

**We want to hear your views about Health & Social Care in Wirral - Listen. Connect. Share.**

### **BRIDGE Forum notes for Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2026 11am – 12:30pm**

The purpose of [BRIDGE Forum](#) is to come together to share updates, themes, and regular information about Wirral Health & Social Care services, giving a voice to all sectors. A place that is shared with Community, Health & Social Care representatives.

if you'd like to join-in, share information, receive [BRIDGE Forum notes](#) or speak at future meetings, or want to know more about the BRIDGE Forum, which takes place monthly each second Wednesday, please email us [spare5@healthwatchwirral.co.uk](mailto:spare5@healthwatchwirral.co.uk).

#### **Guest Speakers**

##### **1. David Welsh, Prevention Team Manager, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service (MFRS)**

David outlined his role and the services that MFRS offer in and around Wirral.

- Merseyside residents can phone **0800 731 5958** for free fire safety advice or to request a Home Fire Safety Check visit, where fire safety advice will be given, including the importance of having working smoke alarms on each level of your home and making sure every resident knows how to escape in case of a fire.
- Many Merseyside residents are eligible for free smoke alarms fitting, particularly people aged 65+ and anyone referred to MFRS by our partner agencies.
- Requesting a visit is important for people who are elderly, vulnerable, and/or have issues with mobility or sensory impairment. You can request a Home Fire Safety Check for yourself, as well as for a neighbour or relative.
- MFRS can provide fire safety talks to groups, particularly for vulnerable groups and/or those aged 65+, although MFRS's high-risk visits do take priority in their schedule. If you have particular concerns regarding an individual, you can refer them directly to MFRS and request a more focused home fire safety check.
- MFRS also provide sessions for professionals for awareness of what MFRS offer, what to look out for during home visits, and how and when to refer into MFRS.

[davidwelsh@merseyfire.gov.uk](mailto:davidwelsh@merseyfire.gov.uk)

[www.merseyfire.gov.uk](http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk)

For new referrals or to request a free home fire safety check safe & well visit - follow [web link](#) below or call **0800 731 5958**

<https://mfrs.cfrmis.co.uk/oneservices/referral/public?model=VPRF>

##### **2. Jennifer Ramage, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, Gynaecology Clinical Service Lead, Wirral University Teaching Hospital (WUTH)**

Jen explained the renewed Women's Health Strategy, re-released in April 2026 due to the current UK Government feeling the 2022 version was inadequate in addressing health challenges UK women face. Women's health is suffering in the UK by:

- Drops in female life expectancy but living longer in poor health
- Ongoing waiting list challenges in gynaecology
- Maternity inequality

- Poorer cardiovascular outcomes.

The new Women's Health Strategy aligns with the 10-Year Health Plan – Fit for the future.

The approach is to listen to women's voices and break the past failings of women's healthcare by shifts to:

- Care in the community
- Digital platforms
- Prevention
- Use of patient-reported outcome measures (PROMs) and patient – reported experience measures (PREMs).

The aims of the strategy are:

- Shorter waits for gynaecology care
- Fewer painful procedures without informed consent or choice of pain relief
- Easier access closer to home to contraception and health screening
- Better information and control over health care utilising digital health care
- Being listened to
- Bringing more women into research, life sciences, and tech leadership.

This will be done by:

- Utilising digital services
  - Menopause and menstrual problems are two of the first priorities for the NHS online hospital.
  - NHS Genomic Medicine Service and National Health tech Access programme.
- Creating a culture of equality, reducing medical misogyny and unconscious bias.
- Using a Neighbourhood Health Service model.
- A focus on four health priorities:

(1) Make women's voices and choices central in healthcare:

- PROMs and PREMs.
- Women's voices partnership
- GP Patient Survey data
- Produce women's standard of care for gynae procedures
- Improve access to Contraception, Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC), and abortion care
- Other priorities include pregnancy loss care, perinatal mental health, and pregnancy support for marginalised communities.

(2) Transform NHS performance in services that matter most to women:

- Menstrual health/ Endometriosis/ Fibroids
- Mental Health
- Cancer
- Osteoporosis
- Reduction in need to repeat stories
- Independent national maternity and neonatal investigations/ maternity care bundle
- Education focused on young women
- Shifting care to the community Single Point of Access (SPoA) and improved pathways
- Having Regional Centres of Excellence.

(3) Support women to lead healthy, prosperous lives:

- Women spend a disproportionate amount of their life in poor health

- NHS and local government working together to strengthen primary and community-based care, as well as working with voluntary and commercial sectors
- Cervical cancer screening changes (home testing, HPV vaccines)
- Expand genomic testing (e.g. breast cancer genetics)
- Tackle cardiovascular and obesity related health conditions
- Halve violence against women and girls within a decade
- Improve working life, menopause, MSK and caring responsibilities.

(4) Create an approach to research and development that works for and empowers women:

- Launch a FemTech healthcare challenge
- NIHR R&D (National Institute for Health and Care Research) Innovation Catalyst-supporting high-priority research
- Reduce gender bias in health research.

Key additional features:

- Appoint a patient experience national director
- Jess's Rule and Martha's Rule
- Patient power payments
- MyChoices – an NHS app feature to provide clearer choices on healthcare providers
- Getting It Right First Time (GIRFT) workstreams.

Wirral Update:

- Already working on Neighbourhood Health
- Pathway work for key gynaecological conditions: heavy menstrual bleeding, pelvic pain, menopause and prolapse
- Cheshire and Mersey Women's Health app
- Martha's Rule
- Outpatient procedures
- LARC (Long-Acting Reversible Contraception)
- Women's Health Study Day.

The next steps will be multidisciplinary engagement to provide better outcomes, care coordination, and continuity of care, aiming to be responsive when directives are given, finding ways to put women's voices first and giving women a choice where feasibly possible.

After Jen's presentation, Nicola Connor (Stein Centre) suggested facilitating and setting up a Women's Health Support Group along with Kate Barker (Wirral Menopause CIC) and Natasha Wilson (Tomorrows Women), Grace Holley (Healthier West Wirral) wished to connect with Jen to discuss sharing the strategy with neighbourhood boards and PCN's.



BRIDGE forum -  
Renewed Women's

### **3. Helen Baker, Nutrition and Dietetic Service, Wirral Community Health, and Care NHS Foundation Trust (WCHC)**

Helen revealed an estimated 6 million UK residents have diabetes; 4.7 million diagnosed with diabetes and 1.3 million estimated to have undiagnosed type 2 diabetes.

The NHS spends at least £10.7 billion per year on diabetes with 60% of this spent on treating complications.

Diabetes Smart is a free course to support local people living with type 1 and 2 diabetes. The course, facilitated by trained professionals, is an opportunity for people to learn about making positive lifestyle changes and managing pre-diabetes, type 1 and 2 diabetes.

Diabetes Smart education:

- Is key to successful day-to-day management
- Improves key outcomes
- Reduces onset of complications
- Is recommended by NICE:
  - Adults with type 2 diabetes should be offered group education programmes as the preferred option and offered a structured education programme at diagnosis.
  - Adults with type 1 diabetes are offered a structured education programme.

Diabetes Smart is a Healthy Wirral initiative co-ordinated and delivered by Wirral Community Nutrition and Dietetic Service:

- Aimed at people with Type 2 and Type 1 Diabetes
- Face-to-face and online (online sessions and recordings)
  - Choice of times / days
  - Flexibility to choose what topics to attend and when.

The sessions include:

- Core session
- Healthy lifestyle
- Carbohydrate awareness
- Reading and understanding food labels
- Physical activity
- Keeping well with diabetes
- Review session.

Access to the service is by self-referral [Diabetes / IGR Referral form](#) or call the team on 0151 604 7271. GP's/ healthcare professionals can also refer people into the service.

<https://www.wchc.nhs.uk/services/diabetes-smart/about-diabetes-smart/> [helen.baker66@nhs.net](mailto:helen.baker66@nhs.net)



DiabetesSmart  
Bridge Forum 14 Oct

#### 4. Clare Wright, Public Health Officer, Wirral Council

Clare shared details of the Winter 2026/27 Seasonal Resource Pack and asked people to communicate clear, consistent messages this winter within their networks.

- Share information from these slides as part of day-to-day interactions, raising awareness of benefits & eligibility of seasonal vaccinations, & busting flu myths.
- Help Wirral Public Health to find Wirral case studies– they are looking for case studies of people (or their children) who have been hospitalised by flu or another vaccine-preventable disease who are willing to share their experiences to encourage others to take up the vaccine offer: [Immunisations Case Study Information Request](#).
- Every interaction is an opportunity to protect someone from seasonal viruses.

#### Why does the Influenza (Flu) vaccination matter? -

- The flu vaccine helps protect against influenza (flu)
- Flu is not just a heavy cold
- Flu occurs every year, usually in winter

- It is a highly infectious disease with symptoms that come on very quickly
- A bad bout of flu can be much worse than a heavy cold
- Flu vaccines help protect against the main types of flu virus circulating.

All those eligible are urged to have their free flu vaccine to help them stay strong this winter. Don't delay, book your appointment today and help protect against the risk of severe illness. Check your eligibility online at [Winter vaccinations and winter health - NHS](#).

#### **Timing of when eligible groups can get vaccinated:**

- From 01 Sep 2026: pregnant women and children.
- From 01 Oct 2026: eligible adults (except for a small number of adults who may be vaccinated earlier following clinical assessment), and frontline health & social care workers.

Most vaccination programmes should be completed by the end of November 2026, but with vaccinations continuing until 31 March 2027 where clinically appropriate.

#### **Where can eligible people get the flu vaccine? - at:**

- Their own GP practice
- A pharmacy that offers NHS flu vaccinations
- Their maternity service (if pregnant)
- Their care home (if resident in a care home)
- Their employer (for health or social care workers) - Frontline health and social care workers without an employee-led flu vaccination offer can go to their own GP practice or any participating pharmacy
- Their school – for most school-aged children (Reception to Year 11). Parents/carers will get an invitation to consent. from 01 Dec 2026, school age children can get their vaccine from participating pharmacies
- [The Living Well Service: Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust](#) Wirral dates advertised, with no appointment needed.

#### **How to book:**

For aged 18+, and for children aged 2 or 3 years:

- Contact GP practice
- [Book a flu vaccination appointment online](#)
- Use your NHS App
- Call **119** (free) to book via phone unable to book online. Interpreters available.

Bidston Hill Medium Super Output Area (MSOA) was identified for lowest overall Flu vaccine uptake in 2025/26 (37%) compared to other Wirral MSOAs (57%), so 26/27 Wirral Public Health want to focus area-targeted work to improve uptake by face-to-face conversations, texts, and social media.

**Call to Action** for anyone healthcare professionals, community, or volunteer groups in or around this area - please use and share the attached Seasonal Vaccination Resource Pack.



FINAL\_26.27 Partner  
Flu key messages an

[clarewright@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:clarewright@wirral.gov.uk)

## **5. Russell, Jenny & Vicky, members of Together All Are Able**

Russell, Jenny, and Vicky gave us an overview of the Together All Are Able service, which is led and run by people with disabilities, for people with disabilities and their Carers. TAAA set up in December 2011 as a community interest company and is a self-advocacy organisation, speaking

up for themselves and others and working with a number of other organisations around and beyond Wirral.

Through the support and facilitation at TAAA there has been incredibly positive feedback about the service, and it is extremely rewarding for TAAA to see people joining in, speaking up, and growing in confidence, especially if they were shy to begin with.

TAAA holds Information and training sessions, including workshops on self-advocacy, how to deal with scams, video calling and video conferencing, human rights, voting, and how to stay safe on social media.

They also hold monthly Zumba sessions and coffee mornings, where people with disabilities are welcome to attend.

Anyone with a disability aged 16+ wishing to join the organisation, can make contact by email or social media. Membership is free and TAAA also take referrals.

Together All Are Able is based at the New Hope Centre, Guildford Street, Wallasey, CH44 0BP.



db131103TAAA  
Information LeafletV

[Toaaa@outlook.com](mailto:Toaaa@outlook.com)

## AOB- Information sharing, updates, and news.

1. **Alcoholics Anonymous Wirral** is looking forward to inviting professionals and organisations to a **Multicultural Event on 16 January 2027 at Wirral Change**, bringing together AA, Al-Anon, local services and organisations representing different cultures and communities across Wirral. This event will provide another valuable opportunity to build relationships, share experiences, celebrate the diversity of local communities, and explore how organisations can work together to ensure that people and families affected by alcohol misuse can access appropriate support regardless of their cultural background. Alcoholics Anonymous Wirral hopes this will be another positive step in strengthening partnerships across Wirral and creating a more inclusive recovery community where everyone feels welcomed, understood, and supported. If interested in attending, please apply for a ticket (as event venue capacity is 150 maximum):

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/alcoholics-anonymous-multicultural-event-wirral-tickets-1999689774947?aff=oddtcreator>



## 2. Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)

RNIB is inviting blind and partially sighted people living in England to take part in a survey about their experiences of accessing healthcare information and communications.

The survey covers areas such as appointment letters, test results, medication information, communications from healthcare services and digital services such as the NHS App. It takes around 10–15 minutes to complete and closes on **20 Oct 2026**.

Take part in the survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DDXKMXF>

### 3. Savera is holding a Women Only Energy Saving Session

Date: **Wed 21 Oct 2026**, 10am – 12pm

Location: PAL Centre, Liverpool, L8 2TF

To reserve a place, please register here: <https://energysavingworkshop.eventbrite.co.uk>

### 4. Cancer Carers Survey by Cheshire and Merseyside Cancer Alliance.

Anyone who is providing, or has provided, unpaid care or support to a family member, friend or loved one affected by cancer can take part in this survey which is open until **31 Oct 26**.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8ZV8DN3>

**5. NHS Living Well Service**, delivered by Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (CWP), operates a drop-in basis providing health checks and wider well-being guidance.

#### Autumn / Winter 2026 - Wirral Clinics:

| Date             | Location                                                                                                            | Clinic Times |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Thur 22 October  | Birkenhead town centre, Catherine Street, Birkenhead / Grange Road (between Asda and Primark), Birkenhead, CH41 6EA | 10:30-16:00  |
| Wed 28 October   | Cherry Tree Shopping Centre (car park), Cherry Square, Liscard, CH44 5XU                                            | 10:30-16:00  |
| Mom 02 November  | Rock Ferry Library, 259 Old Chester Road, Rock Ferry, CH42 3TD                                                      | 10:30-16:00  |
| Wed 04 November  | Wirral Multicultural Organisation (WMO), 111 Conway Street, Birkenhead, CH41 4AF                                    | 10:30-16:00  |
| Sat 14 November  | Birkenhead town centre, Catherine Street, Birkenhead / Grange Road (between Asda and Primark), Birkenhead, CH41 6EA | 10:30-16:00  |
| Thur 19 November | Twickenham Drive (by Heron and Sayers), Leasowe, Wirral, CH46 2QE                                                   | 10:30-16:00  |
| Fri 04 December  | ASDA, Woodchurch Road, Woodchurch, CH49 5PD                                                                         | 10:30-16:00  |
| Sat 12 December  | Cherry Tree Shopping Centre (car park), Cherry Square, Liscard, CH44 5XU                                            | 10:30-16:00  |

**Forthcoming BRIDGE Forum dates in 2026:** Wed 11 Nov starting at 11:05am, and 09 Dec starting at 11am.

Healthwatch Wirral  
Liscard Business Centre,  
The Old School House,  
188 Liscard Road,  
Wallasey, Merseyside  
CH44 5TN

Spare 5 BRIDGE Forum

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