

2025-2026 ANNUAL REPORT



Lymffoedema Cymru
Lymphoedema Wales

FOREWORD

To inform NHS Wales and our partners of the progress made during 2025/26 and our plans for 2026/27.



Dr Melanie Thomas
DPROF FCSP
Clinical Director for
Lymphoedema Wales

As Clinical Director of the Lymphoedema Wales Clinical Network, I am pleased to present the 2025–26 Annual Report. The evolving healthcare landscape in Wales continues to challenge us to support those living with lymphoedema with increasing referrals and a reduced workforce.

Last year, we supported over 55,000 patients across Wales, including nearly 10,000 new referrals. Encouragingly, 80% of patients were seen within the recommended 14 weeks, with 75% seen face-to-face and 25% virtually. Attendance rates remain strong at 87%, reflecting both patient engagement and service accessibility. While we remain committed to delivering high-quality care, we recognise that some patients are still waiting too long to be seen, and this remains a key priority for improvement.

I am delighted to highlight our growing research impact, with 16 publications this last year helping to drive innovation and improve care for the future. Lastly as always, I would like to thank our clinical teams, operational partners and Welsh Government for their continued support in helping people who live with lymphoedema achieve fuller independent lives.

OUR MISSION:

All people in Wales who are at risk of, or diagnosed with lymphoedema, have local access to expert assessment, advice and treatment to support them to manage their condition.

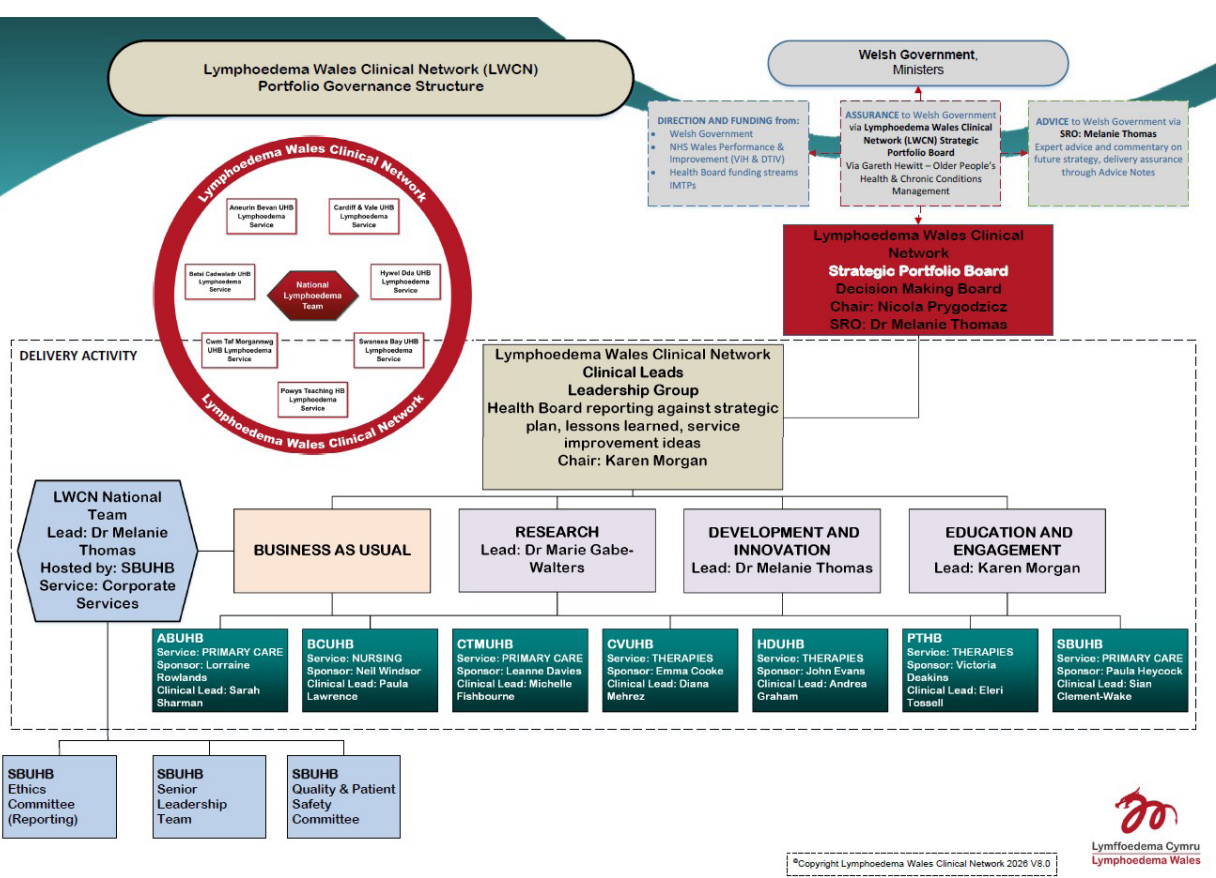


Since its inception in 2011, the Lymphoedema Wales Clinical Network (LWCN) has evolved into a nationally coordinated service model, ensuring equitable access to lymphoedema care across all Health Boards in Wales. The prevalence of lymphoedema in Wales is now nearly 8 adults per 1,000 people which is significantly more than the 2 per 1,000 it previously was. With over 25,000 people remaining on the lymphoedema caseload in Wales it highlights both the growing awareness of the condition and the critical need for robust, responsive services.

As well as the seven Health Board Lymphoedema services, LWCN includes the National Lymphoedema Team hosted by SBUHB. The National Lymphoedema Team provides strategic leadership and operational oversight for LWCN, embedding Value-Based Healthcare principles to reduce waste, harm, and variation while improving patient outcomes, experience, and quality through dedicated programmes of work. Through a structured Evaluation Framework, reported biannually, the Network monitors progress across Health Boards, ensuring alignment with national objectives and the delivery of patient-centred, cost-effective care.

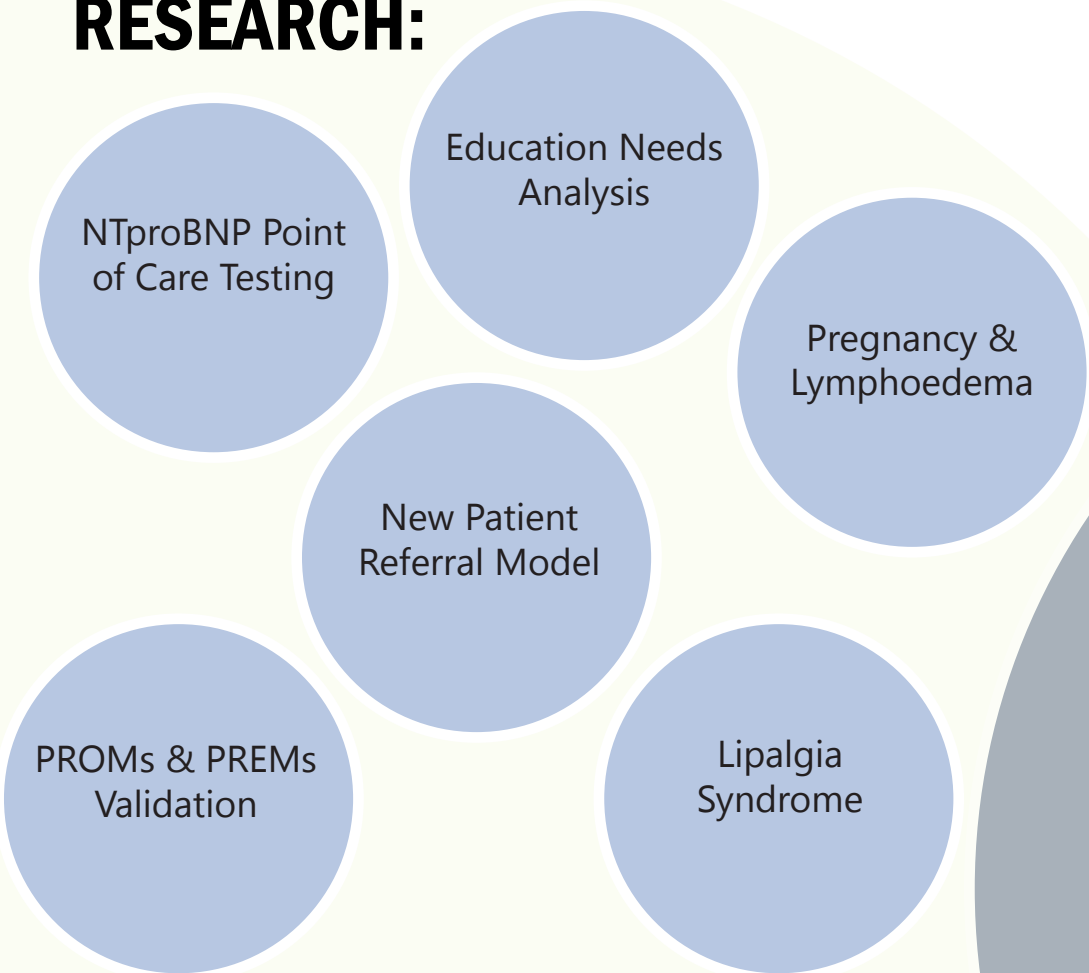
This Annual Report outlines the key programmes and outcomes from 2025-26, including innovations in service delivery. Central to our approach is the promotion of proactive care and self-management, enabling individuals to take ownership of their health through shared knowledge and support.

GOVERNANCE & PORTFOLIO:

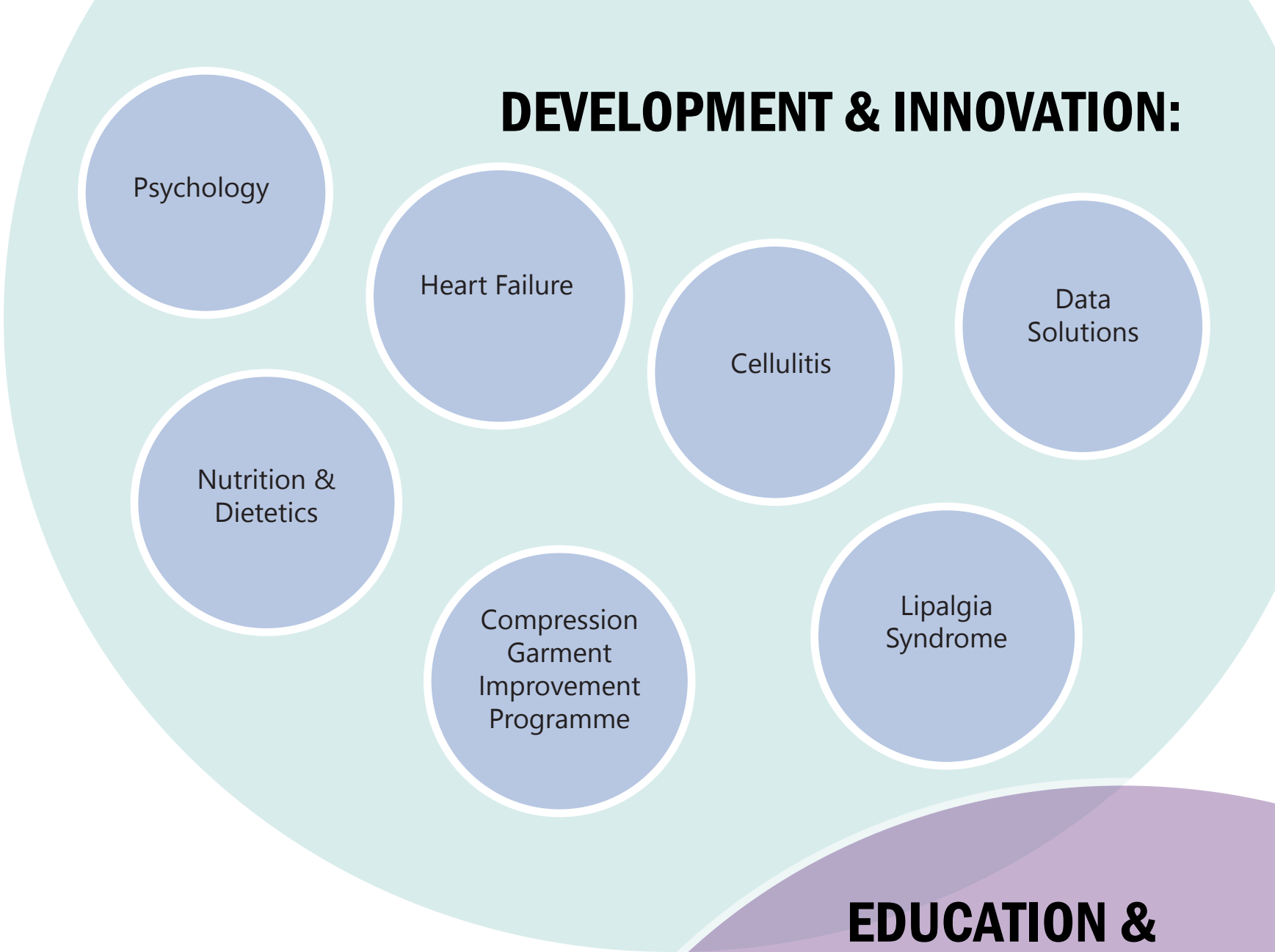


The Lymphoedema Wales Clinical Network supports a number of work programmes to improve and enhance lymphoedema care in Wales. These include the following areas:

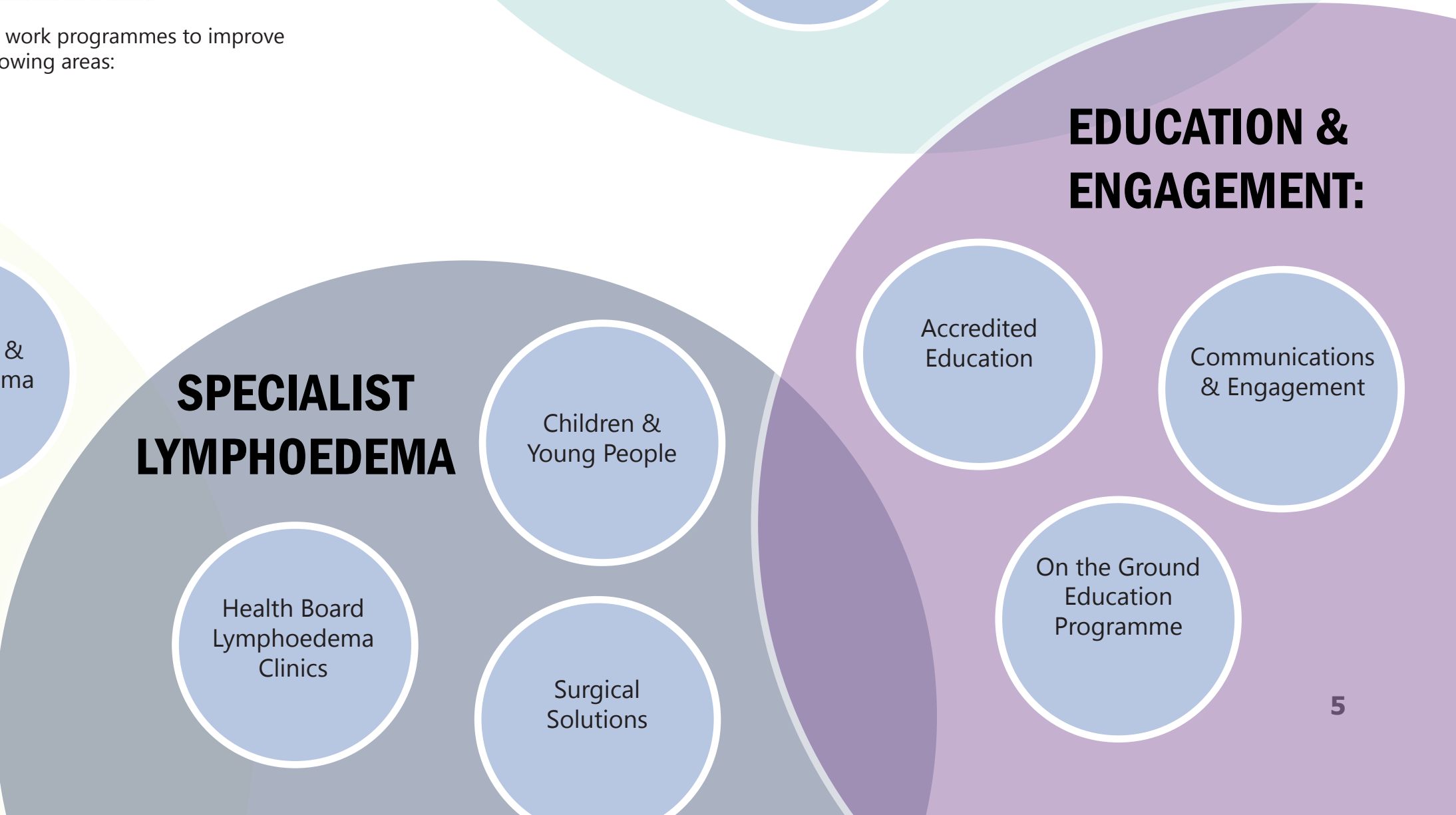
RESEARCH:



DEVELOPMENT & INNOVATION:



EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT:



NHS WALES CELLULITIS IMPROVEMENT SERVICE

This service established in 2020 continues to support early identification and secondary prevention of cellulitis across Wales, with a strong focus on treating people with unmanaged lymphoedema.

The programme aims to improve patient outcomes, reduce inappropriate antibiotic use, and support more efficient use of secondary care services through targeted engagement and evidence-based prevention advice.



In June 2025, the Cellulitis Service won the Antibiotic Guardian Prescribing and Stewardship Award for its work to improve antibiotic use in the management of cellulitis across Wales. This highlights the programmes contribution to safer prescribing and alignment with national antimicrobial resistance priorities.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE SINCE 2020

56,550
people diagnosed with cellulitis contacted and offered a clinical appointment

39%
13,929
agreed to an appointment

If you have one cellulitis your risk of another in a year is up to **50%**

In the last two years nearly **15,000** people have received appointments

578
appointments were at their home

New patient posters have been distributed to GP surgeries, Pharmacies, Secondary Care sites and local community sites across Wales directing patients to self-refer if they have experienced cellulitis.



Since, **230** patients have self-referred to the service



BUILDING SYSTEM CAPABILITY

318 GP Trainees Trained

2,069
Health Care Professionals Trained / Educated (Attended education / seminars)

- ✓ Reducing variation.
- ✓ Improving consistency.
- ✓ Spreading expertise.



PLANS FOR 2026-27



- Target Emergency Rooms with a pilot commencing April – June 26 in the Health Cardiff



- Review the delivery Model to make sure inviting those patients with the greatest need by validating referrals on WCP.

NHS WALES CELLULITIS IMPROVEMENT SERVICE IMPACT, OUTCOMES & VALUE



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BETTER EXPERIENCE & OUTCOMES



Improved PROMs & PREMs (Pre → Post Cellulitis Care)

Patients report better outcomes and experience following access to the service.



Reduced Recurrence Across all Health Board programmes

Fewer repeat episodes of cellulitis.



Enhanced Self-Management Confidence Across all Health Board programmes

Patients feel more confident in managing their condition and seeking help early.

IMPROVING RESPONSE RATES (2025/26)

To improve patient response rates, we introduced a telephone follow-up for patients who did not respond to an initial invitation letter.

Since December 2025:

1,680 patients contacted by telephone

1,031 (61%) answered the call

752 (45%) agreed to engage with the service



This change enables more timely access to secondary prevention advice and supports more efficient use of clinical resources.

RESPONSIBLE ANTIBIOTIC STEWARDSHIP (2020-2026)

406 Patients required / prescribed prophylactic antibiotics

184 Antibiotics safely stopped (not required)

232 Rescue antibiotic packs issued Preventing emergency care

Reducing unnecessary antibiotic use and supporting national antimicrobial resistance priorities.

SYSTEM IMPACT & VALUE

£5,010,000
Estimated cost avoidance (range £180,000 – £950,000 per Health Board)

96% ↓
Reduction in cellulitis episodes
Pre: 14,670 → Post: 586
13,084 fewer episodes

98% ↓
Reduction in hospital admissions
Pre: 5,945 → Post: 102
5,843 fewer admissions

99% ↓
Reduction in bed days
Pre: 40,838 → Post: 472
5,843 fewer bed days

Fewer admissions.
Shorter stays.
Lower system pressure.
Better outcomes for patients.

EARLY IDENTIFICATION. EXPERT ADVICE. BETTER OUTCOMES.



Over half of the people who have cellulitis also have lymphoedema.

Through prompt identification these patients are now being seen by their local lymphoedema service.

This demonstrates the importance of early identification through raising awareness.

GP TRAINEES TRAINED
318

HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS TRAINED / EDUCATED
2,069+
Attended education / seminars on differential diagnosis

In the last two years we have focused on training GP Trainees and have trained 318 and over 2,000 Health Care Professionals overall on differential diagnosis.



LET'S CONTINUE TO REDUCE THE IMPACT OF CELLULITIS ACROSS WALES.
Working together for healthier communities.



PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

Delivering timely, specialist psychological care across Wales



THE TEAM – STRENGTHENING NATIONAL CAPACITY

During the past year, the psychology provision within LWCN has expanded, strengthening capacity to deliver high quality, psychologically informed care.



PSYCHOLOGY LEAD

Provides senior clinical leadership and strategic direction, supporting the continued development and integration of psychological care.



CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

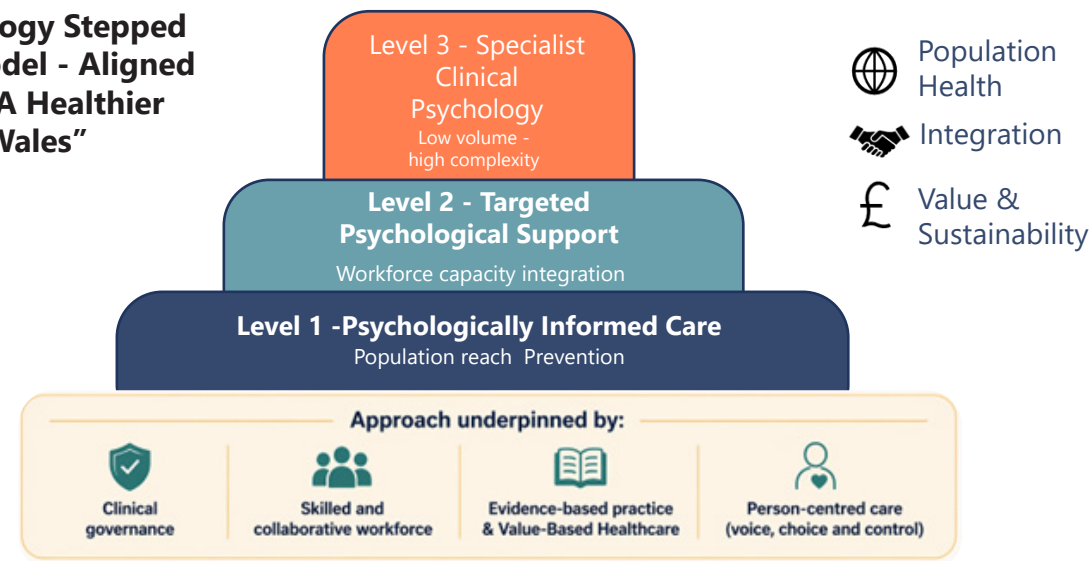
Brings expertise in health psychology and trauma informed practice.



ASSISTANT PSYCHOLOGIST

Supporting the delivery of holistic, patient centred care.

Psychology Stepped Care Model - Aligned with “A Healthier Wales”



SERVICE DELIVERY



SPECIALIST PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTION

- Improving access & quality
- Shorter waits
- Better experience & outcomes



COMPLEX CASE MEETINGS

- Collaborative care planning
- Improved communication



RESEARCH

- Lived experience of Lipalgia Syndrome
- Evidence-based service development



GROUP INTERVENTIONS

- Living Well
- Nurture & Nourish

CLINICAL ACTIVITY & OUTCOMES



395

individual appointments offered



77%

uptake



102

new assessments



46%

PROM completion (pre intervention) used to inform treatment planning



89%

reported improved wellbeing (post therapy)



Initial outcomes indicate improved well-being and patient satisfaction



IMPROVING ACCESS & QUALITY

Increasing timely access to specialist, evidence based psychological interventions for those with complex psychological needs.

KEY IMPROVEMENTS



Referral process
SIMPLIFIED



12-WEEK
referral to assessment target
(reduced from 26 weeks)



Everyone receives a
BESPOKE OUTCOME LETTER



IMPACT

Earlier intervention



Improved patient experience



More consistent, equitable access across Wales



PREM FEEDBACK QUOTES



IMPACT ON FUNCTIONING & WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION

“ My lymphoedema pain was affecting every aspect of my life, compounded by problems at home and work. xxxx really helped me reframe things, stopped me being so hard on myself and give myself a break which helped relieve a lot of stress. I am not sure I would have been able to carry on working without. Thank you ”



VALUE OF BRIEF, TARGETED INTERVENTION

“ I had two sessionstry (to) overcome my anxiety a bit and get out more and enjoy my life more. The breathing exercises I have been given will help a lot with this..... I will be able to see xxxx again if necessary. ”



COMPASSIONATE, PERSON CENTRED CARE

“ I felt what I had to say was important and mattered. Altogether a positive experience. ”

2026–27 PLANS & PRIORITIES



Continue evaluation of level 3 direct psychological therapy/interventions service



Develop robust psychological pathway for children and young people living with lymphoedema



Evaluate and disseminate the psychological needs of people living with lipalgia



PSYCHOLOGICAL CARE IS CENTRAL TO LYMPHOEDEMA MANAGEMENT
Supporting emotional wellbeing, self-management, and quality of life.



DIETETICS SERVICE

Lymphoedema Wales Nutrition & Dietetics Service

The LWCW Nutrition and Dietetics Model outlines a whole-system approach to equitable, evidence-based nutrition care across Lymphoedema Wales. It places the individual and population at its centre, supported by six interconnected pillars that underpin high-quality, sustainable, outcomes-focused dietetic practice. These pillars shape service design, workforce development, innovation, education, partnership working and continuous improvement, ensuring consistent care across Wales while responding to local need.



OUR 6 PILLARS



POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

The service is supporting a highly complex, high-risk population:

- OBSIDITY**
 - 86% had a recorded diagnosis of obesity
 - Over 90% had a BMI ≥ 30 , with a substantial proportion in BMI classes IV and V
- FRAILTY AND SARCOPENIA**
 - 57% of those with obesity had frailty scores ≥ 4
 - 16% had a recorded diagnosis of sarcopenia
- LYMPHOEDEMA AND LIPALGIA**
 - 76% had a diagnosis of moderate-to-severe lymphoedema
 - 11% had lipalgia syndrome

Over 50% of referrals were from the two most deprived WIMD quintiles.

MEET THE NUTRITION AND DIETETIC TEAM



Victoria Jones
National Lead Dietitian:
Lymphoedema Wales
Clinical Network
1.0 WTE Band 8b



Shelley Owen
Dietetic Assistant
Practitioner
0.5 WTE Band 4

We work together to improve nutrition, support wellbeing and enhance outcomes for people living with lymphoedema.

HOW MUCH HAVE WE DONE?

ACTIVITY AND REACH

Referrals since service go-live (Apr 2025):

167

Referrals have increased steadily following launch, indicating growing awareness and acceptance of the service across Wales.

The Lymphoedema Wales Nutrition Dietetics Service went live in April 2025 to provide equitable, evidence-based nutrition support for people with lymphoedema across Wales. The service offers a stepped care model supported by structured triage, targeted intervention and specialist dietetic input for those with greatest need. This report summarises activity, population characteristics, early outcomes and key learning from the first year of delivery.

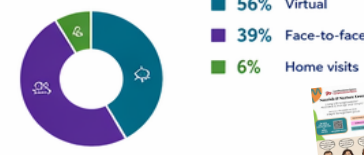
SERVICE MODEL AND OPTIMISATION

62% of referrals had a triage assessment as their first appointment

- Of those triaged:
 - ~50% were progressed to further dietetic intervention
 - ~27% were appropriately discharged following triage
 - ~22% required no immediate follow-up but remained under review

This demonstrates effective front-end clinical decision-making, ensuring specialist dietetic time is focused on patients with greatest complexity.

MODE OF DELIVERY:



Since the service commenced in July 2025 we have:

- ✓ Piloted 3 weight management groups and from April 2025 all patients across Wales will be able to self refer.
- ✓ Published one paper – Nutritional Knowledge of Lymphoedema Professionals across Wales (BJCN 2025) which has informed our educational plan for 2026.
- ✓ Received grant funding to progress early research into sarcopenic obesity.
- ✓ Developed prototype software to diagnose sarcopenic obesity.
- ✓ Developed resources – Healthy Weight Handbook for Lymphoedema, GLP-1 weight loss medication resource and Anthropometric SOP for LWCN.
- ✓ Delivered CPD sessions across all Health Boards in Wales, presented our work in international conference (Canada ILF 2025) and held a Nutrition Support Study Day in Bulth Wells June 2026.
- ✓ Developed a competency framework for Dietetic Assistant Practitioners in LWCN and recruited our 1st DAP (March 2026).

HOW WELL HAVE WE DONE IT?

CLINICAL OUTCOMES

Among patients with repeated weight measures:



These outcomes are clinically meaningful and particularly notable given the severe obesity, frailty and comorbidity burden within the cohort.



SO WHAT ...
There is a positive relationship between time engaged in the programme and weight reduction, supporting the value of sustained dietetic support.

RESEARCH FOCUSED OUTCOMES
The first phase of our SOS study (sarcopenic obesity study) has highlighted that >40% of patients with lymphoedema have a diagnosis of sarcopenic obesity. This is leading us to seek future funding to progress this essential research area.

PREMs
★★★★★
Patient feedback is consistently positive and informs our ongoing service improvements.

BENEFITS

- New patient pathway designed and ready for implementation.
- Research sponsor secured.
- Ethical approval application approved.

Driving better outcomes, improving quality of life and supporting sustainable services across Wales.

OUR PARTNERSHIPS

- Point of Care Testing Team
- Laboratory Medicine
- Cardiology with dedicated Clinical Research Appointments
- Roche Diagnostics
- Patient Representatives

Effective collaboration and engagement across SBUHB and external partners is central to the success of this programme.

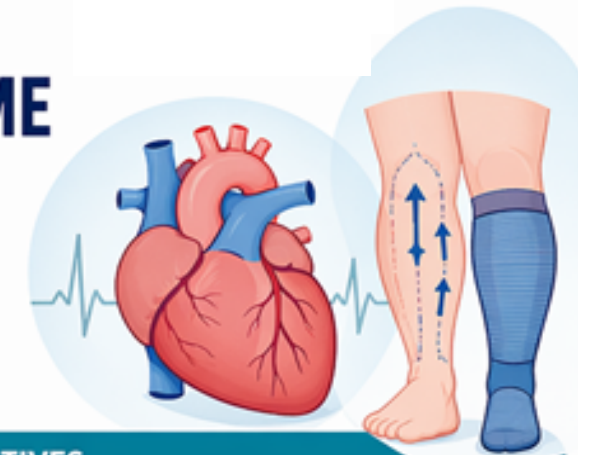
WHAT'S NEXT ...

- Continue to embed and expand the service across Wales.
- Further develop research into sarcopenic obesity and other priority areas.
- Strengthen pathways and integration with weight management and allied services.
- Continue to innovate, educate and improve to ensure equitable, evidence-based care for all.

HEART FAILURE AND LYMPHOEDEMA PROGRAMME

Formed in September 2023 to explore the prevalence of lymphoedema in the heart failure population.

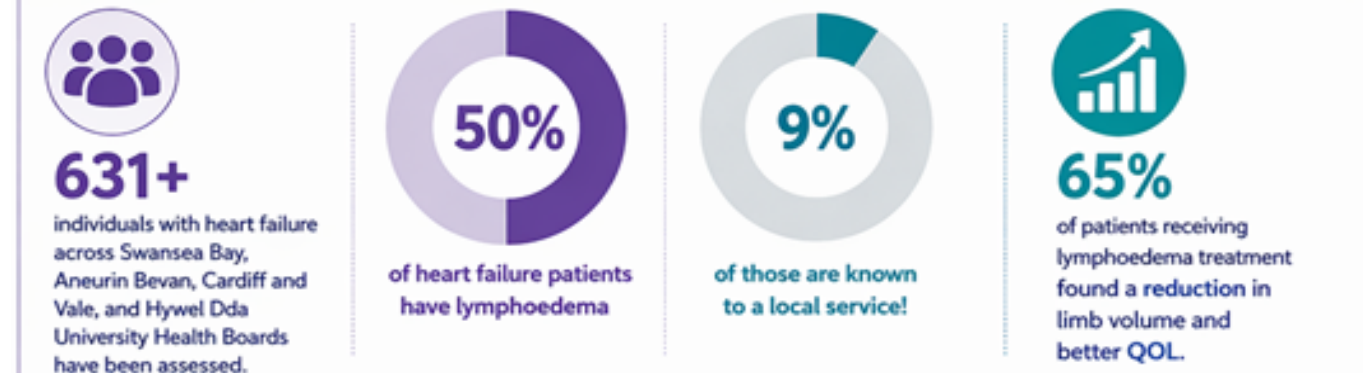
Bilateral chronic oedema is a cardinal symptom of heart failure and although is treated with diuretics, compression therapy can be invaluable. Confusion and lack of clarity surrounding compression is common leading to a lack of and late heart failure referrals to lymphoedema services in Wales.



PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

- Assess patients in heart failure clinics for signs and symptoms of lymphoedema and to provide effective lymphoedema therapy capturing PROMs and PREMs.
- Understand the education needs of both lymphoedema and heart failure clinical specialists via a national survey.
- Investigate if undetected heart failure is apparent in patients with lymphoedema.

KEY FINDINGS TO DATE (SEPT 2023 – OCT 2025)



KNOWLEDGE & EDUCATION IMPACT

- Published two Heart Failure and Lymphoedema Specialists Education Needs Analysis in the British Journal of Nursing (BJN).
- Presented findings in the International Lymphoedema Framework Conference in Canada in October 2025.
- National survey to understand education needs of both lymphoedema and heart failure clinical specialists completed.

WHAT THIS PROGRAMME ACHIEVES

- Improves recognition of lymphoedema in heart failure populations.
- Provides timely access to lymphoedema assessment and therapy.
- Supports better quality of life for patients.
- Builds national knowledge and strengthens collaboration between heart failure and lymphoedema services.
- Drives education, awareness and evidence-based practice across Wales.



Working together to detect the undetected.
Better recognition. Earlier referral. Better outcomes.



HEART FAILURE POINT OF CARE TESTING: NEW RESEARCH

Detecting the Undetected



EXTERNAL FUNDING RECEIVED £210,000

to implement this project
in SBUHB.

ETHICAL APPROVAL APPROVED

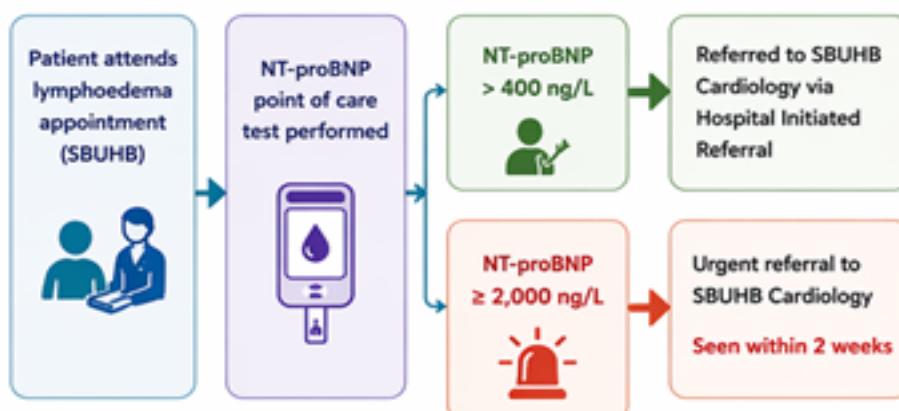
Favourable ethical opinion
gained.

RECRUITMENT STARTS IN July 2026

A clinical audit has been completed
to establish baseline data for
comparison with the findings of
this research.

NEW PATIENT PATHWAY

A safe, structured pathway is in place following the point of care test in the lymphoedema appointment.



COLLABORATION & GOVERNANCE – WORKING TOGETHER FOR BETTER OUTCOMES



GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE

Provided by the
Point of Care
Testing Team.



LABORATORY SUPPORT

Laboratory testing
of related blood
samples performed
by Laboratory
Medicine.



CLINICAL SUPPORT

Cardiology will
support heart failure
assessment with
dedicated Clinical
Research Appointments.



INDUSTRY COLLABORATION

Roche Diagnostics,
manufacturer of the
point of care test,
has provided 2 machines
free of charge and a
fixed price for related
consumables.



PATIENT INVOLVEMENT

3 patient representatives
provided valuable
feedback on the
research proposal
and patient materials.
2 patient representatives
will be members of the
steering group.



A key facilitator for this research has been effective engagement and collaboration across SBUHB.

BENEFITS

✓ New patient pathway
designed and ready
for implementation.

✓ Research sponsor secured.

✓ Ethical approval
application approved.

WATCH THIS SPACE!



RECRUITMENT STARTS

*Exciting times ahead
as we move forward
with this important
research!*



Our goal is simple:

Detect the undetected. Improve outcomes. Save lives.



Compression Garment Improvement Programme

Improving outcomes. Driving value. Working together across Wales.



Compression garments remain the
cornerstone of lymphoedema
management and, aside from
workforce costs, represent the
largest area of expenditure for
services.



The current All-Wales
compression contract
has been **extended until
March 2028**.

ALL-WALES PROCUREMENT: FULLY EMBEDDED

The transition from prescription-based supply to a procurement
ordering model is now fully embedded across all seven Health Boards.



In 2025/26, a total of
68,200
compression garments
and applicators were
procured through
lymphoedema services.

94%

compliance with the
All-Wales compression
garment contract.

STANDARDISING AND SUPPORTING SAFE PRACTICE



Significant collaborative work has been undertaken
with All-Wales Lymphoedema Clinical Leads and
the Medical Device Governance and Regulatory
Compliance Group to develop a Standard
Operating Procedure (SOP) for the modification
of compression garments.



This work supports safe, consistent
practice across Wales.



This data provides valuable insights into service delivery and patient outcomes.
Emerging findings further reinforce the importance of early identification and intervention
in lymphoedema, demonstrating the potential to reduce the long-term costs associated
with compression garment associated with late identification and complex lymphoedema.
Further analysis is planned, with **publication anticipated in 2026/27**.

UNDERSTANDING DEMAND THROUGH DATA



Demand for compression garments continues to
rise, with clear associated financial implications.
In response, routine data collection on garment
usage per patient was introduced during 2025/26.

This enables analysis of aggregated
patient-level data, including variables
such as:



Deprivation
quintile



Lymphoedema
severity



Frailty



BMI



Garment
type



The GP education needs analysis survey received

250
responses,

which are currently being analysed, with
findings to be shared in 2026/27.

IMPROVING COMPRESSION GARMENT PRESCRIBING IN PRIMARY CARE PROJECT



A project to improve compression
garment prescribing in primary
care invited
3,250
patients, achieving a
54% response rate.



Reviews resulted in
changes to garment
prescribing for
85%
of patients, supporting
more appropriate and
effective treatment.



Early findings demonstrate a
28%
reduction in
garment costs,
with 100% of patients
transitioned to
contracted items.

This has also enhanced:

- ✓ Patient experience
- ✓ Education and satisfaction
- ✓ Adherence to treatment
- ✓ Overall quality of care

PLANS FOR 2026/27



Collaborate with compression
suppliers to develop a
Lymphoedema and Lipoedema
Garment Questionnaire to
better understand patient
experience and improve
outcomes, equity, and value.



Publish the findings of the
Improving Compression
Garment Prescribing in
Primary Care project.



Commence work with
shared services and SMTL
on the fourth All Wales
Lymphoedema Compression
garment contract and
formulary.

GARMENT PRESCRIBING IN PRIMARY CARE



Improving care. Optimising prescribing. Delivering value.

1 SCALE & ENGAGEMENT



3,250 patients invited

54% response rate

Strongest engagement: age **50+**

High engagement achieved across the population, with consistent response rates across deprivation groups.

3 ACTIVITY & DELIVERY



1,886 appointments delivered

77% attendance rate

Demonstrates patient commitment and effective clinic organisation.

5 COST & VALUE



28% reduction in garment costs

100% contract compliance achieved

Delivering significant cost savings while maintaining high standards of care.

2 PATIENT NEED & HIDDEN DEMAND



69% with oedema symptoms

81% not previously known to services

41% required specialist referral

Reveals a significant hidden population with unmet clinical needs in primary care.

4 CLINICAL IMPROVEMENT



85% of patients had a change to their garment prescribing after specialist review

Highlights that many previous prescriptions were suboptimal or no longer appropriate.

6 PATIENT & SYSTEM IMPACT



Improved patient education and adherence

Reduced risks of progression, skin breakdown & infection

GP awareness poor – led to Education Needs Analysis and further work

Better outcomes for patients and a more sustainable, efficient healthcare system.

★ HEADLINE INSIGHT ★



Specialist review clinics uncover hidden patient need, improve prescribing accuracy, and deliver measurable cost savings with better patient outcomes.



i Full details to be published in the Autumn

DATA PROGRAMME

Better data. Better decisions. Better outcomes.



WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED?



DHCW developed **prototype Powerapp** for HB activity data collection



Lack of an **electronic patient record** continues to be a **high priority risk**. We have continued researching options, including SBUHB's Rio system. We are also exploring the use of WPAS HCP module, WCP Health Forms and Powerapps which we are hoping to use in September 2026



Data programme **steering group** established



Complex clinic activity **data collection** set up



Supported **data management** during redesign of **NHS Wales Cellulitis Service processes**, ensuring data was stored and reported appropriately



OGEp dashboard gone live



HB activity **dataset improvements**, including standardised recording of specialist treatments, recording of BMI value (not category) and BMI measurement method, and updated LWCN severity score to better record wounds



Further use of **MS Forms** for referrals and data collection



Improvements to **routine reports** for national programmes and HB activity (eg. Simplified monthly report, sub-HB level reporting, inclusion of BCU garment data)



Supported national programmes and health boards with **41 information requests**



Info requests include: garment use analysis, PIFU use, provide data for AB Fracture project, NCIP response rates, GP garment prescription rates, home visit analysis, DNA rates, LWCN staff doing postgrad course projects.



BENEFITS



Increased reliability and utility of HB activity dataset

Improved data quality and standardisation enable more accurate reporting and better decision-making.



OGEp dashboard provides efficient, flexible access to OGEp activity and outcome data, supporting management and the case for funding.

OGEp DASHBOARD – LIVE

1,248 Patients

2,739 Episodes

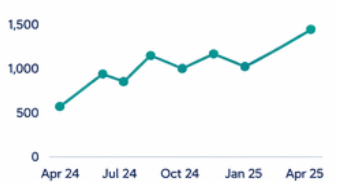
18,462 Outcomes Recorded

86% Episodes with Outcome Data

Episodes by Health Board



Outcomes Over Time



Dashboard provides real-time visibility of activity and outcomes to support planning, performance management and the case for funding.

WHAT'S NEXT ...



1 GO LIVE WITH DHCW POWERAPP FOR HB ACTIVITY

Implement the Powerapp to streamline and standardise HB activity data collection.



2 DEVELOP DASHBOARDS FOR HB ACTIVITY DATA AND NATIONAL PROGRAMME DATA

Provide interactive, user-friendly dashboards to improve insights, monitor performance and support decision-making.



3 MONITOR OPTIONS FOR ELECTRONIC PATIENT RECORD AND DATA COLLECTION

Assess Rio, WCP Health Forms and WPAS HCP module. Develop Powerapps to replace programme data collection spreadsheets if EPR is not available.



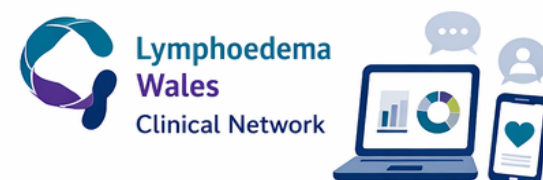
High quality data drives better services, supports funding and ultimately improves outcomes for people with lymphoedema.



Better data.
Better decisions.
Better outcomes.

PROMs & PREMs Annual Report 2025/26

PROMs and PREMs are key to **Value-Based Healthcare**



OVERVIEW

LYMPROM®
(lymphoedema outcomes)



CELLUPROM®
(cellulitis outcomes)



PREMs
(patient experience)



Automated digital PROM and PREM collection established in 5/7 Health Boards using Promptly.

Ongoing support to expand digital collection in remaining HBs.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

✓ **Improving Access & Usability**

Single Sign-On for NHS staff → easier access

Real-time PROM visualisation within Promptly and WCP to support clinicians and track patient progress over time

✓ **Supporting Patients & Communication**

Resources published on LWCN website and social media



✓ **Using Data to Evaluate & Improve Quality**



Monthly PREM reviews across local and national services

✓ **Building National & International Profile**

LYMPROM® validated and published (open access) and used globally, translated into:

Welsh, Spanish, French, Italian, German, Turkish

ACTIVITY SNAPSHOT (2025/26)

PROMs Collected

Total: **34,816**

Avg completion time: **~5 days**

PREMs (LYMPREM)

Total: **18,791**

Avg completion time: **~3 days**

CELLUPROM® (All Wales)

Total: **3,569**

FY 25/26: **1,090**

2025-26 ACROSS HEALTH BOARDS

HB	LYMPROM	PREMs
ABU	2,481	1,203
CTM	1,318	1,016
CV	2,435	1,501
HD	1,212	868
SBU	1,950	1,255
TOTAL	9,396	5,843

IMPACT

Value-Based Healthcare – supporting patient-centred decision-making and evidencing value and what matters most to patients.

Clinical Decision Making – Real-time PROM data supports care planning and monitoring.

Quality & Patient Experience – using validated tools ensure robust measurement with regular reviews to drive service improvements and support patient and staff feedback.

Digital Transformation – Enables remote completion and reduces administrative burden and improves efficiency and accessibility.

PLANS FOR 2026/27

Link PROMs with clinical, activity & experience data

Expand data visualisation in Welsh Clinical Portal

Begin CELLUPROM® validation

Enhance engagement & digital inclusion

Launch Dietetics national programme on Promptly

Progress National Data Resource (NDR) integration

Update LW PREM to align with NHS People Experience Survey

HEADLINE SUMMARY

✓ PROMs embedded across most of Wales

✓ Strong growth in digital data collection

✓ Validated tools with international reach

✓ Clear shift toward data-driven, patient-centred value-based healthcare



Thank you to all patients, carers and staff who contribute to PROMs and PREMs.
Your voice. Your data. Better outcomes.



RESEARCH OUTPUT

Advancing evidence, improving practice and shaping better outcomes for people living with lymphoedema.

16
PEER-REVIEWED
PUBLICATIONS
2025-2026



WALES FOCUS
Research with and for Wales, informing policy and practice

RESEARCH IMPACT AT A GLANCE



EVIDENCE GENERATION

Building the evidence base to improve care and reduce variation



PATIENT VOICE

Amplifying lived experience to shape person-centred care



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Strengthening knowledge, skills and confidence across the workforce



INNOVATION & OUTCOMES

Driving innovation and measuring what matters

OUR RESEARCH SPANS FIVE STRATEGIC THEMES



1 IMPROVING CLINICAL PRACTICE

- Understanding lymphoedema: practical guide for non-specialists
- Heart failure and lymphoedema: navigating compression therapy
- Learning in practice: reflections on delivering education in Wales
- Embedding psychology into a lymphoedema treatment model

4
PUBLICATIONS



2 PATIENT VOICE & EXPERIENCE

- Listening beyond the metrics: lymphoedema patient voices
- Men's perceptions of support and masculinity (narrative inquiry)
- Men's perceptions of non-cancer related lymphoedema (qualitative diary study)

3
PUBLICATIONS



3 WORKFORCE & EDUCATION NEEDS

- Lymphoedema and heart failure staff educational needs analysis: Part 1 – qualitative findings
- Lymphoedema and heart failure staff educational needs analysis: Part 2 – quantitative findings
- Children and Young People with Lymphoedema: education needs of health care professionals
- Knowledge and views of lymphoedema health professionals on risk reduction recommendations

5
PUBLICATIONS



4 INNOVATION & OUTCOMES

- A new validated Lymphoedema-specific Patient Reported Outcome Measure (LYMPROM) for adults (PLOS ONE)
- Cost-effectiveness of lymphaticovenous anastomosis in reducing cellulitis recurrence
- Development of an All-Wales NHS Surgical Lymphoedema Microsurgery Service

3
PUBLICATIONS



5 POPULATION HEALTH & EPIDEMIOLOGY

- Lymphoedema development following a cancer diagnosis: data linkage study in Wales
- Knowledge and awareness of lymphoedema and lipalgia (lipoedema) among nutrition and dietetic professionals

2
PUBLICATIONS



Creating evidence. Informing policy. Improving lives.

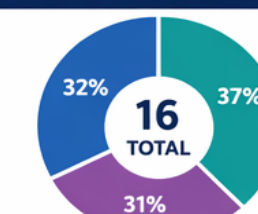
Our research drives better care, stronger services and improved outcomes for people living with lymphoedema across Wales and beyond.



DELIVERING IMPACT

- ✓ Strengthening the evidence base
- ✓ Influencing national practice and policy
- ✓ Building a skilled, confident workforce
- ✓ Putting patient experience at the heart of care

BY PUBLICATION TYPE



- Clinical Practice & Guidance (6)
- Research Studies (5)
- Education & Workforce (5)

PUBLISHED IN LEADING JOURNALS

PLOS	PLOS ONE LYMPROM – first validated lymphoedema-specific PROM for adults
	INTERNATIONAL WOUND JOURNAL Population-level data on lymphoedema in Wales
PRS Global Open	PLASTIC AND RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY – GLOBAL OPEN All-Wales surgical lymphoedema service development
BJC	BRITISH JOURNAL OF COMMUNITY NURSING Workforce educational needs and clinical insights
JCN	JOURNAL OF COMMUNITY NURSING Clinical practice and psychological support innovations

FULL PUBLICATION LIST
See Appendix for complete references (1–16).



Working together across disciplines, organisations and communities to transform lymphoedema care in Wales.

www.lymphoedemawales.org

NATIONAL LYMPHOEDEMA CHILDREN & YOUNG PERSON SERVICE (NLCYP)



ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026

SERVICE DEVELOPMENT



Updated Operational Framework

Strengthened patient pathways across multiple Health Boards covering governance, accountability, service delivery, workforce, referral management and performance & quality monitoring.

INNOVATION & RESEARCH



Introduction of Family Reported Outcome Measures (FROM)

- ✓ In partnership with Cardiff University
- ✓ FROM-16 tool adapted for digital collection within the service

★ Results anticipated next year – watch this space!

SUPPORTING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE



New Information Resources

Information leaflets introduced post-diagnosis to support self-management of lymphoedema. These resources explain the condition, available services and provide guidance.



Aligned with the COMPASS Framework

- Compression
- Ownership
- Maintaining healthy weight & nutrition
- Psychological wellbeing
- Activity
- Skin care
- Sleep

RAISING AWARENESS



488 healthcare professionals educated



Expansion of clinics in special education schools and CYP-focused settings



77% increase in referrals

driven by improved awareness and education

DATA SNAPSHOT (2025-2026)



497 APPOINTMENTS



140 DISTINCT PATIENTS



72 NEW PATIENT REFERRALS



86% OF PATIENTS SEEN IN CLINIC ENVIRONMENTS

KEY INSIGHTS



WNB reduced consistently over the past 3 years



UTAs have increased – suggesting better communication with patients and improved administrative function.



Patients are more likely to WNB/UTA if they are younger and if they reside in more deprived areas.



Education feedback shows healthcare professionals are more likely to:

- ✓ Refer to the service
- ✓ Change practice
- ✓ Have greater understanding of lymphoedema

FUTURE PLANS (2026-27)



A clinical audit of cellulitis admissions for <18yr olds to consider relevance of extending the NCIP programme to include Children and Young People.



Strengthen pathways and links with dietetics service



Strengthen pathways and links with clinical psychology service



Continue to prioritise raising awareness and profile of lymphoedema affecting CYP



Contribute to the planning and facilitation of Lymphaletics, an event for CYP with lymphoedema



Together we are improving outcomes and quality of life for children and young people living with lymphoedema across Wales.



THE LYMPHOEDEMA SURGICAL PROGRAMME

INNOVATIVE SURGERY. BETTER OUTCOMES. IMPROVING LIVES.



The surgical programme continues to deliver support for patients who may benefit from either Lymphatic venous Anastomosis (LVA), Lymph Node Transfer (LNT), or Liposuction.

A new surgery that was introduced end of 2025 is **Biobridge**. This is a hollow collagen fibre inserted under the skin under local anaesthetic to provide a safe environment for lymphatics to grow and drain lymph fluid.



This has been done in collaboration with the surgeons in the Plastics Department, Morriston Hospital. It is an innovative procedure as Wales is the first country in the world to do this surgery under local anaesthetic, and from the data collected, is showing improvements in the patient's lymphoedema in that the tissues are softer, the limb shape has improved, and volume differences are reducing by the three-month post-operative review.



Data is collected for all surgeries to ensure patient and clinical outcomes remain of value to the patient and NHS.

SINCE APRIL 25



3 patients received LNT



3 had liposuction



61 people were scanned



33 were eligible for LVA surgery



22 patients had LVA surgery



Currently there are **24** people on the LVA waiting list.



To date **209** people have had LVA surgery since September 2015.

ICG SCANNING CLINICS – EXPANDING ACCESS



We also provided three scanning clinics in Wrexham for patients living in Betsi Cadwaladr UHB and North Powys tHB.

Thus, to date, we have scanned **459** patients across **110** clinics over the last 10 years.



There has been an increase in the number of ICG scanning clinics due to an increase in referrals. This is helping to upskill staff in the application and delivery of scanning clinics in Wales.

WE HAVE A NEW ICG SCANNER!



Supported by WG and SBUHB two new ICG scanners from Fluoptics were purchased – one for the National Lymphoedema Team, and one for Theatres in Neath Port Talbot Hospital.

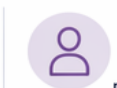


The new upgraded technology ensures better visualisation of the lymphatics and where they are leaking into the tissues. The unit is smaller and the controller is lighter, more ergonomic and easier to use.

LYMPHOEDEMA SURGICAL MDT CLINICS



Seven Lymphoedema Surgical MDT clinics were held with a LWCN Lymphoedema specialist and a Consultant Plastic Surgeon.



32 patients seen



24 cases discussed



311 patients have been through the Lymphoedema Surgical MDT to date



PLANS

Research study for LVA patients who had surgery more than five years ago to understand how their lymphoedema is now, to determine if they have had more cellulitis and learn what they are doing to look after their lymphoedema now.



OUR COMMITMENT



Innovative surgical solutions



Improved patient outcomes



Leading the way in lymphoedema care



Evidence, experience and excellence



Proud to be leading surgical innovation in Wales



Working together to transform lives and improve lymphoedema care across Wales.

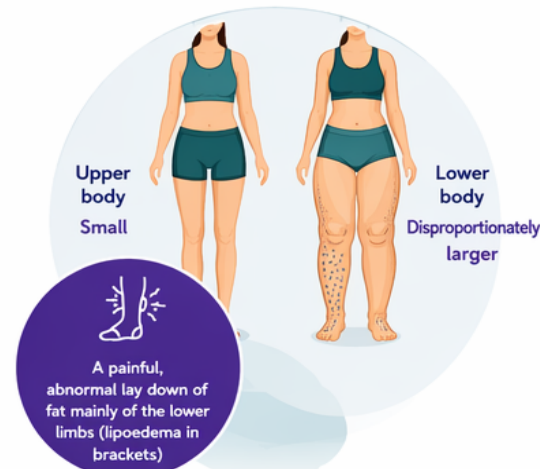
www.lymphoedemawales.org

LIPALGIA SYNDROME PROJECT

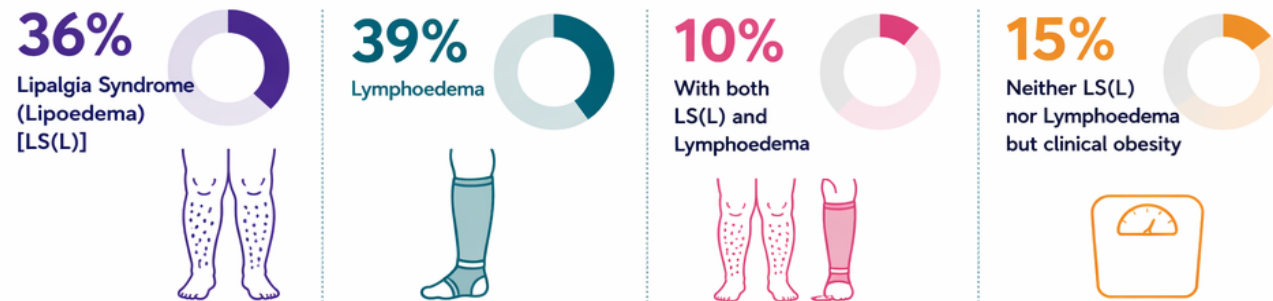
Better recognition. Accurate diagnosis. Better lives.

i In Wales, Lipoedema is now being called **Lipalgia Syndrome** with (lipoedema in brackets) to more accurately define the condition that is a painful, abnormal lay down of fat mainly of the lower limbs resulting in a small upper body and disproportionately bigger legs.

Patients are assessed, often by two clinicians, to distinguish which of the three conditions they may have including Lipalgia Syndrome (Lipoedema), Lymphoedema, and/or Clinical Obesity.



SINCE 2023, 317 PATIENTS HAVE BEEN ASSESSED



ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2025/26

- Revised assessment form for Lipalgia Syndrome (Lipoedema)
- Revised patient questionnaire now called 'Screening for Lipalgia Syndrome (Lipoedema)'
- Early findings were presented at both the British Lymphology Society (BLS) Annual Conference (UK) and the International Lymphoedema Framework (ILF) Conference (Canada) in October 2025.
- Why this matters**
 - Improving recognition and accurate diagnosis
 - Helps ensure the right treatment, support and guidance
 - Builds knowledge and evidence for better services across Wales

FOR FUTURE

- Revise the Patient Information Leaflet for Lipalgia Syndrome (Lipoedema)
- Publish findings once 350 patients have been assessed under this project
- Ongoing support and joint appointments in lymphoedema clinics across Wales with the emphasis of harnessing local therapist confidence in the assessment and diagnosis of Lipalgia Syndrome (Lipoedema)
- 'Living Well with Lipalgia Syndrome (Lipoedema)' online wellbeing group for people diagnosed with Lipalgia Syndrome starting July 2026
- Algorithm to aid differential diagnosis for Lipalgia Syndrome (Lipoedema) is in development

Working together to improve recognition, diagnosis and outcomes for people with Lipalgia Syndrome (Lipoedema) across Wales.
Every person. Every pathway. Every time.



On the Ground Clinical Lymphoedema Educators (OGEP)

Delivering value-based care across NHS Wales



1. WHAT IS OGEP?

Point-of-care education & clinical support

- Improves management of lymphoedema & wet legs
- Reduces avoidable harm
- Enhances patient outcomes across NHS Wales
- Provides real-time education in community settings
- Despite investment constraints and withdrawal from some Health Boards, OGEP remains embedded where it delivers clear value – a programme NHS Wales cannot afford not to sustain.

2. IMPACT IN 2025/26



5 / 7
Health Boards delivering OGEP



580
Patients treated in 2025/26



4,338+
Patients treated since April 2023



£892
Cost reduction per patient following intervention



500+
Community nurses supported with education, training and support

3. CLINICAL & SYSTEM BENEFITS

- Improved confidence in compression therapy
- Increased community workforce capability
- Reduced unnecessary demand on services
- Improved quality and consistency of care

4. SUSTAINED OUTCOMES



71%

of patients remained discharged from community caseloads at 12-month review



Sustained clinical improvement



Reduced community caseloads



Lower ongoing service demand

Reflecting sustained outcomes and reduced service demand, and further evidencing the ongoing value of OGEP.

5. WHY OGEP MATTERS



Prevents deterioration



Supports early intervention



Reduces costs & waste



Builds workforce capability

6. 2026/27 PRIORITIES



Meet with Nurse Directors to spread & scale OGEP benefits



Report on Education Survey to all community nurses in Wales



Continue to capture patient PROMs / PREMs



Launch the reviewed All Wales Chronic Oedema Wet Leg Pathway® (version 3)



OGEP is a proven, value-based programme delivering sustainable patient outcomes, workforce development, and measurable cost savings across NHS Wales.

COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT



WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED?

In line with our commitment to strengthen our digital marketing capacity, we welcomed **Digital Engagement officer** to the National team in **July 2025**. This has significantly expanded our digital reach.



Across our five main social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn & YouTube), we published **835 posts** – an increase of **701** compared to the **134 posts** in the previous year, generating a total of **407,778** views over the year.



In addition, our digital presence was further strengthened by having **account on LinkedIn and YouTube**, supporting wider awareness of the Network's work.

KEY DIGITAL AND ENGAGEMENT ACHIEVEMENTS



• **Introduction of Facebook Live sessions** to strengthen real-time engagement, enabling patients and HCPs to ask questions directly and supporting the development of trusted interactive online space.



• **Launched "Question of the Week"**, a weekly Friday feature where clinical experts provide short, practical answers to patient's and HCPs questions. This initiative achieved strong engagement earning the Network being spotlighted in the March edition of PhysioPod UK's Newsmag.



• **LinkedIn launched** to connect with health professionals, share knowledge and highlight our work to a wider professional audience.



• **YouTube channel established** to share educational content, webinars and patient information.



• **Consistent multi-platform content** covering awareness campaigns, education, research, events and patient stories.



OUR DIGITAL REACH Across 5 Platforms



Instagram



Facebook



Twitter



LinkedIn



YouTube



835

POSTS PUBLISHED
+701 vs last year



407,778

TOTAL VIEWS
across the year



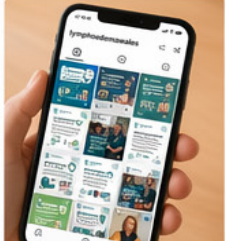
INCREASED ENGAGEMENT

and audience growth
across all platforms



STRONGER DIGITAL PRESENCE

through LinkedIn
and YouTube



WHAT'S NEXT ...



EXPAND DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

Continue to grow our audience and deepen engagement through live sessions, features and interactive content.



CREATE MORE IMPACT WITH DATA

Use insights to shape content, improve reach and demonstrate the value of our work.



STRENGTHEN CONNECTIONS

Build meaningful relationships with patients, HCPs and partners across Wales and beyond.



Communicating today for a healthier tomorrow.
Informing. Connecting. Empowering.

www.lymphoedemawales.org



Consultant Connect

Telemedicine support for NHS staff across Wales



Consultant Connect is a telemedicine service available to NHS staff across Wales, with lymphoedema support in place **since 2021**.

CONTACTS MANAGED VIA CALLS AND MESSAGING



In 2025/26,

126

contacts were managed via calls and messaging



This represents a slight decrease of

8

contacts compared to the previous year.



In 2025/26, **self-referral** was also introduced, resulting in

456

patient referrals across Wales.



This shift may account for the small reduction in clinician-initiated contacts.



Consultant Connect remains an **effective route** for healthcare professionals to access timely advice and facilitate onward referral where needed.



Timely advice



Expert support



Onward referral where needed



Supporting NHS staff.
Improving patient care.



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

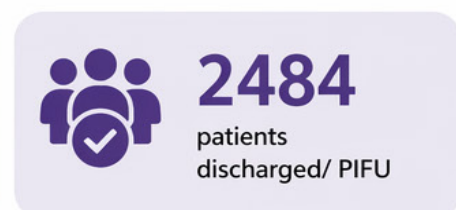
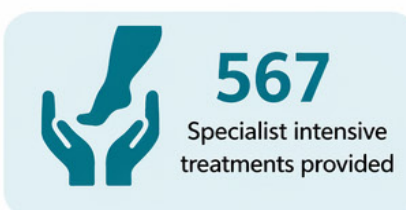
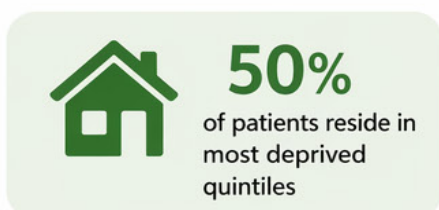
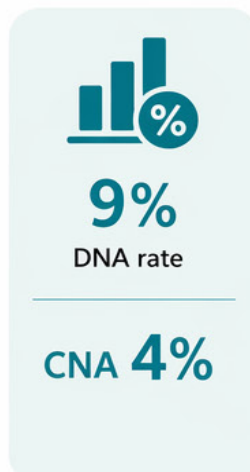


GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Bae Abertawe
Swansea Bay University
Health Board

Lymphoedema Service

Care, Expertise, Compassion



WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED?

- Band 3 completed year 1 of nurse training
- Band 8A completed professional advocate programme
- Introduction of self-referral form – sent communications to all GPs
- Pop up awareness sessions across SBUHB (Neath Port Talbot, Singleton and Morriston)
- Presented at grand round to raise awareness of lymphoedema services within SBUHB
- Joint cellulitis clinics

THIS YEAR THE SERVICE HAS BEEN FOCUSING ON DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF AND STRIVING TO FULFIL STAFF VACANCIES

We remain committed to providing high quality, compassionate care and ensuring our service continues to grow and meet the needs of our patients.

PLANS FOR 26-27

- Two staff members to complete their Non-Medical Independent prescribing master's module
- One member of staff to complete their tissue viability master's module
- Satellite clinic in Gorseinon Hospital
- Increase education opportunities with health care professionals



Together we make a difference
Diolch | Thank you



CARING



COMPASSIONATE



ACCOUNTABLE

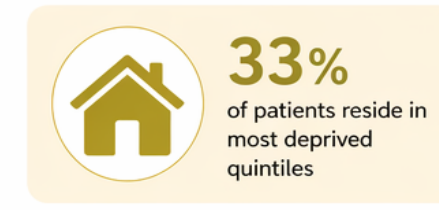
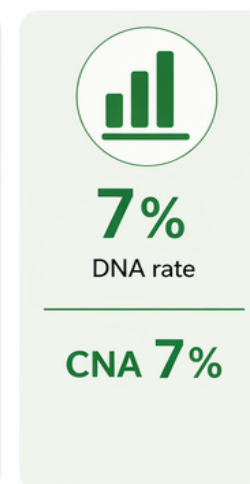


GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Hywel Dda
University Health Board

Lymphoedema Service

Compassionate care, meaningful impact



WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED?

The Hywel Dda Lymphoedema service has focused on continuing to implement the Care Aims Approach to our service delivery.

Benefits

- Improved access to the service by patient-initiated follow-up appointments and centralised communication hub for patient enquiries.
- Implementation of electronic self-referral and supported self-referral process.
- Implementation of Patient Knows Best platform to deliver our patient contact information.
- Improved triage process based upon the information from the self-referral process using a what matters most to the individual approach.
- Continuation of the Healthy Leg groups to provide focused education and intervention to a wider audience increasing access to the Lymphoedema service.
- Implementation of professional supervision groups to ensure clinician self-reflection using a restorative supervision approach fostering a culture of ongoing development.
- Completion of a Lymphoedema Intranet page to support our Health Board colleagues.
- Implementation of an electronic Garment Stock Dashboard to monitor expenditure and ensure the availability of compression garments to all 3 counties in a timely manner.
- Patient feedback continues to be positive from our PREM data with 97% happy with the overall experience. "the therapist understood my problem" "It helped my understand what I need- ed to do to manage and improve my situation" "the whole appointment was top class" "I was listened to, given advice I had not thought about. Useful and constructive, definitely improving my quality of life".

PLANS

- internet page for patients and carers to access.
- Scoping of alternative clinical spaces to shift care closer to home.
- Continue to use our PROM and PREM data to target areas for improvement and targeted clinical interventions.



Working together for healthier communities



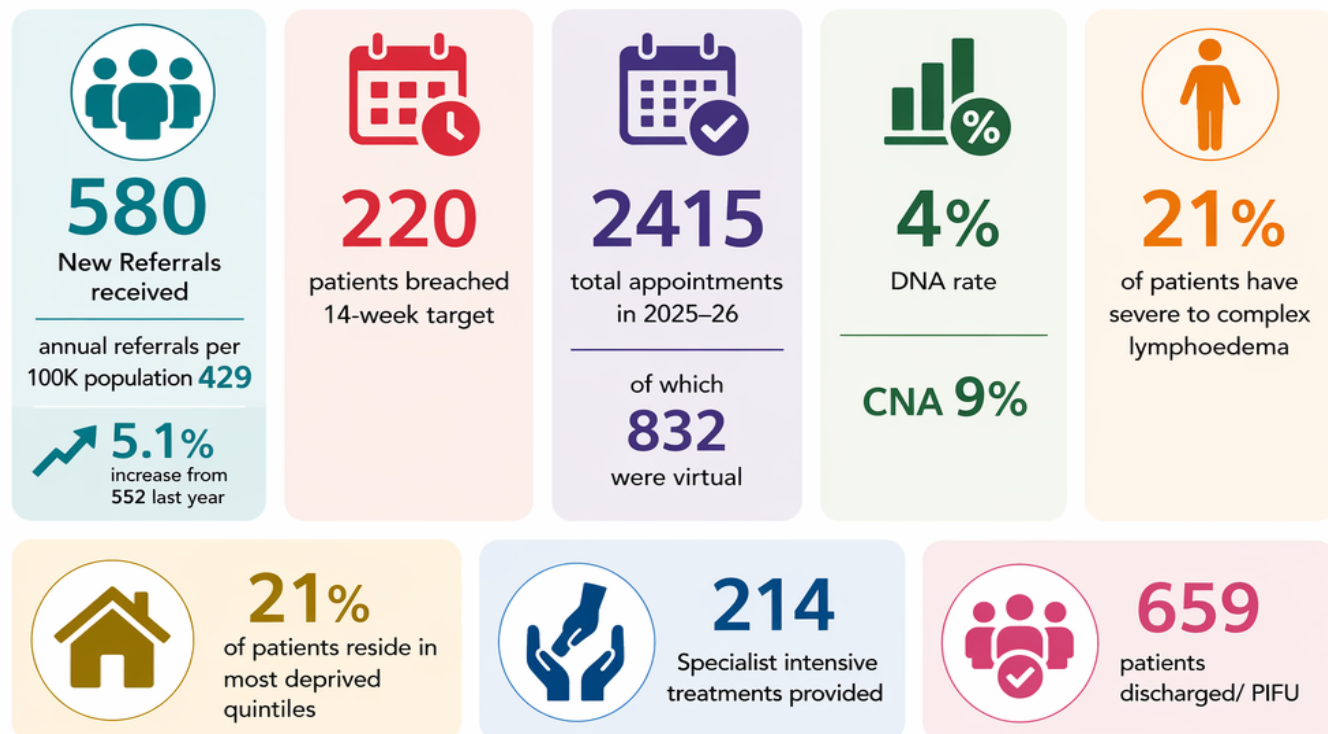
CARE



RESPECT



TOGETHER





WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED?

Modernising clinical systems, improving patient access, and strengthening education for both patients and clinicians. The team has moved from spreadsheets to Health Board-approved systems to improve efficiency and data security, rolled out partial appointment booking and self-referral pathways including MS Forms for PIFU (Patient Initiated Follow-Up) garment requests, and implemented a new approach requiring patients to bring all their compression garments to clinic appointments, ensuring new garments are only issued when necessary.

Adjusted prescribing practices, now ordering compression garments without grip tops when clinically appropriate, supporting cost-effective healthcare.

The service has also hosted educational drop-in sessions for staff, joined the District Nursing "One Stop Shop" training, and provided interactive education on compression bandaging and patient care, while continuing to closely monitor home visit demand.

The team has built excellent working relationships across Powys, with overwhelmingly positive feedback from training sessions, including comments such as, "The Lymphoedema team were great! Welcoming, knowledgeable, and approachable. Training was interactive, well-delivered, and informative," and "Excellent teaching and explanation of care. Flexible, friendly, and highly supportive sessions."

One team member was also recognised at the Powys Awards for being exceptionally supportive, reflecting the service's dedication to teamwork and professional development. Collectively, these achievements have enhanced patient care, strengthened staff knowledge and confidence, and reinforced the service's reputation as a welcoming, professional, and highly skilled team.

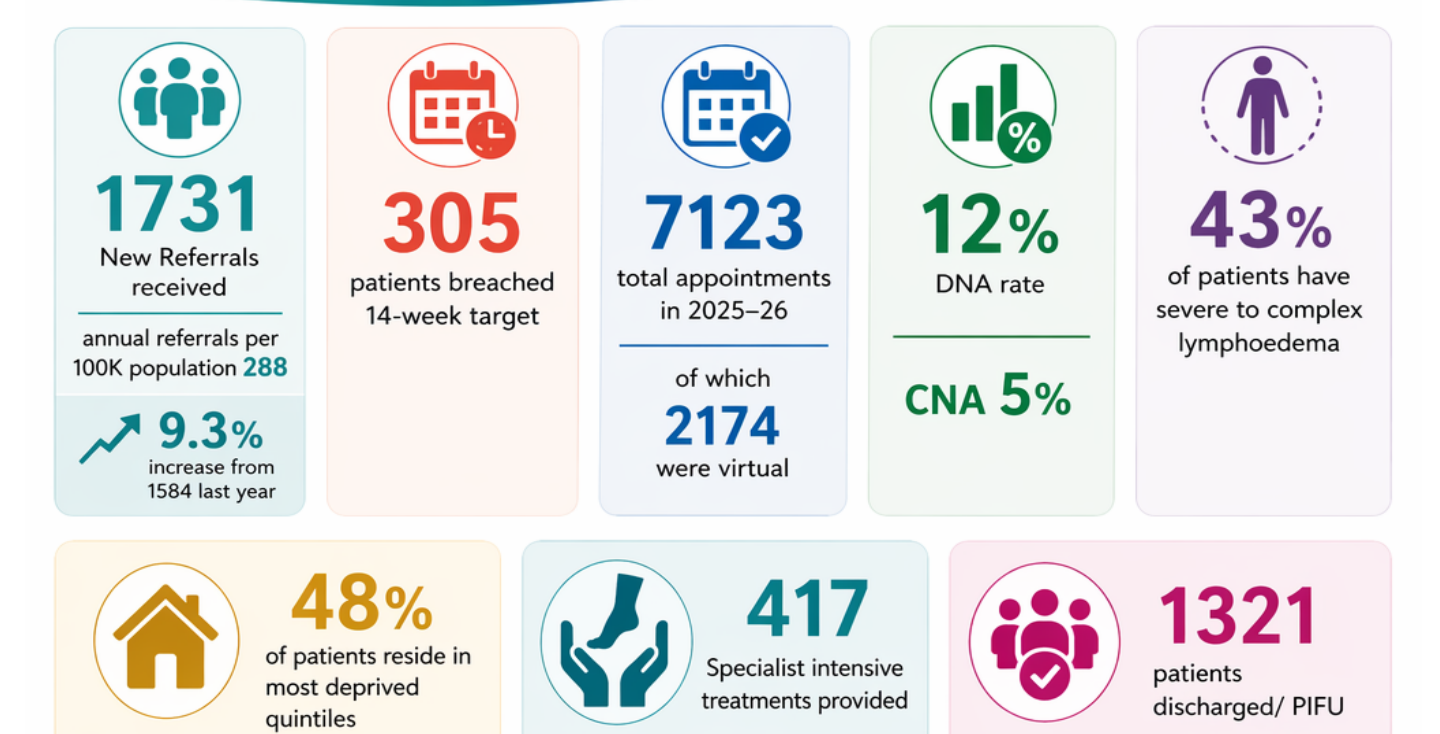


PLANS FOR 2026–27

Develop and launch an internet page for patients and carers to access information and support.

Scoping of alternative clinical spaces to shift care closer to home across Powys.

Continue to use our PROM and PREM data to target areas for improvement and targeted clinical interventions.





WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED?

Established electronic forms (E-forms) to streamline documentation

Two team members completed MSc modules

Service nominated for ABUHB Sustainability Award

Strengthened collaboration with Tissue Viability – monthly joint clinics established

Two team members completed sharp debridement training

Delivered joint lower limb/chronic oedema education for community staff (DNs/PNs) in collaboration with the Academy and JOE programme

Developed joint TVN/Lymphoedema Lower Limb Specialist role (18-month secondment)



BENEFITS

Cost savings achieved through improved garment management and tighter processes

Increased efficiency and time savings through implementation of E-forms

New patient waiting lists consistently managed within target timeframes

Positive patient-reported experience measures (PREMs)



WHAT'S NEXT?

Focus on improving patient outcomes

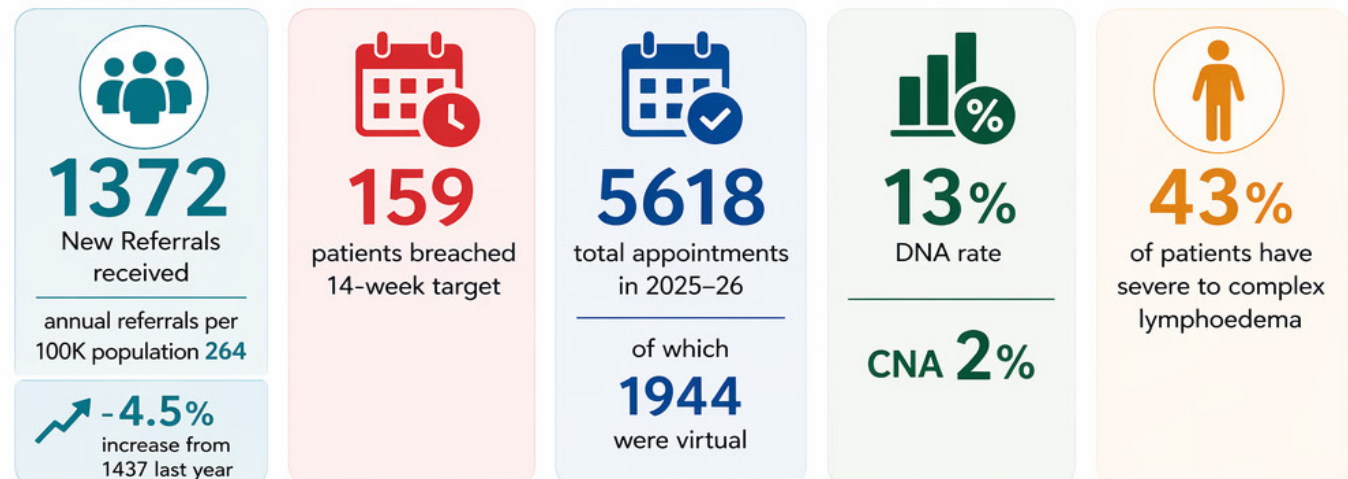
Align with OGEP priorities

Embed and demonstrate value of the TVN/Lymph lower limb specialist role

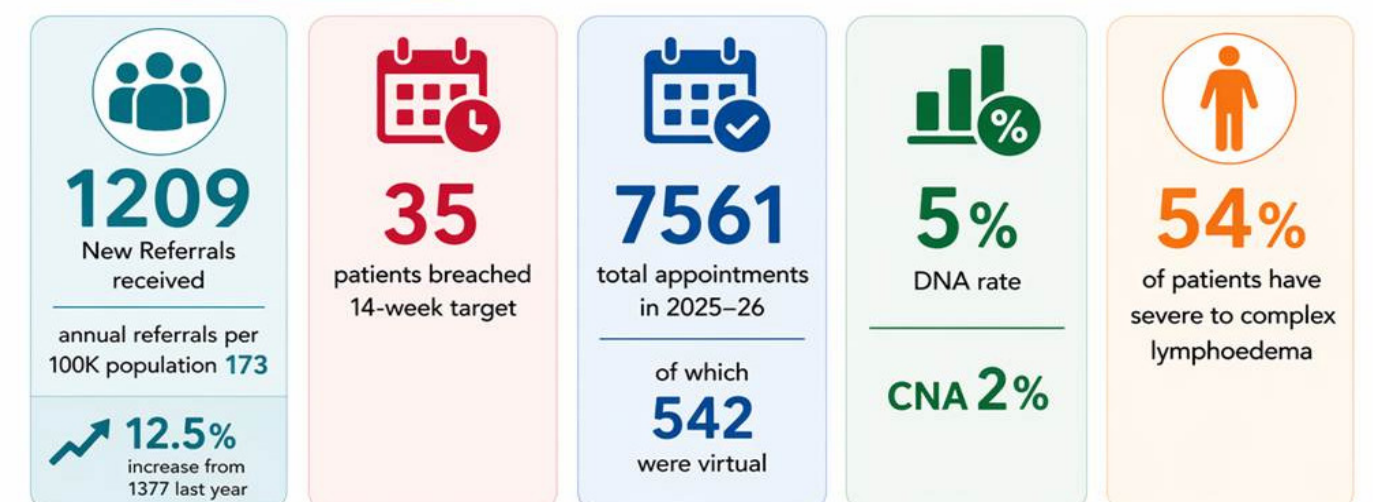
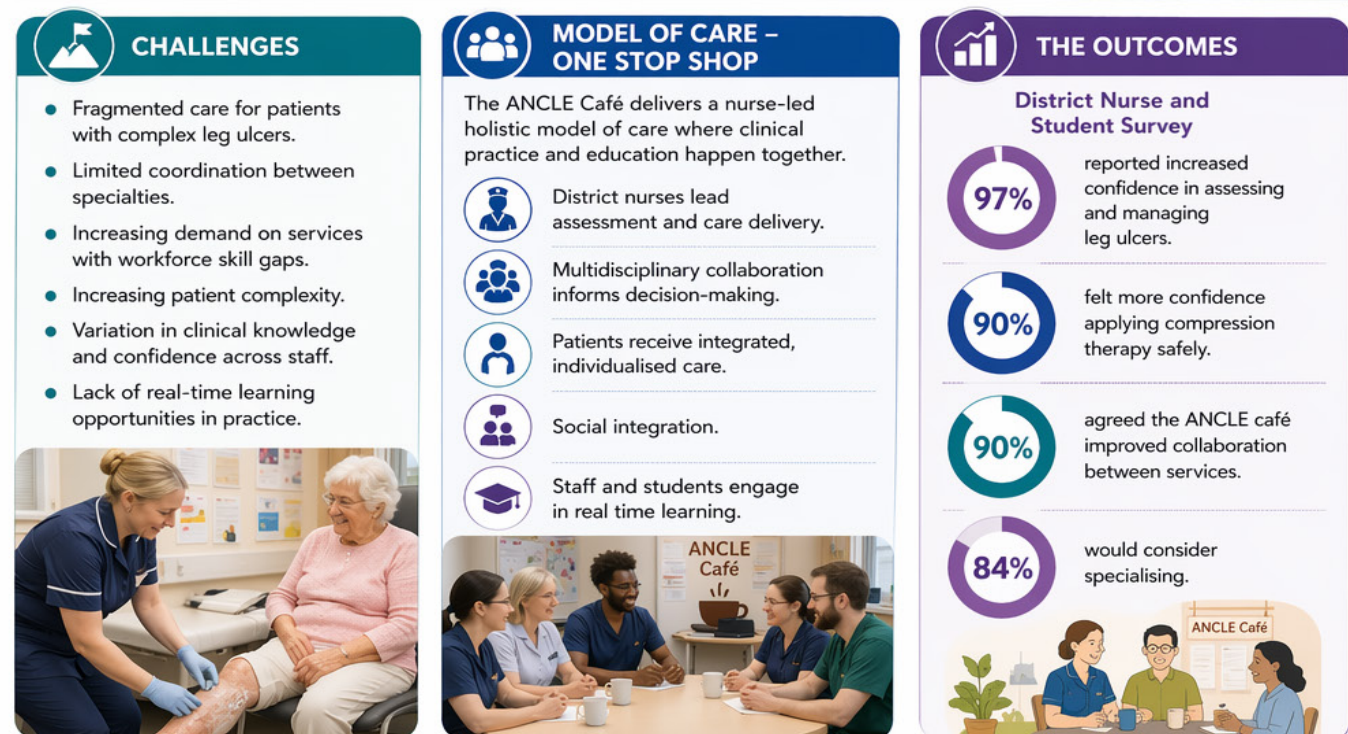
Strengthen collaboration with Vascular and Podiatry services

Work towards a "one-stop lower limb clinic" model

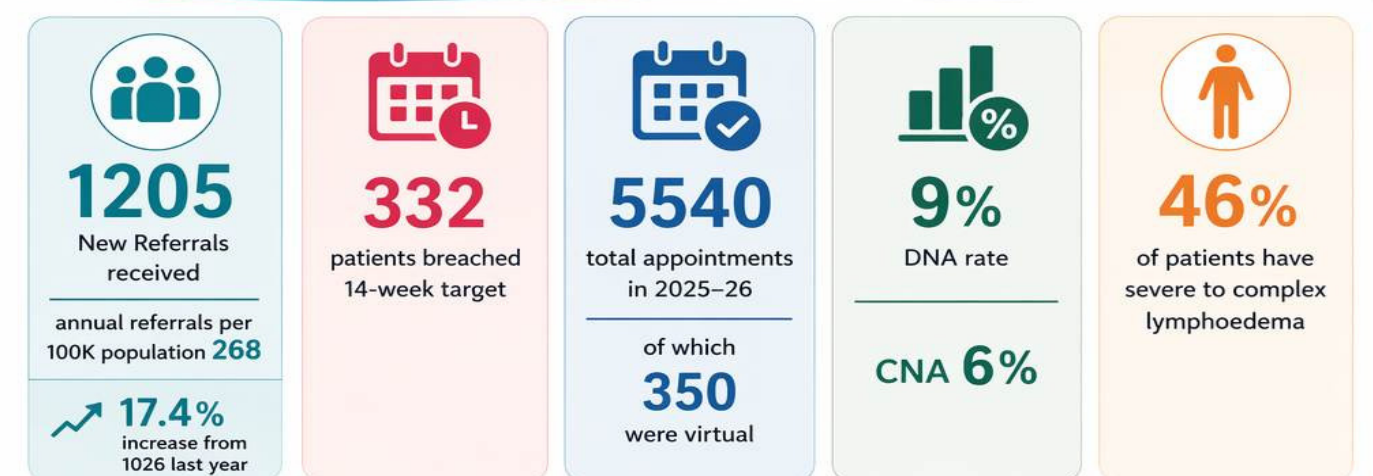




POSITIVE STORY Development on the ANCLE Café- A MDT Education Model



Lymphoedema Service Compassionate care, every step of the way





Lymffoedema Cymru
Lymphoedema Wales