

Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb i ymgynghoriad y [Pwyllgor Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol](#) ar [Cefnogi pobl sydd â chyflyrau cronig](#)

This response was submitted to the [Health and Social Care Committee](#) consultation on [supporting people with chronic conditions](#).

CC32: Ymateb gan: | Response from:

Canolfan Dystiolaeth Ymchwil Iechyd a Gofal Cymru / Health and Care Research  
Wales Evidence Centre

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## Health and Care Research Wales Evidence Centre

**Professor Adrian Edwards**

**Director**

Health and Care Research Wales Evidence Centre

Cardiff University.

Email: [healthandcareevidence@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:healthandcareevidence@cardiff.ac.uk)

24<sup>th</sup> May 2023

### **Purpose of this document: Evidence for the Health and Social Care Committee inquiry on 'Supporting People with Chronic Conditions'**

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This document from the Health and Care Research Wales Evidence Centre was prepared to **provide evidence** to inform the Senedd Cymru Health and Social Care Committee inquiry; **Supporting People with Chronic Conditions - Part 1: 'Identifying the key themes and issues we should focus on when we move into the second stage of our work.'**

### **Inquiry broad area: Impact of Additional Features**

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The evidence we provide below may help to identify the focus for the 3 points under the 'Impact of Additional factors' i.e:

1. The impact of the pandemic on quality of care across chronic conditions;
2. The impact of the rising cost of living on people with chronic conditions in terms of their health and wellbeing;
3. The extent to which services will have the capacity to meet future demand with an ageing population.

### **1. The impact of the pandemic on quality of care across chronic conditions**

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The following Evidence Centre research publication (April 2023) would be relevant for this; **'Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on incidence of long-term conditions in Wales: a population data linkage study using primary and secondary care health records'**

The COVID-19 pandemic has directly and indirectly had an impact on health service provision owing to surges and sustained pressures on the system. The effects of these pressures on the management of long-term or chronic health conditions are not fully understood.

The aim of this research was to explore the effects of COVID-19 on the recorded incidence of 17 long-term health conditions. This was an observational retrospective population data linkage study on the population of Wales using primary and secondary care data within the Secure Anonymised Information Linkage (SAIL) Databank.

Results: A total of 5 476 012 diagnoses from 2 257 992 individuals are included. Incidence rates from 2020 to 2021 were lower than mean expected rates across all conditions. The

largest relative deficit in incidence was in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease corresponding to 343 (95% confidence interval = 230 to 456) undiagnosed patients per 100 000 population, followed by depression, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, anxiety disorders, and asthma.

The **key issue** identified by this research is that the findings show that a GP practice of 10 000 patients might have over 400 undiagnosed long-term conditions i.e. there is a large potential backlog of undiagnosed patients with multiple long-term conditions. Resources are required to tackle anticipated workload as part of COVID-19 recovery, particularly in primary care in Wales.

## **2. The impact of the rising cost of living on people with chronic conditions in terms of their health and wellbeing**

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We feel that **mental health** could be a **key theme** under this area. The Evidence Centre would be able to share findings from a rapid evidence report that has just been completed (May 2023); '**Measuring mental health in a cost-of-living crisis**'. (The report will be published by early June).

Related to this is the impact of the cost of living on fuel poverty, particularly in rural and deprived areas of Wales, which might be considered for an area of focus. We have recently published findings from a rapid evidence review; '**A rapid review of the effectiveness and cost effectiveness of interventions that make homes warmer and cheaper to heat for households in fuel poverty in rural and remote areas**'. Potential implications of the findings include that policy makers and funding bodies should make further investments into research focusing on measures to alleviate fuel poverty, with particular focus on economic analysis.

## **3. The extent to which services will have the capacity to meet future demand with an ageing population**

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We will shortly be publishing an evidence map of '**What is the forecasted prevalence and incidence of chronic and long-term conditions in Wales?**' This work was requested by Welsh Government to inform a paper from their Science and Evidence Advice group on '**The NHS in 10 Years**' time' (expected publication in June 2023). We feel that these findings will be useful to the context of services in Wales.

### **Further information**

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Thank you for your consideration of this information. We would be happy to provide further information verbally or in written format.

The Health and Care Research Wales Evidence Centre declares that no part of this evidence is confidential and there is no conflict of interest.

The Executive summary of all the Evidence Centre reports in the Welsh language will be available in our [website library](#).

Yours sincerely,



Professor Adrian Edwards,  
(On behalf of the Health and Care Research Wales Evidence Centre)