

***A Better Future for Health and
Social Care in Blaenau Gwent***

Healthier Future 2

**Blaenau Gwent's Health, Social
Care and Well Being Strategy**

2008 to 2011

Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership

March 2008

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“Working together to improve the health, social care and well-being of all people living and working in Blaenau Gwent.”

Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership

The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership and the Second Healthier Future Strategy

Healthier Future II is the second Health, Social Care and Well-being Strategy for Blaenau Gwent, developed in partnership between Blaenau Gwent Local Health Board (LHB), Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and its partners. The Strategy sets out our continued commitment to working together to improve the health, social care and well-being of all people living and working in Blaenau Gwent.

The Healthier Future Partnership provides a focus for local organisations and the Communities of Blaenau Gwent to work together to realise our vision for a healthier Blaenau Gwent. This second Strategy provides a clear statement of our intentions and plans to further improve the health, social care and well-being of the people of Blaenau Gwent by continuing to respond directly to local needs. The updated Blaenau Gwent Needs Assessment, together with a range of national and local strategies and plans, provides a framework for us to achieve the vision and aims of Healthier Future II. This Strategy clearly states and explains how we will work in partnership to deliver against these strategies and plans to make Blaenau Gwent a healthier place to live and work.

The Blaenau Gwent Partnership has continued to address the most important health, social care and well-being challenges facing the County Borough through delivering against the aims and priorities we set for ourselves in our first Strategy, ‘Healthier Future’, launched in April 2005. The positive progress made through ‘Healthier Future’ has provided a firm foundation for this Strategy and the next stages of our development as a partnership to continue to modernise local services and improve opportunities for local people to live healthier lifestyles.

A summary leaflet has also been produced, outlining the key themes and priorities of this Strategy.

For a copy, please contact the Healthier Future Partnership on 01495 325425, or email enquiries@blaenaugwentlhb.wales.nhs.uk.

Marilyn Pitman
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Our Partnership Vision, Values and Successes of the first Healthier Future Strategy

Our continuing partnership vision for Blaenau Gwent is:

“Working together to improve the health, social care and well-being of all people living and working in Blaenau Gwent.”

Working together as partners with the communities of Blaenau Gwent has already begun to make a real difference to health, social care and well-being in the County Borough. Through the first ‘Healthier Future’ Strategy, the Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership identified a set of goals and, over the last three years, the Partnership has specifically tackled these.

Some of the projects and schemes which have been implemented in Blaenau Gwent to respond to our previous **HEALTHIER** goals include:

	Goal	Successes
H	health, social care and well-being partners working together with the community	Blaenau Gwent’s Healthier Future Strategy has sought to ensure that young people have access to information about health issues and living healthier lifestyles. Young people have developed and published ‘Health Warning’, a magazine produced by young people for young people. Topics covered have included bullying, smoking, sexual health, healthy eating and physical activity. The magazine has been very well received. It promotes healthy lifestyles and seeks to empower young people to manage their own health and well-being.
E	empowering people and communities to promote their own health and well-being	<p>The Community Food Project continues to be developed across Blaenau Gwent. Groups have been established to ensure that cookery skills courses can continue throughout the County Borough.</p> <p>A Smoke Bugs initiative has been fully implemented in Blaenau Gwent, with twenty-five primary schools participating. ‘Stop Smoking’ classes have been run in four of our six local secondary schools.</p> <p>The Expert Patient Programme has been implemented in Blaenau Gwent, with six cohorts of patients having completed the generic programme, with two specific courses also being completed: one for Carers and one for Learning Disabilities.</p> <p>The X Pert Programme for patients with diabetes has been introduced. This programme has been delivered in conjunction with a community dietician and feedback from patients has been positive.</p>

A	access to services, information and advice	<p>Blaenau Gwent Children and Young People's Partnership took delivery of a community vehicle in June 2007. The vehicle provides an outreach service from the Integrated Children's Centre based in Blaina and enables communities to access services, which may not otherwise be possible.</p> <p>The Active Living Project exceeded the Assembly Policy Agreement target for both 2004/05 and 2005/06, achieving the Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management (ILAM) Leisure and Health Recognition Award and being assessed amongst the best performing across the whole of the UK, achieving Excellence Wales status in Spring 2007.</p>
L	listening to the voices of people and their carers	<p>Service users and their carers continue to be involved in decision making processes regarding their care and management. They have been engaged in the development of a User and Carer Consultation Strategy, Carers' Strategy, Mental Health Promotion Strategy and Learning Disability Strategy.</p> <p>The work of the 'Access for All' Network has been developed to engage disabled members of the public, staff and carers in the planning and delivery of health, social services and wider local authority services in Blaenau Gwent.</p>
T	targeting and modernising services to raise standards and meet local needs	<p>Two service areas have been identified as priorities for the development of care pathways – respiratory disease and diabetes. These have been identified due to their high incidence locally and to reflect local development work already undertaken. Services for patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) have been mapped out and an integrated care pathway (ICP) developed for patients receiving oxygen therapy.</p>
H	healthy children and young people, having a flying start in life	<p>A Food and Health Policy for children and young people has been developed. The policy is being implemented and will be monitored to assess its impact locally.</p> <p>Further progress has been made with the ten week nutrition and healthy lifestyle programmes for children and young people, using the Epstein Model which incorporates diet therapy, behaviour modification and physical activity. Feedback received from participants has been very positive, with many children saying they would recommend the programme to others.</p>
I	individuals living as independently as possible and placed at the centre of services	<p>Services have been developed and implemented to respond to the revised national oxygen therapy contractual arrangements. All local patients now receive a full assessment at the commencement of therapy and thereafter on an annual basis.</p>

E	equality, with everyone having the same right to services and opportunities	A partnership Access for All Seminar has been held, resulting in information being gained from disabled people on barriers to service provision. An Equalities Partnership has been established to take forward joint commitments by key partners on disability equality issues.
R	responsibility and accountability in protecting the vulnerable	<p>The development of a mental health promotion strategy and action plan has made good progress, with a multi-agency workshop held in March 2007 to raise awareness, look at current mental health promotion activity and gaps in service. A partnership group has developed a new strategic framework for improving mental health in Blaenau Gwent.</p> <p>The Mentro Allan programme in the Blaenau Gwent and Merthyr Tydfil promotes physical activity in the natural environment for people experiencing mental health issues.</p> <p>A Book Prescription Scheme for Children and Young People was developed as part of the national Mental Health Bibliotherapy Project.</p> <p>Blaenau Gwent LHB and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council have initiated a process of Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) Recovery Action Plans and monitoring where there has been significant concern with protection of vulnerable adults in nursing homes.</p>

These are just a few examples of the ways in which the Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future partners have sought to work with local groups and people to actively promote health improvement and living healthier lifestyles. Healthier Future II will continue to build on these successes and the good progress made to ensure that our continuing vision of a healthier Blaenau Gwent is realised.

The continued involvement of local people will be vital to the success of this new Strategy. The planning and delivery of increasingly modernised and improved local health, social care and well-being services is the responsibility of local NHS organisations and the Local Authority in partnership with other local providers such as voluntary sector organisations and independent care homes. However, the people of Blaenau Gwent have a crucial part to play in taking increased responsibility for their own health, for living as healthy a lifestyle as possible and also becoming actively involved in the further improvement of health, social care and well-being services in Blaenau Gwent.

This Strategy will act as the commissioning context for local statutory bodies in using our resources jointly to achieve our vision for the future Health, Social Care and Well Being for the people of Blaenau Gwent.

Developing 'Healthier Future II'

On 1st April 2007, the Welsh Assembly Government issued new regulations for the development of a second round of Health, Social Care and Well-being Strategies in Wales. Developing a second strategy for Blaenau Gwent provides an opportunity to further strengthen collaboration between all local partners, both statutory and non-statutory, with the collective vision of continuing to improve the health, social care and well-being of the people of Blaenau Gwent.

This collaborative commitment is led by the Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership Board, which was formed prior to the launch of the first Healthier Future Strategy in April 2005. The Partnership Board and its structure provides high level leadership and monitoring of the development and implementation of this Healthier Future Strategy and associated plans and actions.

Linking with Blaenau Gwent Communities and Local People

Since the launch of the first Healthier Future Strategy in April 2005, Blaenau Gwent LHB, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and partners have been committed to the participation of community groups and local people in the County Borough, including children and young people, and have engaged effectively with these groups.

Extensive engagement and consultation has taken place on a number of our plans expressed in this document. The views and ideas of local people and organisations have informed and guided the ways in which these service modernisation and improvement proposals have been developed and are already being implemented. This Strategy has been designed on the basis of our understanding of the needs of our local communities, the views and ideas of local people highlighted through ongoing engagement and consultation, allied with national policies and the views and ideas of local health and social care professionals.

Involvement of local people and communities will continue throughout the development and implementation of this new Strategy for Blaenau Gwent. This will aim to ensure that local people continue to have a voice and play an active part in improving their own health and well-being and also of the wider population in Blaenau Gwent.

Key Needs in Blaenau Gwent

Blaenau Gwent Needs Assessment

This section is a summary of the work undertaken during 2007, to assess local health needs. Further work on the needs of Children and Young People has progressed through the development of the Children's Single Plan.

The full Needs Assessment document is available on request.

Background

The 2007 Needs Assessment updates the previous document developed in 2004, and provides the rationale underlying the Health, Social Care and Well-Being Strategy for Blaenau Gwent 2008-11.

The 2004 Needs Assessment was presented using a life course model. The current requirement for a single children and young people plan, with a very detailed needs assessment process for a wide range of issues and some discrepancy in timescales and resources required a slightly different approach in 2007.

Overview

The two key elements of health, social care and wellbeing need which can be addressed by partnership working at a local level are prevention of disease and disability, and support and care for those individuals with chronic illness and/or disability. The Needs Assessment, therefore, concentrates on information around these issues.

In terms of the overall assessment of needs, little has changed significantly since 2004. Some improvement has been seen in some areas, in line with national trends; but health and wellbeing in Blaenau Gwent is still significantly worse than the Welsh average, due to largely preventable conditions. Previously presented information has been updated where possible, and some new information has become available, leading to better information about some issues.

As explained in the previous Needs Assessment, the current poor health status of much of the resident population is a direct result of their socio-economic history over several generations. Major improvements in population health will therefore take at least another generation. However, there are also very positive factors promoting health in the area; such as close knit communities, a largely unpolluted environment and a comprehensive multi agency 'Active Living' agenda. Over the next few years it will be important to try and distinguish any genuine health improvement of the current population from apparent improvements due to an influx of healthier individuals from elsewhere.

The current resident population of Blaenau Gwent is around 68,400. This has decreased since the 2001 census, particularly in the 25 to 44 and 0 to 14 age groups, although birth rates have slightly increased over the last couple of years. Death rates from all causes have continued to fall, resulting in an increasing proportion of the population in the oldest age groups.

The population is still very homogenous, although numbers of Welsh speakers and demand for Welsh language education has increased, and there is a modest inward migration of workers from Eastern Europe and Iberia.

- **Mental Health**

Poor mental health remains a major issue for the County Borough. This is not generally about people with severe mental illness, although there are still real issues with some services for such patients. High levels of mental illnesses such as anxiety and depression at a mild to moderate level of severity; and also poor mental health - as in difficulty with coping with everyday life - are extremely common, and contribute to a vicious circle of poor general health, difficulty in acquiring skills and qualifications to get satisfying employment, low incomes or benefits dependency, difficulty in leading healthier lifestyles, and consequent further reduction in mental and physical health. This also has wider influences on the social and physical environment in which people live, which in turn can affect mental health positively or negatively.

Positive promotion of good mental health is a key need in Blaenau Gwent, and needs to involve all agencies, services and communities. This is not an easy aspect of health to promote, but there is a growing evidence base for what works. Action needs to extend far beyond health and social care to education, employment and many other service areas. In many cases, this action needs to be about how rather than what services are delivered; and recent changes in service delivery are facilitating this.

One major area of NHS and Social Care performance is to care for patients with long term conditions as safely as possible and as close to home as possible, keeping them out of acute hospitals unless clinically indicated. This could also make a major contribution to improved mental health by improving personal independence and autonomy, providing people are equipped with the knowledge, skills and support to take a greater part in their care.

The recent Communities that Care survey of 3000 Blaenau Gwent secondary school students (mainly aged 11 – 16) produced some interesting data relevant to mental health. In general, young people in Blaenau Gwent were less likely to report antisocial and risky behaviour than young people across the UK generally, and also were less likely to have parents or a peer group who were supportive of such behaviour. However, they were more likely to report having been excluded from school than the UK average; and short term school exclusions are rising. This is potentially of concern, in addition to the small but significant minority of young people who did admit to quite severe levels of antisocial and risky behaviour.

- **Health Related Personal Behaviour and Lifestyles**

It is difficult to assess change in health behaviour due to the changes in the way information was collected after the 1997 Welsh Health Survey; but there is undoubtedly still a major need to empower and support individuals and communities in improving diet, increasing physical activity and reducing the use of addictive substances, in particular tobacco and alcohol; as well as promoting positive mental health. Much of this activity has been funded through fixed term project grants and partnership discussions have taken place to sustain these projects beyond their current funding arrangements.

The most recent Welsh Health Survey shows that in Blaenau Gwent all of the recorded health related behaviours are worse in Blaenau Gwent than the Wales average

Health Related Behaviour	Blaenau Gwent	Wales Average
Adults aged over 16 that smoke tobacco	31%	27%
Adults that eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables daily	35%	40%
Adults that are overweight or obese	58%	54%
Adults that meet the current physical activity guidelines	27.5%	29%

Smoking, poor diet and obesity rates are significantly higher than the Wales average (which is far too high), while physical activity is close to the Welsh average; but still far too low. These statistics make a major contribution to our high levels of respiratory and circulatory disease, diabetes, lung cancer; and also contribute to poor mental health and musculoskeletal disorders.

Supporting and encouraging healthier lifestyles in children and younger adults is crucial to reducing the burden of ill health in future generations.

- **Alcohol Misuse**

Significant new information has become available on this topic. Alcohol in moderation is undoubtedly beneficial (although not essential) for both mental and physical health. However, nationwide, the effects of alcohol misuse on health, the economy and social fabric are increasingly being recognised.

Alcohol related deaths and hospital admissions are increasing steadily and rapidly, and the incidence of severe organ damage and failure related to a high alcohol intake is increasing in young adults. The highest death rates are in the 50 to 54 age group, and many of these people will have required prolonged periods of health and social care prior to death. Blaenau Gwent also has the highest rates of hospital admission for alcohol related conditions in Wales, with particularly high rates for women.

We know from the Welsh Health Survey that the Blaenau Gwent adult population has a high rate of excess alcohol consumption. Nearly half of a random sample of adults in the County Borough drank alcohol in excess of the recommended safe limits for consumption, and over one fifth of the sample fulfilled the criteria for binge drinking in the previous week. The 'Communities that Care' survey suggests that the secondary school age group in the County Borough also have a higher rate of alcohol consumption and binge drinking than their peers across the UK; and perhaps more worryingly, that their parents are less likely to be concerned about this than parents generally in the UK.

- **Substance Misuse**

Information on this is still not good, as the most reliable figures relate to people who seek help from agencies, which only captures a (unknown) proportion of the substance misusing population. Local police regard alcohol as a much greater cause of crime and disorder in the County Borough than illegal drugs. Hospital admission rates from drug related causes are one of the highest in Wales, but this covers accidental and deliberate poisoning, and all types of drugs whether purchased legitimately, prescribed by a doctor, or illegal.

- **Sexual Health**

Nationally, sexually transmitted infections are still increasing, including HIV. Conceptions in girls aged 16 to 17 appear to be decreasing, but not in girls under 16.

- **Dental Health**

Poor dental health is still a major issue for all age groups, and in some groups appears to be deteriorating rather than improving. This is largely preventable, and caused by poor diet and oral hygiene. However, the first year of the new dental contract in Blaenau Gwent has resulted in apparent overcapacity for dental treatment in the County Borough. This is difficult to interpret, as some treatment may be cheaper if purchased privately rather than as an NHS service. However, we certainly do not have the problems of other areas in Wales, where there is a shortage of dentists and opportunities for dental treatment.

The Socio-Economic Environment

- **Poverty and Health Related Economic Inactivity**

Poverty is also a major issue for many people, and employment is seen as the best and most sustainable route out of poverty for most families. Average incomes are much closer to the Welsh average than a few years ago, but are still well below it.

Economic activity in general has improved since the previous Needs Assessment. The proportion of working age adults claiming Job Seekers Allowance has increased very slightly to 4.6%, but Incapacity Benefit claim and total Welfare Benefit claim percentages have continued to fall slowly to 17% and 29% respectively. There is a proven link between employment and better health, not only for financial and physical benefits, but also from more subtle mental benefits conferred by being economically active. Recent research has found the health effects of worklessness to be comparable in severity to those from heavy smoking.

Mental health issues and musculoskeletal conditions are the most common reason for individuals to go onto Incapacity Benefits, and are frequently only of mild to moderate severity. We need greater awareness of the potential adverse effects of 'sick notes', to the same level that people are aware of the potentially adverse effects of drugs or surgical interventions.

We currently have just under 2000 people claiming Job Seekers Allowance in the County Borough (ie people registered as actively looking for work). However, there are just over 7000 people claiming Incapacity Benefit (ie classified as unable to continue work through ill health), and although they may be unable to continue with their previous occupation, many of them would be able to (and want to) return to employment, given the right skills and opportunities. We still do not have easy access to occupational and workplace health support within Blaenau Gwent, particularly for very small businesses or the voluntary sector.

Lack of appropriate qualifications is now generally agreed to be a bigger factor in worklessness than poor health throughout the 'heads of the valleys' region, but nevertheless many people who are economically inactive (and quite a lot who are in or seeking work) do have significant health problems. The current NHS drive to reduce waiting times for treatment will eventually benefit some of these people, and may help to prevent others from dropping out of the workforce unnecessarily.

- **Community Safety**

Fear of crime still bears little resemblance to actual crime, although it appears to have decreased slightly nationally. Assault, most commonly connected with alcohol use, and between young men who know each other, remains a major issue.

The Built Environment

Adequate housing for vulnerable individuals is still an issue, although major improvements have been made since 2003, particularly in supporting people in tenancies.

A much higher proportion of the housing stock is Local Authority owned than in most areas of Wales, and although it is generally not in bad condition currently, it does not meet Welsh Housing Quality Standards, and will continue not to meet these standards without significant investment over the next few years.

Private housing has increased dramatically in price over the last three years, and numbers of new builds have also increased substantially.

Transport links have improved over the last few years in some areas of the County Borough; but there is significant room for improvement, particularly in provision for active travel opportunities and safe routes to schools.

New planning guidance and a revision of the Local Development (Unitary) Plan will present better opportunities to 'design in' health gain (and 'design out' negative health impact) in future developments.

The Natural Environment

There is growing appreciation of the mental and physical health benefits of the natural environment; and at present we have a rich resource locally. It will be important to ensure we preserve this alongside essential developments for housing and economic growth.

Health Status

- **The health of young women and babies**

The health of young women is increasingly at risk through excessive (and in some cases increasing) use of alcohol and tobacco, poor diet and low levels of physical activity. The effects of this are starting to be seen in death rates from conditions such as lung cancer, with a downwards trend for men, but an upwards trend for women.

This is of particular concern in Blaenau Gwent, as women traditionally have their children at a much younger age than in some other communities in Wales, therefore high rates of unhealthy behaviour in young women here puts the next generation at considerable risk. This is reflected in the continuing high prevalence of low birth weight babies in the County Borough. Low birth weight in babies has significant health implications for those children both as children and in later life as adults. Breast feeding is an important protective factor against poor health, for both mothers and babies, and also for those babies as adults. Women in Blaenau Gwent are less likely to breast feed babies, and feed for shorter periods than the Welsh average. Given adequate support, very few women are genuinely unable to breastfeed. Reversing these trends will not be achieved by preaching at young women (although improving health literacy is probably needed), but needs to be linked with promoting general mental health.

- **Cardiovascular disease and diabetes**

Both of these illnesses are still highly prevalent in the County Borough, but death rates are continuing to fall. The challenge now is to reduce the incidence and severity of these conditions. Increasing use of medication such as statins will help with this, but such methods (although initially easier) are far less cost effective and sustainable than lifestyle modifications such as stopping smoking, increasing levels of physical activity and improving diet. Lifestyle modification reduces the prevalence of a number of other common diseases such as cancers and musculoskeletal problems in addition to cardiovascular disease and diabetes; and does not require ongoing cost to the NHS or disruption of an individual's lifestyle to attend clinics, remember to collect and take medication or perform regular testing.

- **Cancer**

Incidence rates (new cases) in the County Borough are still broadly similar to the Wales average, although death rates appear to be slightly higher. This requires further investigation.

Lung cancer rates are slightly higher than the all Wales picture, but show a gender difference, with rates decreasing in men and increasing in women. This reflects the high smoking rates in Blaenau Gwent, and the changing patterns of smoking behaviour; where smoking is decreasing in men, but increasing in women.

- **Respiratory disease**

This remains high, and death rates do not appear to be reducing. Rates are significantly higher for men than women in the over 75 age group, but not for people under the age of 75; suggesting that an occupational cause is less likely in younger adults. Interestingly, Blaenau Gwent appears to have a relatively low rate of asthma in adults, which may require further investigation.

- **Musculoskeletal disorders and injuries**

Back pain and arthritis remain very common, and in contrast with other areas of the UK, retain a substantial contribution to health related worklessness. Injury rates nationally have decreased, and mortality rates for injury related to road traffic collisions in Blaenau Gwent are similar to the all Wales average.

- **Disability, impairment and support for daily living**

Huge improvements in both social care and the information about clients have taken place in the last three years. Information is now available on sensory and learning disabilities within the County Borough, but still lacking on physical and multiple disability.

Nationally, around 7% of children are thought to be 'disabled', with a 62% increase since 1975.

- **Carers**

There is a large number of people undertaking unpaid caring responsibilities for family and friends in Blaenau Gwent, many of whom do not recognise themselves as 'carers'. There is thought to be a considerable amount of unmet need in this group, both in terms of personal support and help with their caring role.

- **Future needs**

Advances in care and treatment, decreasing death rates and continued migration of younger adults out of the County Borough will mean:

- increasing numbers and proportion of older people, therefore increasing numbers of very frail people, and people with conditions such as osteoporosis and dementia
- more people surviving, and to an older age, with disability and impairment
- fewer staff available to provide health and social care

Much of the need for health and social care will arise from the largely preventable conditions, such as diabetes and heart disease that currently affect disproportionate numbers of middle aged people.

In order to cope with these demands, there will need to be a shift away from current models of care to a more flexible, multiskilled partnership approach between professionals and clients, their family, friends and employers.

The interpretation of social care trends is difficult – statutory services have undergone considerable change and development over the last few years, with massive improvements in both service delivery and data collection. However, the County Borough still has considerably more clients receiving care packages of all types than the Welsh average. Some of this will be explained by genuinely poorer physical health; but anecdotally there is a strong feeling that some are a result of cultural expectations. Again, this is an issue closely related to mental health status of both individuals and communities.

Equality Impact Assessment

An equality impact assessment has been undertaken on the Healthier Future Strategy to ensure that the proposed priorities will not affect anyone unfavourably. The impact assessment demonstrates how the Partnership will ensure a process of designing an effective Strategy that is legally compliant. Within this impact assessment all equality target groups and equality strands were considered, in order to demonstrate that the Strategy was developed in full recognition of the diverse needs, concerns and circumstances of the people who will be affected by it regardless of age, race, gender, sexuality, language, faith and disability.

Impact assessment will continue to be an evolving process after the Strategy has been developed and regular review will be necessary to ensure no unintended or negative consequences occur. The needs of various equality target groups will be constantly assessed throughout the life of the Strategy and through impact assessing partners' existing and proposed policies and functions, to ensure the elimination of negative impact is maintained.

The Future Model of Services and Care in Blaenau Gwent

The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership, through the implementation of our previous Healthier Future Strategy, and with a clear understanding of local needs, has been building and implementing a model of health, social care and well-being services for Blaenau Gwent. This Strategy explains how the Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will continue to take forward and implement this model over the next three years to respond to local needs.

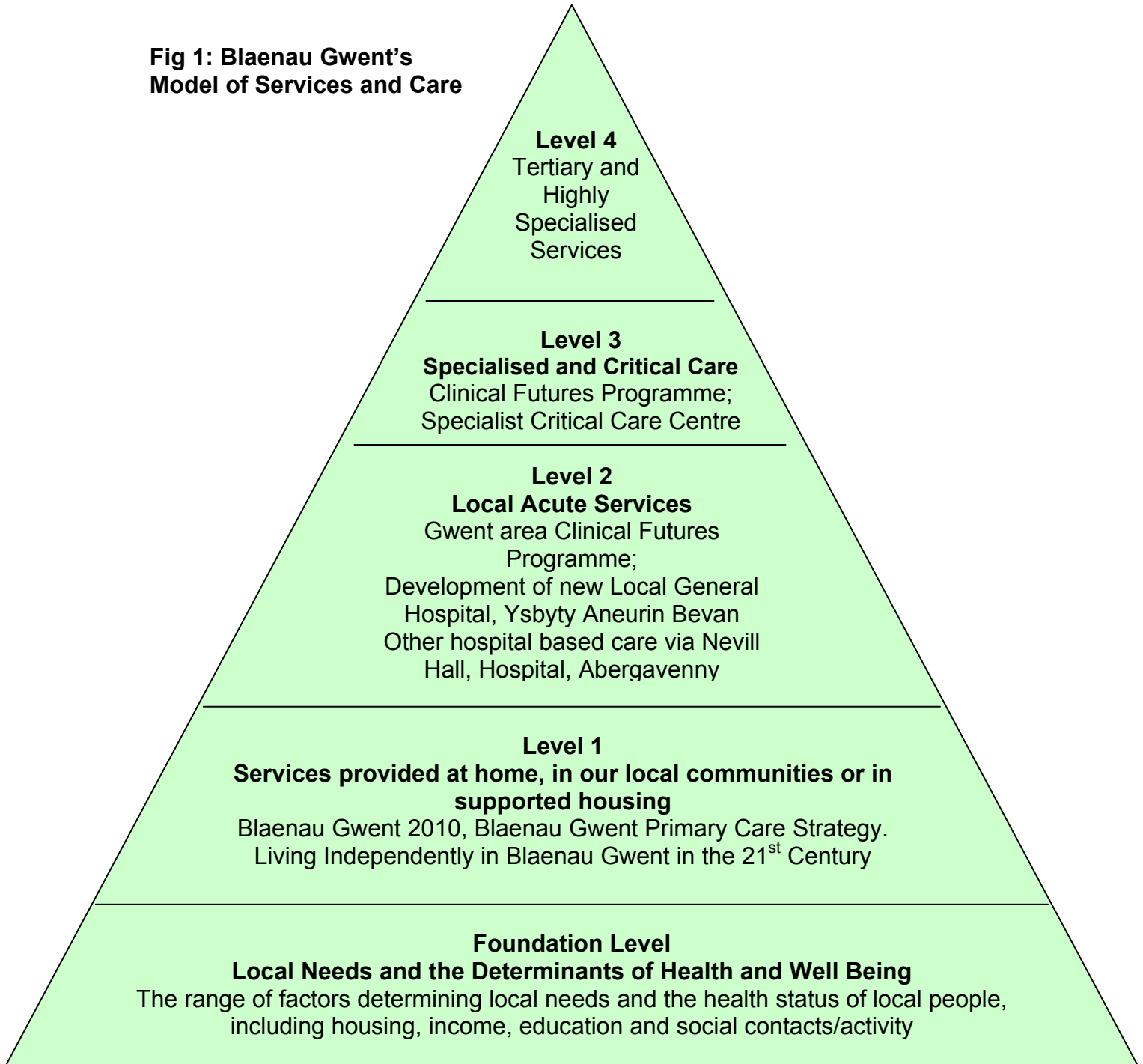
The focus of this second Strategy will be further developing the relationship between health, social care and well-being services in the County Borough to ensure that services become more integrated to provide improvements to better meet the needs of local people.

This Strategy presents a clear statement and framework for the ways in which local partner organisations will work together to respond to the key challenges of delivering health, social care and well-being services and responding to and meeting the shared values we have set for ourselves and also the important national strategic agenda.

The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership is responding to a national tiered model of services and care, which has been adopted locally and guides the ways in which services are developed and delivered. This model expressed below in the pyramid diagram directs how as a partnership we plan and deliver health, social care and well-being services at each of the levels. This locally adopted model of services and care has been developed from the national strategy for the NHS in Wales 'Designed for Life' and the Social Care national strategy 'Fulfilled Lives: Supportive Communities'.

The model also provides the structure for this document, which outlines our existing approaches to improving health, social care and well being in Blaenau Gwent and also our key priorities, which we have set for ourselves as a partnership to further respond to local needs.

Fig 1: Blaenau Gwent's Model of Services and Care



The levels represented within the model of services and care, as expressed in the above diagram, focus on the following aspects of health and social care both at national and local levels.

National and Local Policy Context

The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will make sure that all of our local plans respond to the required policy approaches.

Foundation Level - Local Needs and the Determinants of Health and Well Being: The Partnership will ensure that our local priorities and actions are based on a sound understanding of the needs of local people and that services are evidence based, have proven effectiveness and use best practice.

Level One – Services provided at home, in our local communities or in supported housing: The Partnership will ensure that health, social care and well-being services in Blaenau Gwent are increasingly delivered in integrated ways and delivered where possible as close to where people live. Crucial to the delivery of this commitment in Blaenau Gwent will be a number of local partnership approaches between health services, social services, the voluntary sector and the independent sector. These are Blaenau Gwent 2010 – our Plans for out of hospital care and local health and social care units, the Blaenau Gwent Primary Care Strategy – which plans to further develop the delivery of family health services in the County Borough and Living Independently in Blaenau Gwent in the 21st Century – the social care strategy for the County Borough.

Level Two – Local Acute Services: The Blaenau Gwent Partnership will complement the proposals for integrated community based services with plans to provide local access to hospital based services. Local hospital based services are being developed as part of the Gwent area Clinical Futures Programme. In Blaenau Gwent, a new Local General Hospital – Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan is being developed and will open during the life of this Strategy, in 2010. Other hospital based care will be provided for the people of Blaenau Gwent via Nevill Hall Hospital, Abergavenny and the Royal Gwent Hospital, Newport.

Level Three – Specialised and Critical Care: These services will also be provided as part of the Clinical Futures Programme. It is planned that during the life of this Strategy that further work will be undertaken to develop a Specialist and Critical Care Centre in the Gwent area, which will link closely to the work at Level Two and with required emergency care.

Level Four – Tertiary and Highly Specialised Services: The Partnership will ensure that local people can access, if required, specialised services either within Wales or where necessary elsewhere in the United Kingdom. This will require working with out of area providers for health and social care and key agencies such as Health Commission Wales.

These levels of services outlined in the above model include the full range of services and care that would be required throughout life. Therefore, they include services for children, adults and older people and also deal with services for local people with particular needs such as those with mental health problems, learning disabilities and physical disabilities. It also looks at all factors which can impact on the health, social care and well being of the population of Blaenau Gwent, which might not be directly related to the planning and provision of health, social care and well-being services such as employment issues, education, housing, community regeneration, community safety and transport.

This Strategy also recognises that services for local people can be influenced by decisions which are taken outside of Blaenau Gwent in wider partnerships, eg Clinical Futures, and also that this Strategy can influence the services that are developed for others outside the County Borough. The Blaenau Gwent Partnership recognises that we also need to plan and deliver services in collaboration with others outside Blaenau Gwent, particularly at levels three and four of the model, taking into consideration initiatives such as Regional Commissioning of Services and wider partnerships for the provision of services and care.

Work has been ongoing on a collective basis across the nine LHBs in the South East Wales Region to take forward the development of a Regional Commissioning Support Unit and significant progress has been made in the development of a governance framework. The Regional Commissioning Support Unit will add value to the commissioning process by allowing a regional overview to be undertaken when considering service improvements, reconfigurations and developments.

National and Local Policy Context

Working and Delivering in National and Local Contexts

This Strategy has been developed in the context of existing developments in Blaenau Gwent, the wider Gwent area, regionally in South East Wales and strategies for Wales in general, for instance *People, Places, Futures - The Wales Spatial Plan (2004)* and *Heads of the Valleys Strategic Framework - Heads We Win (2004)*. This Healthier Future Strategy is a clear statement of our partnership commitment to continue to respond to the well developed, understood and connected implementation programme for Blaenau Gwent. The Partnership will ensure that all strategies at national, regional and local levels are interconnected, complementary and add value to the ways in which we work as a partnership to deliver our improved local health, social care and well-being.

The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership is actively responding to our vision and values locally and to do this is using a range of strategic approaches to respond to priorities either determined nationally, regionally or locally. This next section provides an overview of these areas of development and makes a clear statement about the ways in which we are responding or plan to respond in the future.

The National Context

The Welsh Assembly Government over recent years has published a number of key strategy documents, which provide the national framework for our local partnership approaches, priorities and action. This framework provides a clear vision for public services in Wales and sets out the ways in which local partnerships should interpret national policies to ensure the needs of local people are addressed by continuing to improve and develop local public services.

These key strands of national policy are outlined below.

Making the Connections and Local Service Boards

In November 2006, the Welsh Assembly Government published its response to the review of local service delivery, led by Sir Jeremy Beecham - *Making the Connections: Delivering Beyond Boundaries*. The Welsh Assembly Government's response includes a commitment to 'engage with all parts of the public service to establish Local Service Boards (on a local authority basis)' and to 'work with Local Service Boards to develop ... Local Service Agreements on service improvement'.

It is envisioned that Local Service Boards will develop from Local Strategic Partnerships. However, Local Service Boards will have a much stronger remit to agree and deliver joint action and change and further develop local services. The purpose of Local Service Boards is to strengthen local public service leadership so that working together local public service organisations can tackle issues which will improve services for local people. These local discussions will inevitably include consideration of health and social care issues and the wider well being of the population.

A Local Service Board will be the local leadership team, comprising elected, appointed, executive and non-executive members of the statutory authorities, the voluntary and private sectors, and other key stakeholders, working as equal partners and taking joint responsibility for connecting the whole network of public services in the area. The Local Service Board will agree, and ensure delivery of joint actions to achieve this. These actions will be expressed in a Local Service Agreement signed by the partners and the Welsh Assembly Government. This Health, Social Care and Well Being Strategy for Blaenau Gwent will be a key document to inform the discussions and priorities of a Local Service Board for Blaenau Gwent.

Priority for Local Action:

During 2008 a Local Service Board for Blaenau Gwent will be established. During the life of this Strategy and by 2010, a Local Service Agreement will be developed by the LSB to guide partnership activity and deliver against local priorities. The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will ensure that health, social care and well-being issues will be considered by the LSB and feature in the Local Service Agreement (LSA).

Designed for Life

The Welsh Assembly Government has published a modernisation strategy for the NHS in Wales. This all-Wales document, *Designed for Life*, was launched in Tredegar in 2005 and sets out a strategic framework for working towards the establishment of world class health, social care and well-being services in Wales by 2015. The vision aims to develop the role of local communities in creating and sustaining health. The promotion of independence, service user involvement and clinical and professional leadership are of central importance. The Blaenau Gwent response to this Strategy has been to develop a Modernisation Plan for health services in Blaenau Gwent. The Modernisation Plan is continuing to be implemented and local action through this plan is highlighted later in this Strategy.

Fulfilled Lives: Supportive Communities

The objectives for social care in Wales are fully set out in the national strategy *Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities*, launched in February 2007. It states that social services will be rebalanced to allow services to be provided earlier, tailored to individual needs and prevent or delay people moving to a higher level of need. *Fulfilled Lives* highlights the importance of developing services which involve people and which work effectively together to meet their needs locally.

This also reinforces the need to support active and fulfilled lives using appropriate technology and ensuring the protection of those most vulnerable in our communities. This national strategy is being actively responded to in Blaenau Gwent through key social care plans such as 'Living Independently in Blaenau Gwent in the 21st Century'.

The key issues of *Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities* are:

- a need for better assessment and care management to make sure people receive services which give a timely response to their needs
- services need to concentrate more on helping people to keep their independence
- services need to be more reliable, responsive, consistent and of high quality
- local authorities will improve joint working arrangements both within the authority and with other partners

Children and Young People: Nationally, the Welsh Assembly Government has also developed a clear policy framework in relation to needs of children and young people and the services they require. This vision was outlined in *Rights to Action (2004)* and *Stronger Partnerships for Better Outcomes (2006)* and the required establishment of Local Safeguarding Children's Boards and Children and Young People's Partnerships across Wales in response to the *Children Act (2004)*. The Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP) in Blaenau Gwent is currently developing its structure in preparation for the development and delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan. The first phase of development of the plan has been the undertaking of a comprehensive Needs Assessment and service profile. The CYPP has used, as the basis for this work, our local Needs Assessment. Both Needs Assessments have taken into account the requirements of the *National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services in Wales (2004)*.

The Welsh Assembly Government has adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as the basis of all its work for children and young people. This is expressed in seven core aims for all children and young people:

- have a flying start in life
- have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities
- enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation
- have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities
- are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised
- have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional well-being, and
- are not disadvantaged by poverty

The CYPP has identified 6 strategic themes, as overriding principles, for delivering 7 core aims and the priorities emerging from the Needs Assessment.

The strategic themes are:

- Equality of Opportunity
- Healthy and Active Living
- Developing Preventative Services
- Empowerment
- Parenting
- Supporting Vulnerable Groups

The CYPP is mapping needs within Blaenau Gwent against the 7 core aims and strategic themes.

Primary Prevention and Health Promotion: Key to the success of this Strategy and achieving our partnership vision of Blaenau Gwent becoming a healthier place to live and work, will be local people also taking responsibility for their own health and well being as well as the provision of appropriate local services and care. The Blaenau Gwent Partnership will continue to take a lead on these issues and ensure that there is a range of opportunities for local people to actively promote their own health and well being. The Partnership continues to support *Health Challenge Wales* and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council will continue to respond to the Welsh Local Government Association's *Route to Health Improvement (2006)*. Blaenau Gwent's Local Public Health Director leads a local Public Health Team, which is continuing to work on a range of programmes and initiatives to promote good health and reduce health inequalities in Blaenau Gwent. This local activity will also contribute and respond to the soon to be published Welsh Assembly Government's *Public Health Strategic Framework*.

The New Local Strategic Context

The Welsh Assembly Government has also specified that each locality, in order to respond to national policy and locally identified needs and priorities, should only have four statutory plans. This major reduction in the number of plans required at a local level will ensure that we focus on our key priorities, and that our partnership is clear about what has to be done, in identified timescales and with clearly identified responsibilities.

These plans are:

- Community Strategy
- Health, Social Care and Well-being Strategy
- Children and Young Peoples' Plan
- Local Development Plan

Fig 2:
Local Strategic Context



Community Strategy:

There is a duty on each Local Authority in Wales to prepare a Community Strategy in partnership to promote and improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of their areas and to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom.

Blaenau Gwent's Community Strategy - *Proud Past Brighter Future* 2005-2009 provides an overarching local framework. The Community Strategy is informed by, and reflects, the strategic priorities set out in this Health, Social Care and Well-being Strategy, the Children and Young People's Plan and the Local Development Plan. The Blaenau Gwent Community Strategy is being reviewed by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and partners to ensure that the document provides the strategic focus that is required for the future.

The proposal for the development of a Local Service Board through Making the Connections will be considered as part of the development of the local Community Strategy and local partnership structures will be re-developed, where necessary, to actively respond to these new arrangements.

Priority for Local Action:

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, with partners, in reviewing the Community Strategy and partnership arrangements for Blaenau Gwent and the development of a Local Service Board, will ensure that local partnership structures are appropriate to plan and deliver against local health and social care priorities. This will include ensuring that local people play active roles as citizens in these partnership approaches.

Children and Young People's Plan:

The Children and Young People's Partnership is responsible for developing and delivering a Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) for Blaenau Gwent and published in accordance with the Children and Young People's Plan (Wales) Regulations (2007) Regulations. The CYPP is responsible for securing collaboration between the services in order to achieve improved opportunities and outcomes for children and young people, from the ante-natal to the age of 18 years, together with those participating in or receiving youth support services (within the meaning of Section 123 of the Learning and Skills Act) up to the age of 25, and care leavers (up to 21 or 25 if in education or training).

The Children and Young People's Plan will be prepared and published on a three year basis; the first plan will be effective from 1st August 2008 and published by 30th September 2008.

The Children and Young People's Plan will be the defining statement of how services will be delivered to all children and young people in Blaenau Gwent. A number of plans will be replaced by the Children and Young People's Plan and other plans will need to have regard for the Plan.

The Plan must demonstrate appropriate links with the Health, Social Care and Well-Being Strategy. For example, Welsh Assembly Government guidance states that information on the health and social care needs of children and young people must be considered in the context of the CYPP and the Health, Social Care and Well-Being Strategy. The element of the Blaenau Gwent Needs Assessment that relates to the children and young people should constitute the health and social care element of the CYPP needs assessment.

Over time, CYPP planning should become the lead planning mechanism for health, social care and well-being issues for children and young people, and their priorities should be reflected in the Health, Social Care and Well-Being Strategies.

The Plan is being designed to bring about change to the ways in which Blaenau Gwent provides services for children and young people as required by the Children Act 2004. All key agencies are partners in delivering the changes and developments proposed by the Plan. The Plan is also being designed to have a positive affect on Children and Young People in Blaenau Gwent, their families, carers and all staff in the agencies that work with children and young people. The priorities of the plan place renewed emphasis on prevention and early intervention; improved outcomes through integrated service delivery; whole system changes to the way services are planned, commissioned and delivered.

The aim of the Plan in Blaenau Gwent will be to achieve:

- allocation of highest priority to those in greatest need
- a single vision for children and young people across all agencies;
- child and young person centred services;
- services informed by the views of children and young people and their carers; and,
- the removal of artificial boundaries between organisations.

Local Priority for Action:

The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will ensure that issues relating to health, social care and well being are taken forward via the Children and Young People's Plan through the work of the Children and Young People's Partnership. The Plan will be prepared and published on a three yearly basis; the first plan will be effective from 1st August 2008 and published by 30th September 2008.

Local Development Plan

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council in association with local partners is preparing a new Local Development Plan in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This Plan sets out objectives and priorities for the development and use of land in Blaenau Gwent for the period 2006-2021. This new Plan is being developed in partnership with the local community and aims to promote sustainable development.

The Plan will:

- Identify where development for new housing, employment, retail and other uses will be best located;
- Safeguard areas for environmental protection and enhancement;
- Identify areas for environmental protection and enhancement; and,
- Outline future transport proposals.

The Local Development Plan is vital for the delivery of many health and social care developments, such as Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan, the new Local General Hospital for Blaenau Gwent, the Blaenau Gwent Primary Care Strategy and key social care developments as outlined in Living Independently in Blaenau Gwent in the 21st Century through extra care housing schemes and other associated key developments. This plan will also be crucial for ensuring the right facilities and environments are available and developed in Blaenau Gwent to support a range of activities that improve health and well-being for the local population, eg regeneration programmes and leisure facilities.

Local Priority for Action:

The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will ensure that issues relating to health, social care and well being are taken forward via the Local Development Plan.

Linking Plans for Improving Services and Well Being

These four plans provide a framework for all the planning and development activity in Blaenau Gwent to ensure that partners in the locality respond in a co-ordinated and coherent way to key local needs of the population and national and local strategies and plans. These plans are put into action via the tiered model of services and care outlined earlier in this document. The objectives of these plans, especially the Health, Social Care and Well Being Strategy will be to:

- Focus on prevention, self care and maintaining independence
- Re-shape and re-balance services to be sustainable for the future
- Deliver more community focused care and less hospital/institutional based care

- Deliver better integrated services across health and social care and within health services
- Be more effective and efficient

This Strategy, therefore, will enable the Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership to respond to these objectives by:

- Ensuring further integration across public services
- Enabling local people to have increased independence and promote self care, with more people taking responsibility for their own health and that of their families
- Leading commissioning and bringing about changes in the pattern of services which result in improved outcomes for patients and service users
- Taking a lead on behalf of Blaenau Gwent for the improvement of health and well-being for all

Continuing Commitments and Developments in Blaenau Gwent

This Strategy plays an important part in further developing and delivering our locally agreed partnership agenda to modernise local services and facilities, to respond directly to local people's needs and encourage them, where possible, to take responsibility for their own health and well being.

As indicated earlier, key to the agreed partnership way forward in Blaenau Gwent is our proposed responses to national policies. Local plans have been produced to deliver the tiered model of services and care, such as:

- The development of Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan and the linked out of hospital care strategy - Blaenau Gwent 2010,
- The Primary Care Strategy for Blaenau Gwent, with plans to further modernise local primary care services and premises,
- Living Independently in Blaenau Gwent and other social care and community services plans, and also
- Regional activity, such as regional health services commissioning and existing regional networks.

This Strategy also reflects and recognises the wider context of health improvement and well-being in Blaenau Gwent. Partnership activity continues to be taken forward through activity co-ordinated by the Local Authority, through the Regeneration Partnership and Community Safety Partnership, including activity on substance misuse and alcohol misuse services. The wider well-being agenda is also taken forward in partnership across the County Borough much of which is led by the Local Public Health Director and the Local Public Health Team in Blaenau Gwent, but also through a range of other partnership activity through the Leisure and Housing Departments of the County Borough Council and the work of community based organisations, such as Communities First and the Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations.

This Strategy will provide key statements on this already well developed local agenda to signpost to existing agreed implementation programmes and provide a route map for the next three years in relation to health, social care and well-being developments in the County Borough. This strategy provides connected and integrated statements about the range of strategic activity currently being taken forward by partners in the County Borough. It is intended that this will provide a clear foundation for future commissioning of services and make clear to local people the extent and focus of our local strategic activity being taken forward in partnership to respond to local needs.

Health and Social Care Working Together in Blaenau Gwent

In the context of *Making the Connections*, and in order to ensure that the objectives set out in *Designed for Life*, *Fulfilled Lives*, *Supportive Communities* and other major strategies are met, health services and social services commissioning arrangements will continue to be developed, strengthened and become more closely aligned. *Designed for Life* and *Fulfilled Lives*, *Supportive Communities* set out ambitious programmes of transformation and improvement, and see effective commissioning of services as one of the key drivers for delivering the radical transformation of services that will lead to world class services in Wales and especially in Blaenau Gwent.

The objectives of health and social care commissioning are to improve the health, social care and well-being of the population in line with government policies and local Health, Social Care and Well-being Strategies and Children and Young People's Plans. Joint Commissioning provides the opportunity for partners to work together in a collaborative manner, develop ambitious joint commissioning of services and shared provision, and to champion the community-focused model of care and treatment. Effective commissioning will link to and strengthen the impact of other approaches such as unified assessment, care pathways, clinical networks and healthcare standards.

This Healthier Future Strategy will be the over-arching framework for commissioning health improvement and health, social care and well-being services. Partners will work closely, in consultation with users, carers and their representatives to produce detailed commissioning strategies for major service areas – such as older people, learning disabilities, physical and sensory disability, mental health, elective care, emergency care and chronic disease management. This strategy is also concerned with services for children and young people, however although clearly linked to this Strategy, the detailed plans for this client group will be developed and delivered via the Children and Young People's Plan for Blaenau Gwent. The health promotion/illness prevention agenda will be considered across all service areas as an integral element of planning and improvement.

Good progress has already been made in Blaenau Gwent with the joint health and social care agenda. The Local Health Board and Social Services, Leisure and Housing Departments of the Local Authority have co-located in offices in Abertillery. The LHB and Community Services Directorate of the Council have developed a number of joint posts to support and develop joint work. Joint Commissioning Managers have been identified for mental health and children's services. In partnership with the local voluntary sector, and as part of the Building Strong Bridges initiative, a Health and Social Care Facilitator has been appointed and actively works with the voluntary sector in Blaenau Gwent to engage them and ensure that their interests are considered as part of health and social care service development and delivery in the County Borough. The Partnership will continue to work with the voluntary sector facilitated by the Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations.

The aim of working in partnership with the voluntary sector in Blaenau Gwent is to strengthen our local work and better understand the needs of local people. Also, voluntary sector organisations are often best placed to provide services to meet local needs as part of the network of commissioned services locally. The voluntary sector is complex and diverse in its structures, roles and responsibilities and includes a wide range of voluntary groups, volunteers, self-help and advocacy groups, community co-operatives and enterprises, religious organisations and other not for profit organisations benefiting communities and individuals. Over the recent years there has been increased sector input in strategic planning and policy development at a local level.

A range of plans have been or are being developed to take forward the joint commissioning agenda in Blaenau Gwent and many of these are informed and driven by National Service Frameworks in service areas such as Mental Health, Children's Services and Long Term Conditions.

Successful Delivery of a Healthier Blaenau Gwent

By implementing this new model of care and services, the Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will be able to realise its vision of a healthier Blaenau Gwent. The Healthier Future Partnership is clear what success will look like for Blaenau Gwent. The overview below of what success will look like will provide for the Healthier Future Partnership a baseline for identifying a range of key performance indicators to monitor the success of the Strategy.

Children, Young People and Families

The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership working with the Children and Young People's Partnership, Local Safeguarding Children Board, Community Safety Partnership and Regeneration Partnership will:

- tackle the causes and consequences of child poverty
- promote the health of pregnant women and babies
- prevent accidents in the home and on the roads
- protect children from exploitation, abuse and neglect
- promote healthy eating, physical activity and prevent obesity
- promote the mental health and emotional wellbeing of young people
- prevent risky behaviours such as smoking, alcohol misuse and unsafe sex

Child Poverty

What success will look like:

- Fewer teenagers will become pregnant
- Fewer children will live in low income households.

Pregnant Women and Parents

What success will look like:

- Fewer women will smoke during pregnancy
- More mothers will be breastfeeding and weaning appropriately
- More children will be protected from preventable diseases

Children

What success will look like:

- Fewer young children (aged 0-5) will have accidents in the home
- Fewer children will suffer from abuse or neglect
- Fewer children will be overweight or obese

Young People

What success will look like:

- Fewer girls will be smokers and more will be physically active
- Fewer young people will be misuse alcohol or "binge drink"
- Fewer young people will have sexually transmitted infections

Adults and Older People

The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership working with the Regeneration Partnership, Modernisation Board, Out of Hospital Care Group, Older People's Group and NSF for Older People Group will:

- tackle unemployment and levels of economic inactivity due to incapacity
- promote healthier workplaces within the public and private sector
- promote access to preventative services, eg screening and immunisation
- prevent long term conditions by ameliorating risk factors such as obesity and smoking
- prevent falls and life limiting fracture among older people
- promote the mental health and emotional wellbeing of older people

Working Age Adults

What success will look like:

- Fewer adults will be out of work due to a mental health problems or musculoskeletal condition
- More adults will access screening services
- More adults will be physically active and have a healthier diet
- Fewer adults will smoke
- Fewer adults will have a chronic conditions such as respiratory disease, heart disease or diabetes

Older People

What success will look like:

- Fewer older people will be admitted to hospital with a fall related injury or fracture
- Fewer older people will suffer from influenza or pneumococcal disease
- More older people will live independently in their own homes
- Fewer older people will feel lonely or isolated

Communities and Organisations Working Together

The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership working with Communities First Partnerships and organisations in the voluntary and private sector will

- engage local people in identifying and tackling the factors that affect health and wellbeing
- promote neighbourhoods with strong social networks where people can support, trust and rely on each other
- reduce reliance on the motor car and encourage more walking and cycling
- facilitate access to high quality sport, leisure and cultural activities and better access to healthy, affordable food

- prevent accidents and injuries by ensuring safer roads and neighbourhoods

Services and Facilities

The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership working with all local public bodies, voluntary and independent sector organisations and local people will

- Continue to invest in the future health and well-being of the residents of Blaenau Gwent, through reducing the incidence of preventable disease and empowering people to take responsibility for their own health.
- Modernise health and social care services, workforce and facilities, including the delivery of Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan, modernised primary care facilities and residential and supported housing for the population of Blaenau Gwent
- Provide services which focus on maintaining independence. Ensure that all care interventions are based on assessed needs, with outcomes being fully evaluated.
- Ensure that health care and social care services commissioned for the residents of Blaenau Gwent are integrated around the needs of patients and local communities. This will ensure patients receive the right care in the right place at the right time.
- Promote independence and avoidance of unnecessary hospital/care home admissions.
- Ensure timely access to acute, primary, community and intermediate care services.
- Deliver integrated approaches, which focus on promoting health and well-being, whilst managing long term conditions.
- Maintain sustainable services to improve patient outcomes, patient satisfaction and overall performance of health and social care.
- Continue the active involvement of patients and the public, in decisions regarding their own health and well being, future service delivery and development of new facilities.

Foundation Level: Local Needs and the Determinants of Health and Well Being

Blaenau Gwent Well Being Alliance and the primary prevention of avoidable illness and disease and promotion of positive health and wellbeing

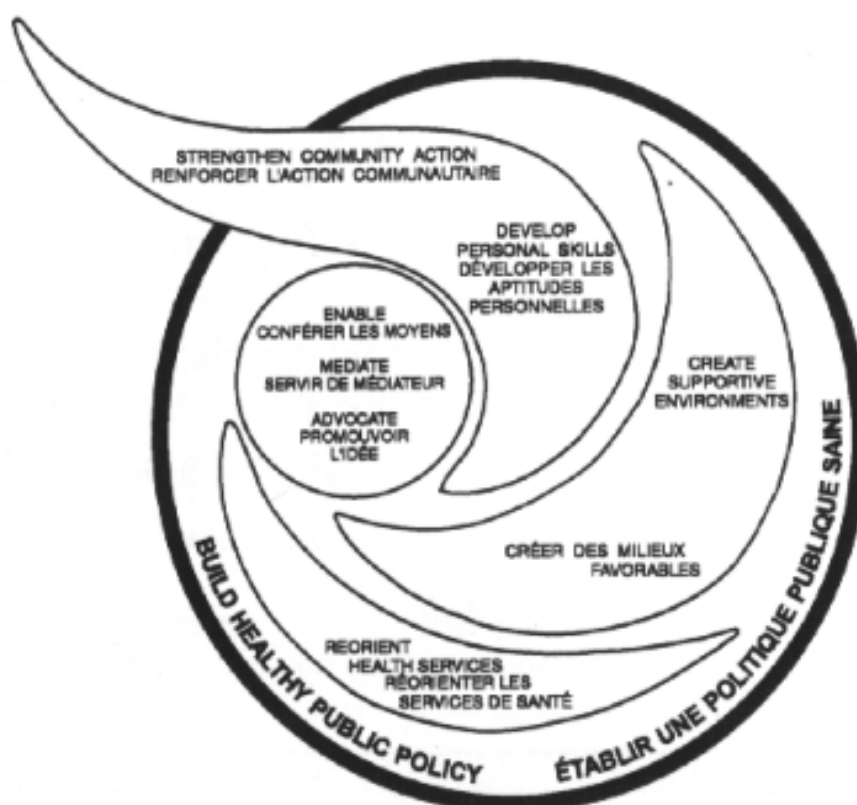
The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will establish a Well Being Alliance led by Blaenau Gwent's Local Public Health Director. The Well Being Alliance will focus on the wider determinants of health, the primary prevention and health promotion agenda. It will bring together a range of representatives from health, local government, the voluntary sector and a range of other interests in Blaenau Gwent, which will link to the socio-economic agenda and the wider social model of health and well being. The Alliance will provide a key focus for the wider well being agenda in the County Borough, whilst also linking via the Local Public Health Director to the Healthier Future Partnership Board. The Well Being Alliance will also be an important mechanism to take forward the Public Health Strategic Framework for Wales.

The work of the Alliance will be based upon wider health issues. Health as a concept is often seen as being synonymous with illness and disease. Primary prevention and health promotion focuses on health as a positive concept which includes social and personal resources as well as physical capabilities.

The World Health Organisation (1984) through the Ottawa Charter has set out the framework for Health Promotion that includes:

- Building healthy public policy
- Creating supportive environments
- Strengthening community action
- Developing personal skills
- Reorienting services (including health services)

Fig 3:
Ottawa
Charter
on Health
Promotion
(1986)
Cited in Tones
& Tilford (2001)



Local work by the Alliance within this framework will require strong advocacy for health promotion to ensure that local and national political, economic, social, cultural, environmental and behavioural conditions are favourable.

Health promotion approaches will attempt to create greater equity by enabling all people in Blaenau Gwent to achieve their fullest health potential. This includes a secure foundation in a supportive environment, access to information, life skills and opportunities for making healthy choices. Health improvement cannot be ensured by the health sector alone and requires coordinated action by all partners.

Factors affecting Health and Wellbeing

‘Healthier Future 2’ recognises that inequalities in health and wellbeing are largely socially determined and are governed by a complex interplay between personal choices and the individual’s social, physical, political, economic and cultural environment, depicted as “layers of influence” in Dahlgren and Whitehead’s diagram below.

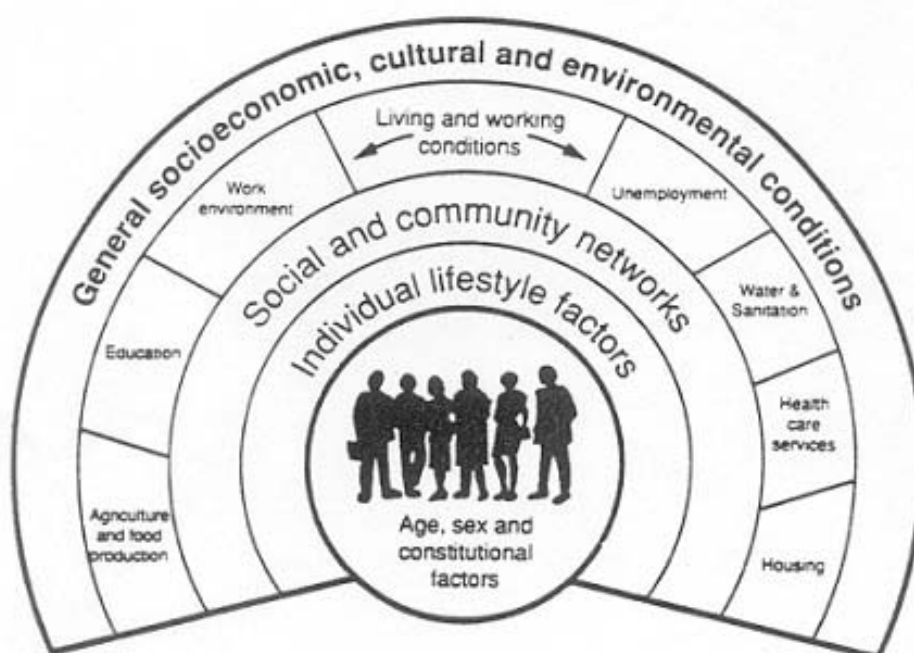


Fig 4:
Health Determinants Model
 Source: Dahlgren and Whitehead (1991)

In view of this, strategies designed to promote health and wellbeing need to recognise the relationship between our living and working conditions, how we think, how we feel and how we act.

Health behaviour such as smoking, diet, physical activity, drug and alcohol misuse, sexual activity and personal safety can have a direct impact of health and wellbeing. The way we chose to live our life is shaped to a large extent by personal values and beliefs. However, individuals do not exist in a vacuum:

they interact with friends, relatives and their immediate community and are therefore influenced by social and cultural norms.

Mutual support within a community can sustain the health of its members in otherwise unfavourable circumstances. The level of social capital in a community is thought to be linked to social networks, community participation, civic and political involvement, trust in people and institutions, and the extent to which local people cooperate with each other. In other words, social capital represents the levels of 'community spirit' within a locality, which has a significant impact on the levels of mental health and emotional wellbeing within the population.

An individual's perception of the area in which they live is also an important issue in relation to wellbeing. A positive view of the local area usually correlates well with how happy, safe and secure people feel within their environment. Beyond the neighbourhood level a person's ability to maintain a good level of health is affected by other settings such as schools and workplace, as well as access to essential goods and services. Local social, economic and environment policies also have a health impact particularly in areas such as education, transport, housing and natural environment.

Local priorities for action will be shaped by the Blaenau Gwent Needs Assessment. The Wellbeing Alliance will lead on tackling wider health determinants such as unemployment, low income, poor housing, transport and access to services. This will involve engagement with communities and support for the development of social capital through the Communities First initiative. The Alliance will help to improve levels of health literacy, thereby enabling people to make informed decisions, particularly those with (or at high risk of developing) long-term health conditions. It will promote mental health and emotional wellbeing across a range of settings, such as schools) and protect those who are risk of developing mental health problems. Finally the Alliance will critically examine the underlying causes of obesity and develop programmes to promote healthy eating and regular physical activity.

There are a number of local strategic plans as outlined earlier that will have a direct influence on health and wellbeing within Blaenau Gwent:

- Local Development Plan
- Regeneration Strategy
- Clinical Futures / Blaenau Gwent 2010
- Single Plan for Children and Young People
- Community Safety Strategy
- Older People's Strategy
- Living Independently in Blaenau Gwent in the 21st Century

The Children and Young People's Plan is particularly important in ensuring that children are kept safe and have the best start in life, through a range of high quality early years initiatives, positive learning experiences and the alleviation of child poverty.

Worklessness is now considered to have a significant impact on health and wellbeing. The Wellbeing Alliance will help to strengthen links between health and regeneration sectors to tackle issues relating to work and health. This will include support for the development of rehabilitation and reablement scheme, such as the Condition Management Programme and Welsh Backs, to help people that are unable to work due to incapacity.

Blaenau Gwent has an ageing population and there are a number of health issues that affect older people. Older people are often at risk of injuries in the home and may experience falls that lead to life limiting fractures. Creating opportunities for older people to be active helps to maintain strength and balance which is important to prevent falls, maintain independence and prevent social isolation. Healthy eating, weight bearing exercise and smoking cessation can help to maintain bone density and prevent osteoporosis, particularly among older women. This will also help to prevent stroke and long terms conditions such as diabetes or heart disease.

Mental health and emotional wellbeing are important issues for older people that are isolated. Free bus travel, community transport and housing schemes are important to help older people maintain their independence and social networks. Age Concern through the Ageing Well Programme, are among a number of important voluntary organisations that provide counselling and support for older people in Blaenau Gwent. These organisations can work together with carers, health and social care professionals to promote the wellbeing of older people, including support for the Keep Well This Winter campaign and immunisation for influenza and pneumococcal disease.

Local partners have key roles to play in improving health and wellbeing. The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGGA) described key approaches in *The Route to Health Improvement*, which offers a clear response to this challenge, especially for Local Authorities, as this document demonstrates how health improvement can be achieved by core services such as leisure, education, housing, regeneration and community development.

The voluntary and independent sectors make an enormous contribution to health and wellbeing. The *National Strategic Framework for Community Development in Wales* outlines how local people can engage and enact change within their local community to ensure a genuinely 'citizen-centred' approach in tackling social, economic and environment health determinants. This will result a greater focus a community development approaches to health improvement and tackling inequalities through programmes such as *Communities First*.

Local Priority for Action:

The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will establish during 2008 a Well Being Alliance led by Blaenau Gwent's Local Public Health Director. This will guide the County Borough's response to the Public Health Strategic Framework for Wales.

Level 1: Services provided at home, in our local communities or in supported housing

Locally Agreed Strategies and Plans

A range of plans have been or are being developed locally to take forward the national and local agenda and the commitment given by the Healthier Future Partnership to further develop our joint commissioning agenda in Blaenau Gwent to better meet the needs of local people. Key to this commitment are agreed approaches through the following partnership strategies, plans and activities.

National Service Frameworks (NSFs)

National Service Frameworks provide a systematic approach to tackle the agenda of improving standards and quality across and within services. NSFs are implemented in partnership between health and social care and other organisations.

NSFs:

- set national standards and define service models for a service or care group;
- put in place programmes to support implementation;
- establish performance measures against which progress within agreed targets

NSF for Children, Young People and Maternity Services

The National Service Framework (NSF) for Children, Young People and Maternity Services, launched in 2005 is a key strategic driver for developing health, social care and well-being services for Children, Young People and their families in Blaenau Gwent.

This NSF is being progressed through the Children and Young People's Framework Partnership. A local Action Plan has been developed for the priority actions for 2007 to 2009.

The priority actions within Core Aim 3 of the Children and Young People's Plan that have been agreed by the Partnership are:

- to promote the mental, emotional, physical wellbeing of children and young people and prevent risk behaviours
- to protect vulnerable children and young people, especially those at high risk or with complex needs

The consultation draft of the Children and Young People's Plan has highlighted the following areas of work to achieve these priorities:

- Improving the physical health of children and young people of all ages by promoting healthy lifestyles, particularly in relation to healthy eating and physical activity.
- Improving the mental health and emotional wellbeing of children and young people through life skills training/emotional literacy programmes, anti-bullying strategies and accessible counselling services and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- Improving outcomes for children and young people with autistic spectrum disorder including early diagnosis, better co-ordination between agencies and increased social opportunities.
- Improve health outcomes for children and young people with chronic disease and physical, sensory or learning disabilities.
- Ensure vulnerable groups, such children with disabilities and looked after children have support and access to services that will enable them to fulfil their potential; and thus ensure partners agencies are fulfilling their duties under the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, Adoption and Children Act 2002, Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000.
- All agencies and organisations in Blaenau Gwent will have respect for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child supported by the young people's entitlements relating to core aim 3 which are:
 - *Personal support and advice, where and when needed and in appropriate formats, with clear ground rules on confidentiality*
 - *Advice on health, housing benefits and other issues provided in accessible and welcome settings*

There are two additional actions that are to be taken forward on a multi-agency, and possibly Gwent wide basis. These are:

- The Integrated Equipment Store
- Transition Arrangements

Local Priority for Action:

During the life of this Strategy the Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will continue to implement the NSF for Children, Young People and Maternity Services via the Integrated Children and Young People's Plan led by the Children and Young People's Partnership.

NSF for Older People

The National Service Framework (NSF) for Older People was published in 2006 and is the key strategic driver for developing health, social care and well-being services for Older People in Blaenau Gwent.

An NSF Implementation Plan has been developed for Blaenau Gwent. For each of the agreed actions there is a designated lead person in the local partnership. From June 2007 the partnership has been required to complete a Self Assessment Audit Tool (SAAT). The SAAT has been devised by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG), and the partnership in Blaenau Gwent reports quarterly on progress towards meeting the objectives in the NSF.

Key objectives being progressed for 2007/08 include:

- The implementation of the Integrated Community Equipment Service
- Development and implementation of Integrated Care Pathways for primary prevention and rehabilitation of stroke, management of incontinence in nursing homes, wound management in nursing homes, and falls
- Developing specialist palliative care or end of life care for all people

Local Priority for Action:

During the life of this Strategy the Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will continue to implement the NSF for Older People via the implementation of Clinical Futures Programme, BG2010 Strategy and Living Independently in Blaenau Gwent in the 21st Century.

NSF for Mental Health

The Assembly Government's original NSF for adult mental health services was published in 2002. *Adult Mental Health Services – A National Service Framework for Wales* was developed following publication of the *Adult Mental Health Services for Wales* Strategy document. The standards are consistent with guidance from the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) and will be delivered through clinical governance mechanisms and monitored by the Commission for Health Improvement and the Performance Management Framework for NHS Wales.

“Raising the Standard: The Revised National Service Framework for Adult Mental Health Services in Wales” was published on World Mental Health Day in October 2005. This replaces the Assembly Government's original NSF for adult mental health services published in 2002.

The revised NSF aims to “set standards for services in Wales, drive up quality and reduce unacceptable variations in health and social services provision”. The document also reflects the key priorities of *Designed for Life*.

The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership recognises that mental health is central to the process of improving the health and well being of the local population. The provision of care for people with mental health problems is a key priority for the health and social care systems across Blaenau Gwent.

Blaenau Gwent’s Joint Adult Mental Health Commissioning Strategy is an agreed way forward for our local partnership to deliver a shared vision for local mental health services, which are modern, community based, based on recovery and social inclusion and which directly responds to local needs.

A significant amount of work has already been undertaken in the County Borough as part of the development of Healthier Future and Blaenau Gwent’s Wanless Local Action Plan. These two documents provide a foundation from which the Commissioning Strategy for adult mental health services in Blaenau Gwent (2007-2010) has been developed.

Key priorities for the implementation of the Mental Health NSF in Blaenau Gwent include:

- Development of a Mental Health Accommodation Strategy
- Development of a Service User and Carer Involvement Strategy
- Development of a First Access Team, to include functions for a Primary Care Gateway Worker role
- Work to ensure that Blaenau Gwent is prepared for the Mental Health Act 2007, which will be enacted in October 2008
- Commissioning Independent Mental Health Advocates in readiness for enforcement of the Mental Health Act 2007
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) are also anticipated to come into legislative force in October 2008.
- Review of Primary Care Counselling Services – the first stage has been agreed, with centralisation of referrals with allocation of sessions being given to first available Counsellor; this will reduce inequity across the County Borough as well as reduce waiting times.
- A service specification is currently being developed for the community mental health team and Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan.
- A Blaenau Gwent Mental Health Promotion Strategy will be approved and implemented linked to the Well Being Alliance led by the Local Public Health Director.

Local Priority for Action:

During the life of this Strategy the Blaenau Gwent Partnership will continue to implement a Blaenau Gwent Action Plan to respond to the needs of local people through the NSF for Mental Health.

Learning Disabilities

In Blaenau Gwent, the Learning Disability Commissioning and Planning Group is currently working in partnership to develop a Joint Commissioning Strategy for Learning Disabilities. This Strategy will identify best practice and gaps in service with a focus on those people with Learning Disabilities being able to access all services, whether for leisure, health or social care in an equitable and non-discriminatory manner.

Services will need to be accessible, equitable and appropriate to meet the complex needs of those with a learning disability. The Joint Commissioning Strategy will also take into account and consider the needs of carers.

Local Priority for Action:

During the life of this Strategy the Blaenau Gwent Partnership will agree a Joint Commissioning Strategy for Learning Disabilities by April 2008; develop an Action Plan by April 2008 and implement actions in Partnership.

Substance Misuse

In Blaenau Gwent, the Substance Misuse Action Team is currently being re-structured to ensure that reporting and decision making is undertaken in partnership with all stakeholders, under the umbrella of Blaenau Gwent's Community Safety Partnership.

A Joint Commissioning Strategy will be developed, together with an Action Plan for implementation, to identify gaps in services, in order to support individuals experiencing alcohol and substance misuse. The Joint Commissioning Strategy will also take into consideration actions to be implemented with regard to prevention and rehabilitation.

Local Priority for Action:

During the life of this Strategy the Blaenau Gwent Partnership will:

- ***develop a Joint Commissioning Strategy and Action Plan by April 2008***
- ***implement the actions in partnership***
- ***improve services for those wanting help with drug misuse and reduce the incidence of and potential for binge drinking***
- ***disseminate information on prevention to school aged children***

Modernisation Plan

The Blaenau Gwent Modernisation Plan is reviewed and renewed annually. It has been developed within the strategic context of Designed for Life and the Healthier Future Strategy, and builds on our partnership agenda to modernise and improve local health services.

The focus of work which commenced in 2006/07 will continue through the life of this Strategy and includes the integrating and mainstreaming of the intermediate care developments, managing long-term conditions and maintaining health and well-being. The Modernisation Plan also encompasses the NHS Annual Operating Framework targets.

The implementation of the Modernisation Plan involves close collaboration with all partners, including service users and the independent and voluntary sectors. There are two issues central to the modernisation agenda, which commenced in 2004/05 and will continue to be a priority. These are the development of Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan and the development of out of hospital care in Blaenau Gwent, through Blaenau Gwent 2010.

Local Priority for Action:

The Healthier Future Partnership will implement on an annual basis the locally agreed Modernisation Plan for Blaenau Gwent during the life of this Strategy to ensure that local services continue to be improved and modernised. This Plan is a key implementation mechanism for a range of plans in Blaenau Gwent e.g. Clinical Futures Programme and BG2010 Strategy

Blaenau Gwent 2010 (BG2010) - A Better Future for Health and Social Care

In conjunction with the development Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan, the LHB, Local Authority and Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust are developing the future model of out of hospital care through implementation of the Blaenau Gwent 2010 Strategy. The Strategy was adopted during 2006 and was formally launched in February 2007.

BG2010 complements the Clinical Futures Model of Care as it relates to Out of Hospital Care as well as hospital based care and the development of Health and Social Care Units in Tredegar and Blaina. BG2010 includes all primary and community services, wherever these are delivered, and includes care in patient's homes or care homes. Additionally, the model includes Intermediate Care services, in a similar way this includes care delivered in a patient's home, care home or in a dedicated inpatient intermediate care facility.

All these services will be developed according to the agreed model of services and care with a clear understanding of local needs and in partnership with local people and community interests. These developments will operationalise the model, the implementation of the Blaenau Gwent Long Term Conditions Strategy and the Primary Care Strategy.

Local Priority for Action:

The LHB, Local Authority and Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust along with other local partners will continue to implement BG2010 the local strategy for Out of Hospital Care, which will incorporate the development of health and social care units, linked to the social care Strategy - Living Independently in Blaenau Gwent in the 21st Century.

Primary Care Estates Strategy

A long-term Strategy was approved in 2005 for the further development and improvement of primary care services (services provided by GPs, dentists, pharmacists and opticians) and facilities in Blaenau Gwent, which will support and contribute to the wider integration of local services and ensure the delivery of high quality services. The Strategy identifies the property and premises needs for primary care over the next decade.

The Primary Care Estates Strategy proposed that the County Borough would be best served through four separate networks, each with a Primary Care Resource Centre supported by a range of satellite facilities. It is proposed that these networks are:

- Tredegar
- Cwm/Waunlwyd/Ebbw Vale/Beaufort
- Brynmawr/Nantyglo/Blaina
- Abertillery/Aberbeeg/Llanhilleth/Trinant

The exact location of the Primary Care Resource Centres will be dependent upon a number of factors, such as availability of suitable sites within Blaenau Gwent and links to other development Strategies such as Clinical Futures and BG2010. This will include exploring the opportunities provided by the development of the existing Blaina and Tredegar Hospitals into Health and Social Care Units.

The exact content of the proposed Primary Care Resource Centres will be based upon the following:

- Bases for GPs, either as one practice or grouping of several practices
- Providing a complete range of Essential and Enhanced Services (nGMS Contract). *Enhanced services are those services which are not provided through essential or additional services, or those essential and additional services which are delivered to a higher specified standard. These might include more specialised services undertaken by GPs or nurses with special interests and allied health professionals and other services at the primary-secondary care interface. They may also include services addressing specific local health needs or requirements, and innovative services that are being piloted and evaluated.*
- Co-location with other Primary Care contractors
 - Dentistry
 - Pharmacy
 - Optometry

It is envisaged that spokes will provide a more limited range of services, mostly those defined as essential services under the GMS contract. These could include:

- Nurse-led Management of Long Term Conditions
- Minor Illness Triage by Nurse Practitioners/Physician Assistants
- Some surgery sessions by General Practitioners

The Primary Care Strategy is one component of the overall vision of the Health, Social Care and Well-being Strategy and will enable the achievement of the aims and objectives set out in a range of Welsh Assembly Government policies for improving primary care services and facilities.

Local Priority for Action:

The LHB during the life of this Strategy will along with other local partners continue to implement the Blaenau Gwent Primary Care Strategy linked to the other key Strategies such as BG2010 and the development of Health and Social Care Units in Blaina and Tredegar. During the life of this Strategy a wider Primary Care Strategy will also be developed to focus on workforce issues, including recruitment and retention, and training and development.

Design to Improve the Health and Management of Chronic Conditions in Wales

Management of chronic conditions is a necessary and key part of achieving a more sustainable, effective and efficient health and social care services in Wales. This builds on Wanless and Beecham Reports. Developments are under way in Blaenau Gwent to develop a Chronic Conditions Programme, embracing developments to date.

Long Term Conditions Strategy

The LHB in 2006 agreed a Strategy for Long Term Conditions in Blaenau Gwent. Long Term Conditions are defined as conditions where a cure is not as yet possible e.g. diabetes, coronary heart disease and asthma. These conditions can also be called chronic disease, life long disease or long term disease. Living with a long term condition has a significant impact on a person's quality of life and on their family.

Long Term Condition Management is an approach to care that involves supporting people to maintain independence and keep as well as possible, through early detection and effective management to prevent deterioration, reduce the risk of complications, prevent associated illnesses and enable people living with Long Term Conditions to have the best possible quality of life.

It is recognised that improving the management of people with Long Term Conditions is a major element of improving the health of the local population. This is a key priority for health and social care systems in Blaenau Gwent and is clearly linked to the Partnership's work on implementing National Service frameworks as outlined earlier. This strategy has been developed in full collaboration with health and social care professionals involved in providing care to the people of Blaenau Gwent.

Local Priority for Action:

The LHB along with other local partners during the life of this Strategy will continue to implement the Blaenau Gwent Long Term Conditions Strategy.

NSF for Diabetes

The NSF is a ten year plan, from 2003 to 2013. Published in 2003, the National Service Framework (NSF) for Diabetes is the Welsh Assembly's ten year plan to improve diabetes services. The Blaenau Gwent Partnership via the LHB continues to focus on improving diabetes services in Blaenau Gwent.

The key locally agreed priorities are:

- To perform an annual review for everyone with diabetes, to detect complications of diabetes, such as heart disease and kidney problems
- To provide education and self-management training for all people with diabetes
- To enable people to manage their own diabetes through initiatives such as the X Pert Programme.
- To provide access for young people with diabetes to psychological support, to help them cope with living with the condition
- To provide ongoing diabetes education for healthcare professionals, so that everyone who treats people with diabetes understands diabetes.

Significant steps in implementing the NSF for diabetes include:

- delivery of the Diabetes X-Pert programme in Ebbw Vale and Brynmawr
- an effective primary care external quality control scheme for the performance of blood glucose monitoring
- delivery of talks on diabetes to a high risk exercise group
- updating of diabetic and cardiobetic templates for clinics
- progress on the Blaen-y-Cwm Group GP Practice case management project. This is a two tier project which has a primary prevention approach in addition to case management of complex diabetes. This demonstrates a partnership approach to management of diabetes in primary care, involving a lead GP, practice nurses, community nurses and partners from secondary care.
- The Diabetes integrated pathway work will continue and will focus upon the housebound and the care home sectors.

Local Priority for Action:

During the life of this Strategy the Blaenau Gwent Partnership will continue to implement a Blaenau Gwent Action Plan to respond to the needs of local people through the NSF for Diabetes.

NSF for Coronary Heart Disease

The Wales National Service Framework (NSF) for Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) *Tackling Coronary Heart Disease in Wales: implementing through evidence* was first published by the Welsh Assembly Government in 2001. It has recently been reviewed and new guidelines are awaited.

In response, a review of cardiology services for the people of Blaenau Gwent has taken place and partners will continue to respond to the challenge of improving services for the prevention and treatment of coronary heart disease and arrhythmias, to save lives and improve the quality of life for people in Blaenau Gwent by preventing and treating coronary heart disease and arrhythmias (abnormal heart rhythm).

- Through the Healthier Future Partnership, partners will develop, implement and monitor evidence based programmes to address tobacco use, diet and physical activity within Blaenau Gwent.
- Everyone at high risk of developing CHD and all those who have been diagnosed as having the disease should have access to a comprehensive risk assessment and be offered an appropriate treatment plan.
- Everyone with an acute episode of coronary heart disease should receive high quality evidence based care.
- Everyone with heart failure should be recognised and offered appropriate evidence-based care.
- Everyone with atrial fibrillation should be offered appropriate evidence-based care.

Significant steps have been made in implementing the NSF for Coronary Heart Disease, these include:

- 12 nurses undertaking a Coronary Heart Disease module as part of the partnership between the LHB and the University of Glamorgan.
- The Active Living Project High Risk Exercise Programme will recommence following the training of BACR Instructors directly funded under the Active Living Programme.
- A review is being undertaken of cardiology services for the people of Blaenau Gwent;
- The commencement of the Blaen-y-Cwm Group GP Practice, which encompasses primary prevention strategies for the 50+ age group.
- Updating of the CHD protocol for secondary prevention

Local Priority for Action:

During the life of this Strategy the Blaenau Gwent Partnership will continue to implement a Blaenau Gwent Action Plan to respond to the needs of local people through the NSF for Coronary Heart Disease.

Service Development and Commissioning Directives for Respiratory Conditions

Published in 2007, 'Designed for People with Chronic Conditions: Arthritis and Chronic Respiratory Conditions', is the Welsh Assembly's Service Development and Commissioning Directives for chronic respiratory conditions, which establishes the direction for the remodelling of services for people living with chronic respiratory conditions in Wales.

Chronic respiratory conditions, which include asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and respiratory failure, are the most common chronic conditions in the UK. The Service Development and Commissioning Directives for Chronic respiratory Conditions outline a vision for services in Wales which aim to:

- Maintain respiratory health and well-being in order to reduce illness, disability and premature death
- Ensure early and accurate diagnosis and access to high quality, integrated and patient-centred services for respiratory conditions
- Ensure that people with chronic respiratory conditions are empowered and supported to maximise their independence in all areas of life and are partners in decision-making relating to treatments and services

The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership has identified respiratory disease as one of the key priorities in its Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy for the County Borough. In responding to these priorities, the Partnership has already made significant progress in a range of local initiatives to respond to these identified needs.

Local Priority for Action:

During the life of this Strategy the Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will continue to implement a Blaenau Gwent Action Plan to respond to the needs of local people through the Service Development and Commissioning Directives for Respiratory Conditions.

Service Development and Commissioning Directives for Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Conditions

Published in 2007, 'Designed for People with Chronic Conditions: Arthritis and Chronic Musculoskeletal Conditions', is the Welsh Assembly's Service Development and Commissioning Directives for arthritis and chronic musculoskeletal conditions, which establishes the direction to remodel services for people living with arthritis and chronic musculoskeletal conditions in Wales.

The aims are:

- To achieve and preserve musculoskeletal health and wellbeing in order to prevent bone, joint and soft tissue disorders
- To ensure early assessment and diagnosis of arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions to minimise physical and psychological impact.
- To ensure that all individuals with arthritis and chronic musculoskeletal conditions receive treatment and management that is appropriate, timely and where possible, locally accessible.
- To ensure that people with arthritis and chronic musculoskeletal conditions are partners in their care and are able to better self-manage their condition to maximise independence.

Local Priority for Action:

During the life of this Strategy the Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will continue to implement a Blaenau Gwent action plan to respond to the needs of local people through the Service Development and Commissioning Directives for arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions.

Palliative and End of Life Care

In Blaenau Gwent, community specialist palliative care services are provided by the voluntary sector. The focus of care wherever possible is to ensure that patients and their families are supported at home.

The Blaenau Gwent Palliative Care Development Group will develop a Strategy for Palliative and End of Life Care, which sets out strategic aims and principles as a framework to continue the work already commenced in Blaenau Gwent.

Local Priority for Action:

The LHB will lead along with local partners the development of a Strategy for Palliative and End of Life Care, which will be implemented during the life of Healthier Future 2.

The Social Services Continuous Improvement Plan

This is a rolling plan that underpins the Council's Improvement Plan and sets out key priorities for social care in response to the strategic context of 'Fulfilled Lives Supportive Communities' and the Healthier Future Strategy. It builds on and supports our partnership agenda to modernise and improve local services.

Key priorities include:

- Ensuring effective 'User and Carer Engagement' in service delivery and design
- Further developing and implementing commissioning strategies for 7 client groups:
- Reshaping and reinvesting in modern services to better meet the assessed needs of vulnerable people
- Continually driving forward and improving performance management and quality assurance
- Greater consistency and improved quality in assessment care management
- Robust financial management including managing risk appropriately within financial resources
- Improved Partnership and joint working with key partners
- Ensuring effective workforce development, planning and attendance
- Promoting equality and diversity in Service Delivery

Supporting and Enabling Structures and Strategies include:

Adult Area Protection Committee (AAPC)

The Adult Area Protection Committee (AAPC) leads on arrangements for the protection of vulnerable adults (POVA) joint working will continue between health and social care to ensure vulnerable adults are effectively protected. This service area will continue to evolve where significant needs are highlighted as a priority for the future.

Integrated Children's System (ICS)

The Integrated Children's System (ICS) aims to provide a structured, coherent and holistic approach to working with children and families across agencies, and is one of a range of initiatives established by the Welsh Assembly Government to promote effective interagency working and early provision of services to children. It builds upon the Assessment Framework and the Looked After Children System.

Children's Services Placement Strategy

The Children's Services Placement Strategy has been developed to establish priorities to meet the care needs of those children 'Looked After' by the local authority.

Unified Assessment Process (UAP)

The Unified Assessment Process (UAP) ensures that adults and older people receive appropriate, effective and timely responses to meet their health and social care needs. Unified Assessment means health and social care professionals will work together assessing and managing care and sharing information.

Local plans are well underway to ensure UAP is effectively implemented across all adult and older people service areas and it provides a joint approach for access to services.

Living Independently in Blaenau Gwent in the 21st Century

The 'Living Independently in Blaenau Gwent in the 21st Century' project commenced in June 2005 and sets out to:

- Develop a strategy for meeting the needs of vulnerable older people in the 21st century
- Assess the level of need for vulnerable older people in now and in the future
- Research the range of options available to meet the assessed need
- Consult extensively on the range of options
- Achieve value for money and affordability
- Confirm the future model of service
- Where necessary to reconfigure existing services, including the Council's direct provision of residential care

Evidence indicates a reducing level of demand, both locally and nationally, for institutional-type services, particularly standard residential care. There are increasing expectations for support in a person's own home helping them to maintain their independence. Where higher levels of support are required, for example for those with dementia, there is a shortage of provision in both community-based services, and specialist residential and nursing care.

Long-term care will still be required in the future but this will be more specialist residential care, catering for the needs of older people with dementia, nursing care and specialist nursing care. Specialist residential care may be provided directly by the Council or can be contracted from the independent sector; nursing care is always contracted from the independent sector.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council approved the strategy in November 2006 and its implementation is now well underway. The emphasis is on modernising services that are more flexible and responsive, supporting people to live independently in their own home as long as is possible. Blaenau Gwent has been successful in its bid for Social Housing Grant for the development of an Extra Care Sheltered Housing complex in 2008/09. This development will improve the range of accommodation available to older people and provide accommodation that is flexible and can respond to increasing needs of tenants.

The Supporting People Operational Plan (SPOP) sets out the local response to the government funding framework focusing on the delivery of housing related support services to vulnerable people. The plan for 2008-09 highlights priorities for the future, progress against which will be dependent on provision of appropriate funding.

Health and Social Care Workforce Strategies

These strategies set out local arrangements for the training and workforce development priorities for the whole health and social care workforce. The Strategies have the specific objectives of increasing the proportion of staff across the health and social care sector in Blaenau Gwent with the necessary qualifications, skills and knowledge to enable collaboration and co-ordination within and across services to meet future service delivery plans for example, the opening of Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan, Health and Social Care Units in Blaenau Gwent and Living Independently in Blaenau Gwent in the 21st Century.

Patient, User and Carer Engagement Strategies

These partnership strategies cover the whole spectrum of patient, service user and carer groups that come into contact with health and social services. These approaches for patients, service users and carers set out what the Blaenau Gwent Partnership want to do and how we want to do it and gives a commitment to enable local people to become actively involved in decision making about local services and their own care.

Carers' Strategy

The Carers' Strategy has been jointly developed between health and social care partners and with the voluntary sector to ensure appropriate services and support is available and accessible locally for carers, including young carers.

Community Services Framework and Community Partnership Agreement

The Communities Services Framework sets out a strategic vision for integrated services across Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government issued the Community Services Framework to influence the way in which future service changes are delivered, by achieving an appropriate balance between secondary care and the primary and community care environment. *Designed for Life* set out a clear strategy that expects the redesign of existing patterns of service, by challenging models of care that are unsustainable given current and projected pressures for the NHS in Wales. Community services are services in the community that enable people to live healthy, fulfilled and independent lives, including familiar services such as:

- primary health care services, including the general practitioner, dental, pharmacy and optometry services;
- generic community services such as the district nurse, health visitor, community midwife, community psychiatric nurse, school nurse, and community therapy services;
- specialist clinical or outreach services;

- Local Authority social services, services provided by the voluntary and independent sector such as day centre services, respite care, home support, residential and nursing home services.

The Healthier Future Partnership recognises that the development of an agreement for Blaenau Gwent will require partners to agree the ways in which the Health, Social Care and Well Being Strategy along with other delivery strategies will be developed, understood and implemented. It is anticipated that the framework will provide a well integrated and jointly owned approach to:

- Continue to develop and deliver more effective services in the community;
- Promote the innovative use of the primary care contracts to utilise the opportunities they give for development of local services;
- Achieve better co-ordination and targeting of services across the community
- Anticipate and prevent problems, and tackle them early, reducing demands elsewhere in the system;
- Use the allocated resources of partners as effectively and as flexibly as possible to make the greatest health impact in meeting people's needs.

Local Priority for Action:

The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will develop and agree a Community Services Partnership Agreement during 2008/2009 for implementation.

Level 2: Local Acute Services

Clinical Futures

The Clinical Futures Project is a 10 year plan to develop a sustainable health care system for the Gwent area that can deliver appropriate access to services and excellent standards of care for patients. It integrates the Health, Social Care and Well Being Strategies for Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Newport, Torfaen and Monmouthshire with future proposals for secondary care services in the Gwent area. Clinical Futures provides a framework to implement the findings of the Wanless Report in relation to achieving a better balance of care within the NHS in Wales.

The Clinical Futures Strategic Outline Programme has been supported by the Welsh Assembly Government and includes the development of Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan, the new Local General Hospital for Blaenau Gwent, which is at an advanced stage of development.

Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan is a significant development for local health services in the County Borough and will mean that increasingly a greater range of services will be brought closer to local people. The range of services which will be provided by Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan include:

- 3 inpatient wards
- an adult mental health unit (inpatient, outpatient and day unit)
- a 15 room outpatient department
- X Ray department
- Urgent care centre for minor injuries and primary care out of hours
- Therapies Unit
- Birthing Room
- Dining and café facilities
- Staff administration

Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan will be the first hospital to be built in Wales with 100% single bedrooms and the first major project of the regeneration on the former steelworks site in Ebbw Vale. Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan is scheduled to be completed in 2010.

The Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan development is part of a wider model to deliver services for the residents of Blaenau Gwent. Therefore, the residents of the County Borough will continue to receive some of their services from Nevill Hall Hospital, Abergavenny and the Royal Gwent Hospital, Newport.

Local Priority for Action:

The LHB and Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust along with other local partners will continue to implement the Clinical Futures Programme in Blaenau Gwent, including the completion and opening of Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan in 2010.

Level 3: Specialist and Critical Care

The Blaenau Gwent Partnership, via the LHB and through the Clinical Futures Programme, is participating in the development of proposals for a single Specialist and Critical Care Centre to provide care for people who are seriously ill or who have complex problems and cannot safely be cared for in their Local General Hospital.

The proposed Specialist and Critical Care Centre will serve the majority of the population of the Gwent area parts of Powys (600,000 people) and will:

- Speed up access to specialist and major emergency care, by ensuring patients are directed to the correct services in the correct place as quickly as possible.
- Improve the quality of specialist care for patients in line with national standards, evidence and best practice.
- Make these specialist services more reliable and robust, 24 hours a day and sustainable in the future.
- Provide modern environments that maximise efficiency and effectiveness for patients, visitors and staff.
- Ensure that resources are targeted at patients who most need them.
- Provide the potential to expand the range of tertiary (highly specialised) level services that are delivered and bring more highly specialised services into the Gwent area.

Level 4: Highly Specialised and Tertiary Services

The population of Blaenau Gwent currently receive highly specialised health, social care and well-being services outside the County Borough. These services are negotiated with specialist centres and providers elsewhere in Wales and the United Kingdom. For health services, highly specialised services are negotiated on behalf of the LHB by Health Commission Wales. In the South East Wales NHS region, work is under way to develop a regional model of commissioning services, which will also support the planning and delivery of these specialised services that are not frequently required by Blaenau Gwent residents and are not directly available within the Gwent area.

Resources and Financial Overview

The main resources to support this Strategy are the financial allocations of the Local Health Board and Local Authority.

Blaenau Gwent Local Health Board has several sources of funding, the most significant being the Welsh Assembly allocation for LHBs. The LHB also receives income from patient charges for dental services, in-year WAG funding and section 28bb Local Authority funding.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council sets a budget for each financial year based on the amount it has to spend in order to provide services to the public. Income for these services comes largely from the Welsh Assembly Government in the form of a Revenue Support Grant, Non-Domestic Rates and Specific Service Grants. The balance of funding is drawn from reserves held by the Authority, service charges and Council Tax.

The Blaenau Gwent Partnership, in assessing funding available for the implementation of this and associated strategies, and in setting a financial strategy for its delivery, will also explore the opportunities for pooling budgets across local public services. This will include utilising mechanisms to support this, such as Section 31 of the Health Act 1999 that gives NHS bodies and local authorities the flexibility to respond effectively to improve services.

Measuring Success (Key performance/outcome indicators)

Discussions between Health, Social Care and Well-being partnerships in Wales, the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and the Local Government Data Unit - Wales (the Data Unit), have developed a set of shared outcome measures to support local Partnerships in developing and implementing their strategies. The measures are described as **shared** outcome measures as it will be necessary for more than one organisation to make a significant contribution to achieving improvements. They are consistent across Wales and can be used to compare progress across Wales and to show trends in local areas. The performance measures will be mapped against the various aims of the Strategy to ensure we achieve the best fit between national and local priorities.

Measuring and managing performance remains key to the effective delivery of local services. Key performance indicators will be complemented by systematic service user/patient feedback, quality audits and external reviews, with a focus on improved outcomes for people in need.

Monitoring and Review

The responsibility for monitoring and auditing the Strategy lies with the Healthier Future Partnership Board. The Strategy will be reviewed and evaluated annually, in co-operation with Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust, Health Commission Wales (Specialist Services), Gwent Community Health Council, Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations and representatives of community organisations and local businesses concerned with, or with an interest in, health and well-being.

An Implementation Plan will be developed to set out in detail the actions that we are planning from 2008–2011, as expressed in this Strategy. The Implementation Plan will provide details of priorities that are realistic and viable in joint planning terms during those three years, many of which will continue into the longer term. The Implementation Plan will summarise key actions required and identify lead agencies to deliver in appropriate timescales.

An Annual Report will be produced for each year of the Strategy following the date of its adoption, which will assess how effectively the proposals of the Implementation Plan are performing and highlight any need for modifications.

It is important to feed back on progress made against achieving the objectives set out in the Strategy to all partners, stakeholders and the local communities. A variety of communication channels will be utilised to inform stakeholders on the progress of the Strategy.

Adoption and Publication of the Strategy

Adoption

The formal adoption of the Strategy will be undertaken by the Board of the Local Health Board and in the case of the Local Authority, will need to be approved by the Full Council. Other bodies involved are not required formally to adopt the Strategy; they will, however need to decide upon internal arrangements which will enable them to sign up to the Strategy.

Subject to the responses of the consultation exercise, Blaenau Gwent Local Health Board and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council will formally adopt the Strategy by the end of March 2008. The Strategy will then be implemented over the three year period from 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2011.

Progress on the implementation of the Strategy will be monitored via an agreed performance measurement process and will include a detailed Implementation Plan.

Publication

The final Strategy will be published no more than four weeks after adoption. It will be accessible in electronic form and other formats, and available in English and Welsh.

Local Key Priorities for Action

The local priorities for action highlighted in boxes throughout the Strategy have been drawn together in this section for ease of reference.

- **Making the Connections and Local Service Boards (page 20)** - During 2008 a Local Service Board for Blaenau Gwent will be established. During the life of this Strategy and by 2010, a Local Service Agreement will be developed by the LSB to guide partnership activity and deliver against local priorities. The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will ensure that health, social care and well-being issues will be considered by the LSB and feature in the Local Service Agreement (LSA).
- **Review of Partnership Structures (page 25)** - Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, with partners, in reviewing the Community Strategy and partnership arrangements for Blaenau Gwent and the development of a Local Service Board, will ensure that local partnership structures are appropriate to plan and deliver against local health and social care priorities. This will include ensuring that local people play active roles as citizens in these partnerships approaches.
- **Children and Young People's Plan (page 25)** - The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will ensure that issues relating to health, social care and well being are taken forward via the Children and Young People's Plan through the work of the Children and Young People's Partnership. The Plan will be prepared and published on a three yearly basis; the first plan will be effective from 1st August 2008 and published by 30th September 2008.
- **Local Development Plan (page 27)** - The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will ensure that issues relating to health, social care and well being are taken forward via the Local Development Plan. The Plan is to be prepared and published during 2008.
- **Well-Being Alliance (page 37)** - The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will establish during 2008 a Well-Being Alliance led by Blaenau Gwent's Local Public Health Director. This will guide the County Borough's response to the Public Health Strategic Framework for Wales.
- **NSF for Children, Young People and Maternity Services (page 38)** - During the life of this Strategy the Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will continue to implement the NSF for Children, Young People and Maternity Services via the Integrated Children and Young People's Plan led by the Children and Young People's Partnership.
- **NSF for Older People (page 40)** - During the life of this Strategy the Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will continue to implement the NSF for Older People via the implementation of Clinical Futures Programme, BG2010 Strategy and Living Independently in Blaenau Gwent in the 21st Century.

- **NSF for Mental Health (page 40)** - During the life of this Strategy the Blaenau Gwent Partnership will continue to implement a Blaenau Gwent Action Plan to respond to the needs of local people through the NSF for Mental Health.
- **Learning Disabilities (page 42)** - During the life of this Strategy the Blaenau Gwent Partnership will agree a Joint Commissioning Strategy for Learning Disabilities by April 2008; develop an Action Plan by April 2008 and implement actions in Partnership.
- **Substance Misuse (page 42)** - During the life of this Strategy the Blaenau Gwent Partnership will:
 - develop a Joint Commissioning Strategy and Action Plan by April 2008
 - implement the actions in partnership
 - improve services for those wanting help with drug misuse and reduce the incidence of and potential for binge drinking
 - disseminate information on prevention to school aged children
- **Clinical Futures and Service Modernisation (page 43)** - The Healthier Future Partnership will implement on an annual basis the locally agreed Modernisation Plan for Blaenau Gwent during the life of this Strategy to ensure that local services continue to be improved and modernised. This Plan is a key implementation mechanism for a range of plans in Blaenau Gwent e.g. Clinical Futures Programme and BG2010 Strategy.
- **BG2010 – Out of Hospital Care (page 44)** - The LHB, Local Authority and Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust along with other local partners will continue to implement BG2010 the local strategy for Out of Hospital Care linked to the social care Strategy Living Independently in Blaenau Gwent in the 21st Century.
- **Blaenau Gwent Primary Care Estates Strategy (page 44)** - The LHB during the life of this Strategy will along with other local partners continue to implement the Blaenau Gwent Primary Care Strategy linked to the other key Strategies such as BG2010 and the development of Health and Social Care Units in Blaina and Tredegar. During the life of this Strategy a wider Primary Care Strategy will also be developed to focus on workforce issues, including recruitment and retention, and training and development.
- **Long Term Conditions (page 46)** - The LHB along with other local partners during the life of this Strategy will continue to implement the Blaenau Gwent Long Term Conditions Strategy.
 - **NSF for Diabetes (page 47)** - During the life of this Strategy the Blaenau Gwent Partnership will continue to implement a Blaenau Gwent Action Plan to respond to the needs of local people through the NSF for Diabetes.
 - **NSF for Coronary Heart Disease (page 48)** - During the life of this Strategy the Blaenau Gwent Partnership will continue to implement a

Blaenau Gwent Action Plan to respond to the needs of local people through the NSF for Coronary Heart Disease.

- **Service Development and Commissioning Directives for Respiratory Conditions (page 49)** – during the life of the Strategy, Blaenau Gwent Partnership will continue to implement a Blaenau Gwent action plan to respond to the needs of local people through the Service Development and Commissioning Directives.
- **Service Development and Commissioning Directives for Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Conditions (page 50)** – during the life of the Strategy, Blaenau Gwent Partnership will continue to implement a Blaenau Gwent action plan to respond to the needs of local people through the Service Development and Commissioning Directives for arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions.
- **Palliative and End of Life Care (page 51)** - lead along with local partners the development of a Strategy for Palliative and End of Life Care, which will be implemented during the life of Healthier Future 2.
- **Community Services Partnership Agreement (page 53)** - The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership will develop and agree a Community Services Partnership Agreement during 2008/2009 for implementation.
- **Clinical Futures and Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan (page 55)** - The LHB and Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust along with other local partners will continue to implement the Clinical Futures Programme in Blaenau Gwent, including the completion and opening of Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan in 2010.

Developing the Strategy through Engagement

Blaenau Gwent LHB, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and their partners are jointly committed to ensuring that local people and organisations are involved, can influence and inform the delivery and future shape of health, social care and well-being services in Blaenau Gwent. Healthier Future 2 has been developed through engaging local people and organisations. Local voices have been heard through engagement and the issues that have been raised have informed the priorities for action in Healthier Future 2,

The Healthier Future Partnership will ensure that it continues engagement of local people and community interests through the implementation of this Strategy.

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