investing in state-of-the-art technologies, such as Conduent's Maven, will modernise our surveillance, case and incident management capabilities keeping us at the forefront of health protection.

This investment is crucial and I'm delighted that UKHSA has the opportunity to deploy this system to monitor and respond to diseases that impact on people's daily lives.

Mark King, President, Government Solutions at Conduent, said:

Conduent brings nearly 4 decades of experience supporting the public health and human services sector.

Maven is an interoperable disease management platform that can significantly transform how public health organisations monitor and respond to diseases by getting the right information to the right people at the right time.

We are proud to work with UKHSA as they maintain a relentless focus on keeping the citizens of and visitors to England safe and healthy.

Maven has been in use globally for public health infectious disease cases and incident management for over 18 years. The platform is currently used by approximately 40 organisations around the world – in the US, more than a dozen jurisdictions use the full Maven application for COVID-19.

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## **13 million top-up COVID-19 vaccines given across the UK**

- A total of 13,147,333 people in the UK have received a COVID-19 booster or third jab
- Milestone comes as government accepts advice to extend booster programme to 40-49 year olds and new data shows boosters give over 90% protection against symptomatic COVID-19

More than 13 million life-saving booster jabs have been given across the UK, marking another significant milestone in the phenomenal COVID-19 vaccination programme.

A total of 286,582 top-up jabs were recorded in the UK on Tuesday, bringing the total to 13,147,333, providing crucial protection against the virus ahead of the winter months.

On Monday, 217,349 top-ups were recorded, with the programme jumping another million since it hit 12 million jabs on Saturday.

Yesterday the vaccination programme took another significant step, with the

government accepting the advice from the independent experts at the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) to expand the booster programme to those aged 40-49. This means millions more people will be eligible to get their third dose.

Further milestones have also been hit today – with the Midlands being the first region to individually hit two million top-up jabs given.

New findings on Monday reinforced how vital the boosters are in maintaining protection ahead of winter, with the first UK real world study from the UK Health Security Agency showing that boosters give over 90% protection against symptomatic COVID-19 in adults over 50.

These findings show that two weeks after receiving a booster dose, protection against symptomatic infection in adults aged 50 years and over was 93.1% in those with Oxford/AstraZeneca as their primary course and 94.0% for Pfizer-BioNTech.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

There is not a second to waste in getting your booster jab – and it is fantastic to see more than 13 million people have now come forward to top-up their protection this winter.

I want to thank everyone who has come forward for their jab and the NHS and army of volunteers helping to get jabs in arms.

While we know immunity can wane after six months, new data published this week shows a third dose boosts protection against symptomatic infection to more than 90% – showing just how important the booster is, so come forward for yours as soon as you can to protect yourself and your loved ones.

More than 50 million first doses and 46 million second doses have been given across the UK.

Following an update to the national booking service last week, booking a booster jab has never been easier. Those eligible for a top-up vaccine – people over 50, health and social care workers and those most at risk of COVID-19 – can pre-book their jab 5 months after their second dose, making it easier and more convenient to boost their protection into winter.

People will still receive their vaccine 6 months after their second dose, but the change will speed up the vaccination programme by allowing people to receive a jab the day they become eligible, rather than waiting for a convenient appointment.

Vaccines Minister Maggie Throup said:

It is excellent to see another million boosters clock up in the

vital vaccine rollout with 13 million people across the UK boosting their protection ahead of winter.

To all those eligible – getting the booster could be the most important thing you do this Christmas as we look to spend more valuable time with our loved ones.

Vaccines give high levels of protection but immunity reduces over time, particularly for older adults and at-risk groups, so it is vital that vulnerable people come forward to get their COVID-19 booster vaccine to top-up their defences and protect themselves this winter.

The latest evidence from the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) shows that protection against symptomatic disease falls from 65%, up to 3 months after the second dose, to 45% 6 months after the second dose for the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine, and from 90% to 65% for the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine. Protection against hospitalisation falls from 95% to 75% for Oxford/AstraZeneca and 99% to 90% for Pfizer/BioNTech.

Although the vaccine effectiveness against severe disease remains high, a small change can generate a major shift in hospital admissions. For example, a change from 95% to 90% protection against hospitalisation would lead to doubling of admissions in those vaccinated.

The booster programme is designed to top up this waning immunity.

Dr Emily Lawson, head of the NHS COVID-19 Vaccination Programme, said:

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of NHS staff and volunteers, more than 11 million eligible people in England have already received their top-up jab in the eight weeks since the rollout began, with almost a quarter of a million boosters delivered yesterday alone.

The booster roll-out continues to go from strength to strength and in the last 24 hours almost 400,000 people have come forward and made an appointment for their life-saving covid vaccine or top-up.

As we head into winter I urge everyone who is eligible to take up the offer as soon as possible to protect yourself and those around you over the festive season.

COVID-19 booster vaccines have been delivered or booked in at every older adult care home in England where safe to do so, with almost 9 in 10 care homes already visited.

People are also able to book by calling 119 and can get vaccinated at hundreds of walk-in sites across the country without an appointment. Those eligible can use the NHS online walk-in finder to locate the most convenient site.

Last month, clinical guidance was updated to enable boosters to be given slightly earlier to those at highest risk, where this makes operational sense to do so. This includes care home residents who may have received their second doses at different times to be vaccinated in the same session, as long as it has been 5 months since their second dose. It may also help with other vulnerable groups, such as housebound patients, so that they can have their flu and COVID-19 vaccines at the same time.

Vaccine confidence is high, with data from the Office for National Statistics showing nearly all (94%) of those aged 50 to 69 say they would be likely to get their COVID-19 booster if offered, with the figure rising to 98% for those over 70.

Flu is another winter virus that can be serious. To give people the best protection over winter, those eligible for a free flu vaccine should come forward and book an appointment at either their GP practice or their local pharmacy, or take it up when offered by their employer or other healthcare provider.

The government has launched a nationwide advertising campaign, encouraging people eligible to get their booster and flu jabs to protect themselves and their loved ones and help reduce pressures on the NHS. This includes outdoor billboards, broadcast and community radio and TV.

The offer of a first and second COVID-19 vaccine remains open to anyone who is eligible. Vaccines are available free of charge and from thousands of vaccine centres, GP practices and pharmacies. Around 98% of people live within 10 miles of a vaccination centre in England and vaccinations are taking place at sites including mosques, community centres and football stadiums.

There are more than 500 extra vaccination sites now compared to April this year, with 1,697 vaccination centres in operation in April 2021, and over 2,200 vaccination centres in operation now.

Vaccines are also available for those aged 12 to 15 to offer the best possible protection this winter in schools, as well as more than 200 vaccine centres.

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## [Joint statement from the Home Secretary and the French Interior Minister](#)

News story

Summary of a meeting with the Home Secretary and her French counterpart on illegal Channel crossings.



On Monday 15 November, both the Home Secretary and Interior Minister agreed to strengthen operational cooperation further. More must be done to stop the dangerous crossings. They agreed to accelerate the delivery of the commitments made in the [joint agreement of July 2021](#) to deliver on their joint determination to prevent 100% of crossings and make this deadly route unviable.

They discussed a range of additional steps, alongside additional technical solutions to tackle organised crime groups and respond to the escalating issue. It was agreed that the joint technical working group will meet imminently with a view to permitting the use of new technology as rapidly as possible.

The two ministers also committed to reinforcing intelligence sharing and police cooperation.

The Home Secretary also raised issues of wider migration challenges across Europe, including ongoing issues at the Polish border where the UK stood in solidarity with its European partners.

They agreed to stay in contact in the coming weeks and to ask their departments to take forward delivery of agreed actions.

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## [Office of Tax Simplification advertises new vacancies](#)

News story

The OTS is looking for tax professionals to join its team.





The OTS is currently looking to recruit 2 part-time tax professionals who have current or recent private sector experience to join its team.

You can find more out about these posts and apply [here](#).

The closing date for applications is 7 December 2021.

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