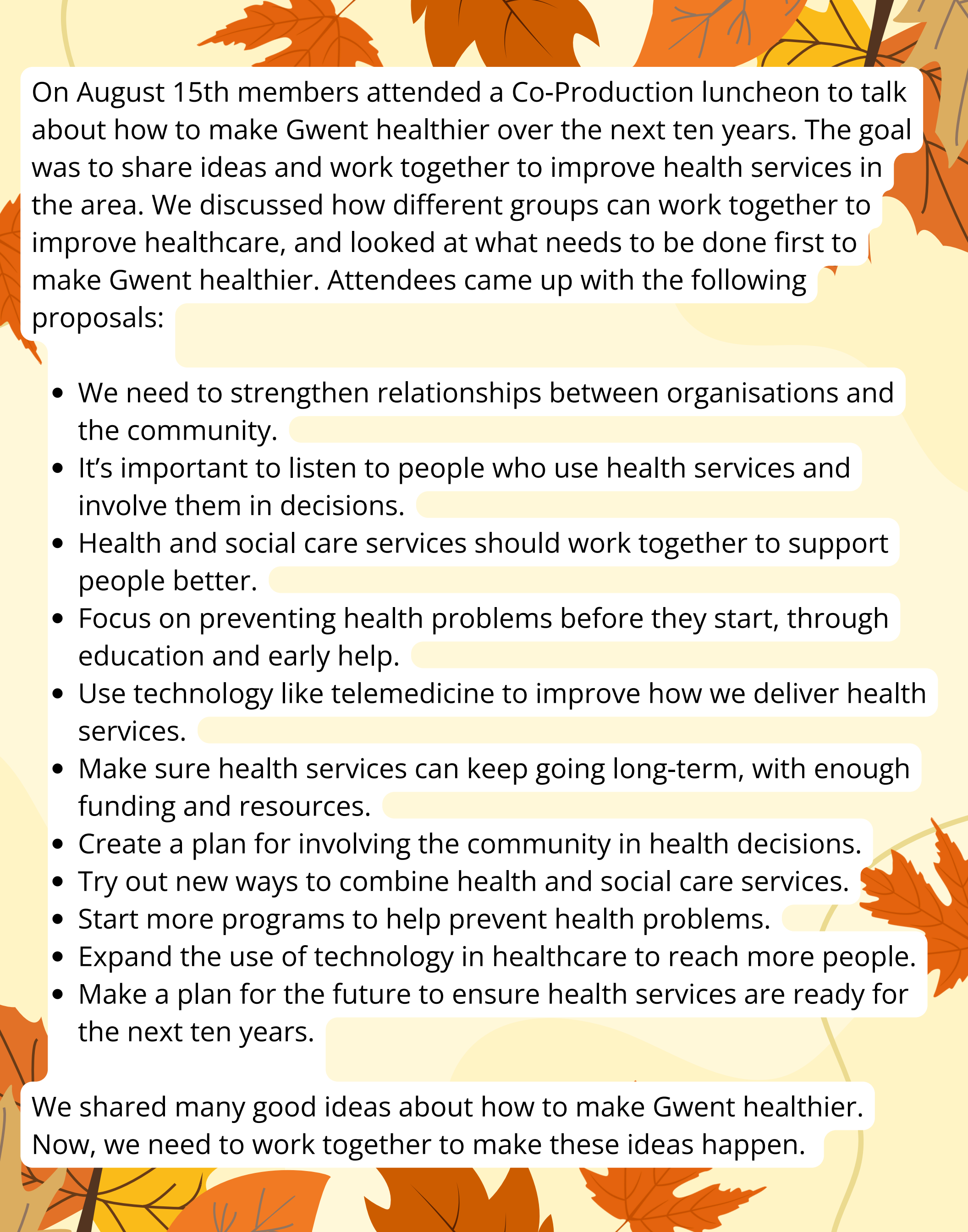




CAERPHILLY PEOPLE FIRST *Autumn Newsletter*

-A Healthy Future For Gwent-



The background of the entire page is decorated with various autumn leaves in shades of orange, yellow, and brown, scattered across a light cream-colored background.

On August 15th members attended a Co-Production luncheon to talk about how to make Gwent healthier over the next ten years. The goal was to share ideas and work together to improve health services in the area. We discussed how different groups can work together to improve healthcare, and looked at what needs to be done first to make Gwent healthier. Attendees came up with the following proposals:

- We need to strengthen relationships between organisations and the community.
- It's important to listen to people who use health services and involve them in decisions.
- Health and social care services should work together to support people better.
- Focus on preventing health problems before they start, through education and early help.
- Use technology like telemedicine to improve how we deliver health services.
- Make sure health services can keep going long-term, with enough funding and resources.
- Create a plan for involving the community in health decisions.
- Try out new ways to combine health and social care services.
- Start more programs to help prevent health problems.
- Expand the use of technology in healthcare to reach more people.
- Make a plan for the future to ensure health services are ready for the next ten years.

We shared many good ideas about how to make Gwent healthier. Now, we need to work together to make these ideas happen.

University of South Wales Roleplay



We had an amazing day at the University of South Wales on September 10th. Caerphilly People First TRAC volunteers teamed up with third-year student nurses for a hands-on simulation session. Nat rocked her fake wound makeup, and Ffion's acting as a patient with severe abdominal pain was spot on. The nurses handled the pressure like pros, showing just how valuable these real-life practice scenarios are. Huge thanks to everyone involved — what a fantastic learning experience!

Mental Health With Sad Dog

Sad Dog, a mental health and wellbeing organisation, recently came to visit Caerphilly People First to talk about mental health. We spoke about different types of mental health, anxiety and stress. We spoke about how people have different coping strategies and how stress isn't a mental health condition. We also spoke about how we can approach friends or family and how to keep an eye on them. The feedback we had after the session was that members gained a better understanding of suicide and mental health, and feel much more confident to have a conversation with someone. Thanks to Sad Dog for taking the time to come and have a chat with us.

Reconnect Through Music

We have restarted our music sessions with RecRock after our summer break, and the turnout and the response has been amazing. We usually welcome around 35 people to Libanus Lifestyle Chapel in Blackwood, where old friends and new faces come together to sing their favourite songs, dance, and share a delicious lunch.

Karaoke brings out everyone's inner superstar, and the lunch creates such a warm, welcoming vibe — it's all about connecting through music, laughter, and good food. Our talented members have treated us to some great performances, and they really blow the roof off the place with their passion and energy.

Huge thanks to Lexy and Zac from RecRock for running the group, and to the Libanus Lifestyle gang for funding the session through the Moondance Foundation.



Wellbeing Wednesdays - Relexology

As part of our Wellbeing Wednesdays project, we have hosting monthly reflexology sessions with Emma from Soulfully You. Reflexology is a therapeutic technique where pressure is applied to specific points on the feet, hands, or ears, which are believed to correspond to different parts of the body. This therapy can be especially beneficial for individuals with learning disabilities and autism, as it helps reduce stress, improve mood, and ease physical tension.



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These sessions are focused on the feet, but Emma also covers hand reflexology. Many of our members felt more relaxed and comfortable after these sessions, and we look forward to the continued benefits they will bring.

Reflexology helps reduce stress, improve sleep, and boost overall wellness – the perfect way to feel refreshed and ready for anything. Want to join in the relaxation? Contact us at enquiries@caerphillypeoplefirst.org to reserve your spot for November – you deserve it!

A special thank you to the Gwent Regional Partnership Board for funding our wellbeing project.

Reconnect Through Cookery

After a short summer, break, our cookery sessions are back! It's amazing to see everyone joining in, having fun, learning new skills, and trying new foods. These sessions make a huge difference to our members, reducing isolation and loneliness. Our members do a fantastic job preparing fresh ingredients, and while the food is cooking, everyone has a great time participating in the quiz and bingo.

Our most recent session was attended by 64 people, which means our sessions are now full to capacity, but don't worry, we have a reserve list available.

A big thank you to all our fantastic volunteers for helping in the kitchen, running the quiz and bingo, and setting up the hall. Your efforts make these sessions special!



Social Firms Wales

In August we met with Rosie Cribb from Social Firms Wales to discuss crucial issues surrounding employment for individuals with learning disabilities and physical disabilities. The meeting focused on understanding the barriers faced by these individuals and exploring the role of Social Firm Wales in supporting their employment needs.

Social Firms Wales is an organisation dedicated to developing and supporting social enterprises across Wales, with a specific focus on creating employment opportunities for individuals who face significant barriers to entering the workforce. During the meeting, Rosie Cribb and the members discussed the specific challenges that individuals with learning and physical disabilities face when seeking employment.

These barriers include:

Physical Barriers: Many workplaces are not fully accessible to individuals with physical disabilities.

Attitudinal Barriers: Discrimination and misconceptions about the capabilities of people with disabilities can result in employers being hesitant to hire them.

Learning and Cognitive Barriers: Complex job requirements and a lack of tailored training can make it difficult for individuals with learning disabilities to secure and retain employment.

Social and Communication Barriers: Individuals with disabilities may experience social isolation or communication difficulties in the workplace.

The meeting with Rosie highlighted the importance of Social Firms Wales in addressing these employment barriers through their support of social enterprises.

National Council

At the beginning of September, our rep Ffion Poole attended the National Council meeting in Swansea, where members gave overwhelmingly positive feedback on Adfest, calling it the best one yet. The council also discussed important issues affecting our community, including the rising cost of living, benefit cuts, and staff shortages within social care. We also talked about the recent changes to purchasing rail tickets in Caerphilly. These changes will make it much harder for adults with learning disabilities to buy tickets independently. Ensuring accessible transport options is vital for our community, and we'll continue to advocate for better solutions.

Panel Discussion with Students

In August TRAC members Ffion, Amy, Natalie, Gethin, and James from Caerphilly People First participated in an important panel discussion with year-two learning disability nursing students at the University of South Wales. The session, led by Professor Dr. Steve Walden, provided a platform for TRAC members to share their personal experiences with healthcare services, offering the students a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by individuals with learning disabilities. These real-life examples gave the nursing students a unique opportunity to hear directly from those who have navigated the system, highlighting areas where care was effective, and where it fell short.

Ffion, Amy, Natalie, Gethin, and James did an excellent job of sharing their experiences and helping the students understand the real-world impact of their work. The session was a powerful reminder of the importance of listening to and learning from those with lived experience in order to drive meaningful change in healthcare.