

Cardiff and Vale Public Health Team Newsletter



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Welcome to the Cardiff and Vale Public Health Team newsletter October 2025.

A warm welcome to this month's edition of the Cardiff and Vale Public Health Team newsletter - a chance for us to showcase our work, our partners' contributions, and the impact they've had across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.

The leaves on the trees are turning beautiful shades of orange and yellow across our communities, which means we're heading into our busiest time of year. To help keep yourself and others healthy as the seasons change, here are a few simple steps you can take:

1. Get your flu vaccination

Symptoms of flu can be mild but can also lead to more serious illnesses such as bronchitis and pneumonia (lung infections), which may need treatment in hospital. In a normal winter, thousands of people will die from flu-related illnesses in the UK. [Having a flu vaccine every year is one of the best ways to protect against flu.](#)

2. Regular handwashing helps stop the spread of viruses

Something as simple in your daily routine

This month:

- *'I'd rather die than be that ill again'*: Mum's warning after missing flu vaccine
- Aged 55 or over? Have your say on vaccinations
- 'Stop HIV Stigma' campaign is launched
- Cardiff Council bans junk food advertising
- Help Me Quit video nominated for UK award
- Community wellbeing boosted at 'Love Grangetown 2025'
- Get help with your NHS hearing aid
- Team member profile: Dr Tom Porter
- Key health awareness days

as good, regular handwashing can make a difference. Preventing the transfer of germs from yourself to your loved ones is one of the easiest ways of stopping the spread of illnesses this winter. [The recommended healthcare guidance from Public Health](#)

[Wales for good handwashing](#) is 30 seconds using soap and water, and the extra time taken can be effective in killing germs and preventing the spread of infection. If you do not have immediate access to soap and water, then please use hand sanitiser.

3. Take steps to look after your physical and mental wellbeing

The most effective action that we can take to help keep ourselves well is to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Leading a healthier lifestyle has many benefits. We know that eating well, stopping smoking, staying active and drinking within the recommended guidelines support our overall health and wellbeing and reduces the risk of many health conditions. [The Keeping Me Well website contains a range of information and advice that you can use to look after yourself and those around you.](#)

4. If you smoke, now is a great time to quit to feel well over the winter months

Help Me Quit is the national smoking cessation service for Wales. Help Me Quit empowers individuals to take control of their health and break free from the grip of tobacco addiction. [Help Me Quit helps thousands of smokers in Wales, every year, to achieve their goal of living smoke-free.](#)

If you missed our September edition of the newsletter, you could catch up [here](#).

Claire Beynon
Executive Director of Public Health

Key Health Awareness Days

- October 19- 25: infectionpreventionandyou.org
- October 29: [World Stroke Day 2025 | Stroke Association](#)
- November 3-7: [International Stress Awareness Week - Healthy Working Wales](#)
- November 12: [World Pneumonia Day - Every Breath Counts](#)
- November 14: [World Diabetes Day - Healthy Working Wales](#)
- November 17: [World Cervical Cancer Elimination Day 2025](#)
- November 1-30: [November - Healthy Working Wales](#)
- November 1-30: [Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month \(PCAM\) - Pancreatic Cancer UK](#)

'I'd rather die than be that ill again': Mum's warning after missing flu vaccine

Charlotte Bessent, a mum-of-two from Cardiff, suffered a severe case of pneumonia after missing her annual flu vaccination.

Initially mistaking her symptoms for a cold, she rapidly deteriorated and was taken to the University Hospital of Wales in January 2024.

Charlotte described the experience as "like drowning" and said she would "rather die" than endure such illness again.

With underlying conditions like arthritis and fibromyalgia, she was eligible for the flu vaccine but missed it. Recovery took six months, significantly impacting her family and work life.

The flu vaccination is especially important for vulnerable groups such as those with chronic illnesses, pregnant women, carers,

and people over 65. Nearly a million people in Wales get the flu jab annually, helping reduce hospitalisations and protect the NHS during winter.

We urge everyone eligible to get vaccinated each year, as flu viruses evolve and immunity fades over time. Vaccines also help limit the spread to others in the community.

To read Charlotte's story in full please go to the [Cardiff and Vale UHB website](#). Visit the main flu and COVID-19 vaccination page [via this link](#).



Cardiff Council bans junk food advertising

Cardiff Council has become the second local authority in Wales to restrict the advertisement of foods high in sugar, fat, and salt on streets, roadsides, and bus stops.

Under its updated advertising policy, the council will also prohibit the advertisement of vehicles powered by fossil fuels, payday loans, E-cigarettes, and vapes.

The decision was approved by Cabinet on September 18, following on from the Vale of Glamorgan Council which introduced similar restrictions earlier this year.

Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Strategic Planning & Transport, Cllr Dan De'Ath, said: "This is about putting the health and wellbeing of Cardiff's people first.

"Products - such as foods high in fat, salt, and sugar - can still be advertised elsewhere in the city, and people can still make their own choices on whether to buy them or not. But stopping publicly owned assets being used to promote them is a positive step towards creating a stronger, fairer, and greener city for everyone."

Companies that sell foods high in sugar, fat, and salt will still be able to advertise their brands but only if they are promoting healthier alternatives.



Aged 55 or over? Have your say on vaccinations

Our partners in Public Health Wales have designed a survey to explore the attitudes, views, and experiences of adults aged 55 and older to the vaccinations recommended by the NHS.

The insights gathered will help to improve vaccine information, communications and services.

The survey is anonymous, and people can withdraw their consent to take part at any time. It should take no longer than 10-15 minutes to complete and includes a mix of questions, some where you can share your thoughts in your own words.

To take part in the survey, please [follow this link](#). It closes on **Monday, November 10**.

Get help with your NHS hearing aid

Drop-in sessions are being held in Cardiff Central Library, The Hays, (CF10 1FL) for anyone who wants to get the most out of their hearing aids.

The sessions, held on the first Wednesday of every month in the Training Room on the fourth floor, involve hearing aid cleaning and tubing replacement, free replacement hearing aid batteries, free hearing checks and even pairing aids to mobile phone apps.

For more information, email contact@rnid.org.uk or call 0808 8080123

Help Me Quit video shortlisted for UK award

A video featuring three people from Cardiff who have successfully quit smoking using the NHS has been shortlisted for an award.

Nabil, Eloise and Ryan - who all [used the free Help Me Quit Service](#) - were interviewed in Roath Park about their experiences of smoking and how tailored one-to-one support from an expert practitioner helped them stop the addiction for good.

The video has been shortlisted in the 2025 UKPHR Awards in the category of 'Best Digital and Communications Initiative', with the winners being announced in early November.

Congratulations to everyone involved in putting the communications together. The 2025 UKPHR is an independent regulator for public health professionals in the United Kingdom.

You can watch the full version of the video via [this link](#).



Community wellbeing boosted at 'Love Grangetown 2025'

The Public Health Team was pleased to participate in the 10th annual [Love Grangetown](#) event earlier this month. It was a day dedicated to fostering community wellbeing and exploring local priorities in Grangetown.

Led by the Grange Pavilion Youth Forum, Grange Pavilion, and Cardiff University Community Gateway with the Welsh School of Architecture, the event brought together residents, local groups, and key stakeholders.

There was a dynamic morning workshop themed around shaping Grangetown's future. A crucial element of the session involved exploring how community initiatives could be supported and aligned with Cardiff Council's 25-year plan for Cardiff and the work of the Welsh Commissioners.

A dedicated hour-long session with representatives from the Welsh Commissioner's offices allowed participants to discuss practical ways to turn ideas for community action into reality through partnership. The workshop concluded with a delicious lunch provided by members of the Shree Swaminarayan Temple, fostering further connection.

The afternoon session showcased local businesses and stakeholders. The Public Health Team's stall ensured that community members were made aware of the teams' three big health priorities: healthy weight, smoking cessation and immunisation.

Love Grangetown 2025 served as a powerful example of how collaboration across sectors, from public health and local government to academic institutions and grassroots groups, can effectively harness community energy to improve the health and wellbeing of residents. We look forward to seeing the positive outcomes of the ideas generated.

Team member profile

Dr Tom Porter, Consultant in Public Health Medicine

Tom trained as a doctor in Cambridge and London, and in public health in Oxford, becoming a Consultant there in 2010. He joined the Cardiff and Vale Public Health Team in 2011 and has held various Consultant public health lead roles previously including immunisation and vaccination, screening and commissioning.

He is passionate about climate change and sustainability and making transport systems work for people to improve health and wellbeing. In this role he worked one day a week in Cardiff Council's transport team before the pandemic, and has developed and led the rollout of the [Healthy Travel Charters](#) across Wales.

Tom currently leads on environment and sustainability within the team. This includes sustainable travel, supporting the UHB's response to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, and developing a climate change risk assessment and adaptation plan for the Health Board in conjunction with the Shaping Change team. He also inputs to strategy and planning from a public health perspective, developed the [Long term Public Health Plan for Cardiff](#)



[and Vale](#), and leads the team's internal planning, performance, reporting and risk management functions; and is an educational and placement supervisor for public health Specialty Registrars.

In his spare time, Tom enjoys running trail along the Wales Coast Path, cooking, and coding. He lives in Llantwit Major with his wife and two teenage children.

'Stop HIV Stigma' campaign is launched

The Public Health Team has joined forces with [Fast Track Cymru](#) to intensify efforts to reduce HIV stigma.

Fear, stigma and myths around HIV remain common among some sections of society, including within the healthcare community, which can prove to be a barrier for people accessing testing and treatment for the condition.

The aim of the campaign is to empower people with more knowledge about HIV, reduce discrimination and provide practical tools for combating stigma.

A spokesperson from Fast Track Cymru said: *"Stigma affects individuals living with HIV in Wales and hampers public health efforts by discouraging people from getting tested and accessing treatment.*

Through our comprehensive resources and community engagement, we aim to transform the narrative around HIV in Wales."



HIV in the 21st Century: Some Key Facts

- HIV is no longer a death sentence - you can live to a ripe old age with it
- Modern HIV treatment not only keeps you alive, it stops the virus from being passed on
- You can have healthy, HIV-free children
- There's even a pill to stop you getting HIV in the first place (PreP)
- There's also treatment (PEP) to stop HIV if you think you've been recently exposed to it
- You can [test by post for HIV](#) and other conditions in the comfort of your own home
- Testing, treatment and prevention are all free for everyone in Wales

Between October and December 2025, our 'Stop HIV Stigma' graphics should be visible on social media and on billboards around Cardiff and Vale. A webpage dedicated to the campaign can be found on the [Cardiff and Vale UHB website](#).