

# A Rapid Health Impact Assessment of the Enable Project in Wrexham

## Authors

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## **Acknowledgements**

Thank you to all the stakeholders and facilitators who gave their time to attend and contribute to the participatory stakeholder workshop.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Health Impact Assessment**

*“Health Impact Assessment is a combination of procedures, methods and tools by which a policy, programme or project may be judged as to its potential effects on the health of a population, and the distribution of those effects within the population.” 1*

Therefore health impact assessment (HIA) allows us to explore all the future potential health and wellbeing impacts (both positive and negative) of a project or programme, identify affected parties, and modify and enhance project delivery in order to maximise the positive health and wellbeing impacts and minimise or remove the harmful effects.

A recent guide to HIA published in Wales states that the Welsh Assembly Government is *“committed to developing the use of health impact assessment*

*in Wales as part of its strategy to improve health and well-being and to reduce health inequalities.”* <sup>2</sup>

For the purpose of health impact assessment, the term “health” must be considered in its broadest possible sense, with awareness given to the wider determinants of health, including environment, housing, income, employment, crime, and transport. Therefore, for the purpose of HIA it is usual to adopt the World Health Organization definition of health as *“a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”* <sup>3</sup>

HIA is an inclusive, participatory approach, involving key stakeholders at all stages in the process. These stakeholders range from key decision makers, to members of the community affected by the policy or programme.

In April 2005 it was decided to carry out a HIA on Canolfan Dewi Sant in Rhyl, to support the continuing search for long term funding and look at improving the health and well-being of the users, staff and the local community.

<sup>1</sup> Health Impact Assessment: Main concepts and suggested approach. World Health Organization. December 1999

<sup>2</sup> Improving Health and Reducing Inequalities: A practical guide to health impact assessment. Welsh Assembly Government. September 2004

<sup>3</sup> Preamble to the Constitution of the World Health Organization as adopted by the International Health Conference, New York, 19-22 June, 1946; signed on 22 July 1946 by the representatives of 61 States (Official Records of the World Health Organization, no. 2, p.100) and entered into force on 7 April 1948

## **1.2 The Enable Project**

The Enable Project was set up in 2001 and seeks to break down the barriers to education for people living with mental health problems, and/or drug & alcohol misuse problems.

The Project is currently staffed by two part-time Mentor / Support Workers

The staff provides one to one mentoring support to the students enrolling in classes at the Partnership.

The Project helps to combat isolation by building self-confidence, which enables the students to gain qualifications, thereby increasing the prospect of employability and social inclusion.

The Project gives emphasis to the students being treated as learners, not people who have a problem, and they are given a flexible service in response to their individual needs.

To compliment this, the Project has access to a free crèche which is available to all students with children under the age of 5, whilst they are in the classroom. This crèche is based on site.

Referring agencies include Community Mental Health Teams, Community Drug & Alcohol Team, Wrexham Mind, Coed Celyn, Wrexham Response, Wrexham Womens Aid, The Foyer, First Access, Centre 67, Fairhome Nursing Home, Working Links, Belmont House, Llwyn-y-Groes and Local Health Visitors.

This Project is one of its kind in Wales and the success stories of some of the students speak for themselves.

### **1.3 Welsh Health Impact Assessment Support Unit**

Welsh Health Impact Assessment Support Unit (WHIASU) is funded by the Welsh Assembly Government, through the Wales Centre for Health. WHIASU is based in the Cardiff Institute of Society, Health and Ethics, which is part of Cardiff University's School of Health Sciences, and is funded to cover North and South Wales.

The key roles of WHIASU are:

- o To support the development and effective use of the health impact assessment approach in Wales through building partnerships and collaborations with key statutory, voluntary, community and private organisations in Wales.
- O To provide direct information and advice to those who are in the process of conducting health impact assessments.
- O To contribute to the provision of new research, and provide access to existing evidence, that will inform and improve judgements about the potential impacts of policies, programmes and projects.

The WHIASU can be contacted at:

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## **2.0 METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Why a “rapid” HIA?**

HIAs can be categorised in two ways. Firstly, “in-depth” HIAs, which are conducted over a matter of weeks or months, and secondly “rapid” HIAs, which are completed in hours or days.

Rapid HIA is clearly useful where a short period of time is available. A key element of rapid HIA is usually a participatory stakeholder workshop where key individuals are brought together to examine the proposal.

## **2.2 Participatory stakeholder workshop**

### **2.2.1 The workshop**

The rapid HIA was undertaken at a one-day participatory stakeholder workshop, held on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September, at Caia Park Partnership, Prince Charles Road, Wrexham.

A copy of the letter sent out can be seen in appendix 2.

### **2.2.2 Participants**

There were 22 participants, from a variety of sectors and backgrounds, including representatives of the Local Health Board, referring agencies and students who use the service.

A full list of participants and all those who were invited can be found in appendix 3.

### **2.2.3 The format of the day**

The day began at 10am and concluded at 4pm. During the morning there was a presentation on health impact assessment, then an introduction to the Centre and the workshop screening exercise. During the afternoon session, the evidence was appraised and recommendations were made.

The full programme can be found in appendix 4.

The workshops were run in two groups. One workshop was facilitated by Liz Green (Welsh Health Impact Assessment Support Unit) and the other was facilitated by Jo Perera/Sharon Mason (Mentor/Support Workers, Enable Project). The number of participants attending each workshop was roughly even.

## **2.3 Producing the report**

Information was gathered from the workshops to compile this comprehensive report.

## **3.0 THE RAPID HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

### **3.1 Identifying potentially affected groups.**

At the beginning of the screening session, participants were asked to identify vulnerable and/or disadvantaged groups who may be affected by The Enable Project. Participants chose from a list of population groups particularly vulnerable to the cause of ill health. The list is included as appendix 5.

Groups that participants felt may be affected by The enable Project were:

- Service users
- Staff at the centre
- Local residents
- Families
- Friends
- Social support networks
- Staff of other services
- Volunteers
- Tourists
- Large statutory organisations (County Council, LHB)
- Local businesses

### **3.2 Impacts upon health of the local population**

The vulnerable and/or disadvantaged groups identified would be considered in terms of positive or negative health-related impacts upon their:

- Lifestyles
- Social and community influences on health
- Living/environmental conditions affecting health
- Economic conditions affecting health
- Access and quality to services

Participants used a health and well-being determinants checklist (see appendix 6) in order to assist them in focusing their thought, and to help them to make a judgement as to the likely impacts of the Project upon the different health determinants.

### **3.3 Summary of impacts**

The following tables describes the potential impacts of elements of The Enable Project, the adverse effects, the positive effects and the recommendations which emerged following discussions of the issues.

Issue	Positive impacts – beneficial effects	Negative impacts – adverse effects	Recommendations
<b>Lifestyles</b>			
LIFE STYLE & DIET	<p>The Community Café which is staffed mainly by Enable Students/Volunteers offers a wide variety of food/range of healthy eating options that can positively influence user’s food choices at home.</p> <p>New skills in cooking can be gained via Cookery Classes through Enable Student and Volunteering opportunities.</p> <p>This can lead on to further courses (accredited), i.e. Basic Food Hygiene, etc, which all Café Volunteers have completed for training purposes.</p>		Liaise with The Healthy Living Project and Community Dietician to provide further information about healthy eating on a Budget/possible workshop.
PHYSICAL EXERCISE	The Enable Project encourages and motivates students & volunteers to access, attend and socialise in classes & groups i.e. Kick- Boxing, Gardening Group through volunteering, exercise classes and Weight Clinics through The Healthy Living Project, etc. This has an overall positive effect on Physical,		Further improve community relations with Queensway Sports Centre for access to all facilities, including Exercise classes and Gym.



	Emotional and Mental Well-Being.		
SEXUAL ACTIVITIES	Information from and signposting to other agencies/services available through The Healthy Living Project, etc.		
USE OF ALCOHOL, CIGARETTES, NON-PRESCRIBED DRUGS	The Enable Project supports users with Alcohol and Drug Misuse problems, within a positive learning environment. This can provide them with a diversionary activity to help combat their addiction and isolation. Smoking Cessation Support Group and clean needle exchange, etc, also available.		

Issue	Positive impacts – beneficial effects	Negative effects – adverse effects	Recommendations
<b>Social and Community influences on health</b>			
FAMILY ORGANISATION AND ROLES	Mentoring/Supporting users with Low self-confidence/esteem and Single Parents, etc, Enable Project Workers encourage independence and increasing self-confidence through learning and experience in classes & activities, whether on a one-to-one basis or in a group. This can impact positively on user's home-life.		
SOCIAL SUPPORT AND SOCIAL NETWORKS	By accessing and attending activities in classes & groups, users can build a social network and make friends. They can also increase their own personal support network through gateways to other agencies/services, such as Counselling through MIND, etc.	Do Enable Students, Volunteers, and Drug & Alcohol, and Mental Health Professionals know that the gateways	Improve links with, and sign- post to Day Centres and other organisations.  Draw on other resources

	They will have a close, working relationship with the Volunteering Project which can provide further opportunities for both work and social activities. They can build good working relationships with other professionals in Drug & Alcohol, and Mental Health. Information from and sign- posting to Welfare Rights for advice on maximising income.	exist?	from all departments within The Caia Park Partnership Ltd.
SENSE OF BELONGING	Enable Students can contribute to their community through Volunteering Opportunities, gain Support on a one-to-one/group basis within classes and groups for both learning & social activities, and feel they have a sense of purpose when achieving their personal goals, etc.		
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Positive impacts – beneficial effects</b>	<b>Negative effects – adverse effects</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<b>Social and Community influences on health</b>			
LOCAL PRIDE	The area of and around The Caia Park Partnership Ltd has been greatly improved over time, through many Volunteer/Enable run projects, etc, and is now more pleasing to the eye for community users.		
SOCIAL ISOLATION	The Enable Project seeks to help break the cycle of boredom and isolation often felt by students with Drug & Alcohol, and Mental Health issues. It respects and values individual clients and encourages	Can create a dependency for vulnerable students who become over-	To arrange/provide more social activities during the evenings for students/ volunteers.

	improvements in self-confidence/esteem.	reliant on support offered.  This can lead to students monopolising the Mentor/ Support Workers time.	To increase support and provide a Drop-In facility similar to that offered at Belmont House, etc.
OTHER SOCIAL EXCLUSION	No labels/stigma attached to students of the project, who are treated as 'learners first'. Encourages inclusion in the community via learning and social activities/groups, and volunteering opportunities.		

Issue	Positive impacts – beneficial effects	Negative impacts – adverse effects	Recommendations
<b>Living/environmental Conditions that effect health</b>			
HOUSING	Advocacy available and signposting to other departments within The Caia Park Partnership Ltd – i.e. CATS team, etc.		
NEIGHBOURHOOD	The courses offered by The Life Long Learning Centre		

DESIGN	<p>can give students opportunities to gain skills that will encourage user's home improvements such as Woodwork, Craft and Basic Plumbing, etc. Volunteering opportunities can do the same, i.e. gardening projects</p> <p>Can create a sense of belonging which can impact positively on physical improvements to the area.</p>		
ATTRACTIVENESS OF AREA	<p>The project benefits the community on a wider scale, i.e. gardening activities for local churches/schools, etc.</p> <p>A rewarding feeling in 'giving back to the community' – i.e. cutting the grass on a voluntary basis.</p>	Other peoples perceptions of the area	

Issue	Positive impact – beneficial effects	Negative impacts – adverse effects	Recommendations
<b>Economic conditions affecting health</b>			

UNEMPLOYMENT		Support is not available for Enable Students leaving the project to go into employment.	
ECONOMIC INACTIVITY	Increases individuals economic activity through volunteering work opportunities, and skills gained through supported learning & social networking	<p>Lack of financial resources/ support to 'meet the need'.</p> <p>A fear that taking the time to study and/or volunteer may affect user's benefits.</p> <p>Negative attitudes towards volunteering may be present</p>	<p>Link in with relevant strategies to ensure we are accessing funding sources to fulfil the identified needs.</p> <p>Accurate information available for students about benefits when they join the Project. Being pro- active by collecting evidence to prove the success of the Project.</p>

Issue	Positive impacts – beneficial effects	Negative effects – adverse effects	Recommendations
<b>Access and quality of services</b>			
GENERAL			<p>Produce information leaflets &amp; provide workshops for Interview Skills, etc.</p> <p>Reference provided for students prior to interviews.</p> <p>Arrangement for continued support when student leaves Project for employment.</p> <p>Time management issue for Mentor/Support Workers.</p> <p>Road show to other Agencies</p> <p>Attend other Agency team –meetings.</p>

<p>EDUCATION AND TRAINING</p>	<p>A Personal Development Plan (PDP) is completed with all new students to identify their own personal aims.</p> <p>Enable Students have access to a wide variety of courses which are identified by local residents as being of interest.</p> <p>Courses on offer are both academic and vocational, some of which are also accredited, etc.</p> <p>The courses are free to residents of Caia Park and an on-site crèche is available to parents of pre-school children who need child-care support.</p> <p>The Mentoring/Support offered by Enable Workers is provided completely free of charge to students and/or volunteers. There is no means testing done for the service.</p> <p>All learning and social activities take place in an informal learning environment which is non-threatening and actively encourages participation.</p>	<p>Only taps into existing courses on offer rather than creating new learning for students.</p> <p>Limited access to evening/ weekend courses.</p> <p>Constant course review with changes made if necessary.</p> <p>Gaps in types of courses being offered.</p> <p>Limited places available for Enable Project Support.</p> <p>The Enable Project does not advertise its services widely enough for promotion, etc.</p>	<p>Basic First Aid training for Enable Mentor/Support Workers, and training on how to move students on appropriately.</p> <p>Recruit a Volunteer Driver for the company minibus to carry Enable Students and Volunteers when courses end in evenings/on dark nights, etc.</p> <p>Continual review of courses on offer and promotion of all aspects of service offered.</p> <p>Produce more frequent questionnaires to meet the need of the community.</p> <p>Conduct Open Days on an annual basis.</p> <p>Use local radio and Regeneration News, etc, to meet advertising needs.</p> <p>Make The Enable Project information more widely available to all.</p>
<p>INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY</p>			<p>Presentations and Training Event to be given to</p>

			Businesses on how to Mentor/Support Enable Students/Volunteers in employment, and contact details for staff support, etc.
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### **3.4 Summary of recommendations**

#### **3.4.1 Lifestyles**

- Liaise with Healthy Living and Community Dietician to provide information on healthy eating on a budget / possible workshops
- Improve relations with Queensway Sports Centre for access to Gym

#### **3.4.2 Social and Community influences on health**

- Improve links with Day centres and other organisations to signpost
- Pull in other resources from all Departments within Caia Park Partnership
- More social activities in the evening for students
- Provision of drop-in facility i.e. Belmont House

#### **3.4.3 Living/environmental Conditions that effect health**

#### **3.4.4 Economic conditions effecting health**

- Link in with relevant strategies to ensure that we are accessing funding sources to fulfil the identified needs
- Accurate information available for students about benefits when they join the Project
- Being proactive by collecting evidence to prove the success of the Project

#### **3.4.5 Access and quality of services**

- Produce information leaflets and provide workshops for Interview Skills
- Reference to be provided for students prior to interviews
- Arrangement for continued support when students moves on from the Project
- Time management issue for Mentor/Support Workers
- Roadshow to other Agencies
- Attend other Agency team meetings
- First Aid training for Enable Staff
- Produce more frequent questionnaires to meet the needs of the community
- Recruit a volunteer driver for the minibus to carry Enable students when courses finish as dark nights approach
- Need to advertise the service more widely
- Use the Regeneration News to advertise service
- Use local radio to advertise the service
- Conduct Open Days annually
- Training for Mentors on how to move students on appropriately
- Continually review what courses are on offer, and promote what we do in the evening
- Make Enable leaflet more available

- Presentations to be given to Businesses on how to support Enable Students in employment
- Training event for Business with contact details for support from staff

#### **4.0 Monitoring and evaluation**

- Need to establish clear targets for the project against which to measure progress
- Need to implement and maintain the collation of information on Enable students and their activities and achievement to better analyse trends and activities
- Need to establish a project co-ordination group bringing together members of staff from Enable and other departments that work with Enable students to ensure the best co-ordination of support
- Need to identify way of monitoring 'unlooked' for outcomes of the project
- Need to monitor progress against recommendations identified in the report

#### **5.0 Conclusion**

The Health Impact Assessment (HIA) was an extremely useful process for Enable to go through. The structured approach and the support and facilitation provided by Liz Green, allowed Enable to undertake a thorough but time (and resource) limited review of the project. The HIA provided an excellent framework against which to measure the true impact of the work done by Enable on health & wellbeing.

Although there were initial concerns that some of the students would have difficulty engaging with process and understanding some of the concepts of what was being assessed, these fears proved to be unfounded. All of the students that attended made full and valuable contributions.

What has come over strongly from the HIA is the level and diversity of the positive impact that the project is having. Although the project is there to support learning it quite clearly is having a much wider, positive impact on student's lives. Some of these impacts could have been guessed at but many (mostly identified by students on the day) were quite unexpected.

The HIA has confirmed to us that the Enable project is making a valuable contribution and it has also identified a number of useful recommendations which we can implement and progress the project on to its next stage of development.

## **Appendix 1 -Comments received from participants on the day**

### **Expectations/Comments on workshop and rating (1=poor, 10=excellent):**

To discover more about the enable project and the Caia Park Partnership and to find out its plans for future development (10)

Good Positive workshop. Very useful (10)

Sharing of thoughts about the project. Presenting positive aspects of the project. -Meeting people who use and support the project. To have a say in the benefits of the project (10)

Things should now move forward in a better and organised way. I also now feel Caia Park Partnership understand what the students needs are (9)

To get a view of what the projects strengths and weaknesses are and to collect evidence for funding applications (9)

I envisaged a focus group event to evaluate the effectiveness of the Enable Project. Expected a range of views on the Project from users in particular (8)

What experiences you can get from the Caia Park Project. Recognising the value of the project – kindness of staff (8)

I got a lot out of the day and enjoyed it (8)

Today provided myself with an insight into the Project and what it is all about and what's available. I feel this will be of benefit to others who are within my project and I would certainly be happy to recommend them to use these facilities (8)

To meet with all the volunteers and to have organisation with people (8)

To know more about the Enable Project and Caia Park Partnership in general (8)

To make Caia Park more accessible to people coming in/improve on what we can do. Make Caia Park more interesting and have things that people will find enjoyable and have more activities for people coming in to Caia Park (8 ½)

I had no clear expectations at all (7)

Information regarding services provided by Project evaluating current provision and identifying gaps etc (7)

## **Appendix 2 – Invite letter to stakeholder day**

### **Rapid Health Impact Assessment of the Enable Project, Caia Park Partnership**

The Enable Project, with the support of Caia Park Partnership, is to undertake a rapid Health Impact Assessment of the Project.

Health Impact Assessment seeks to explore all the future potential impacts of a particular project on peoples' health and wellbeing, and to modify and enhance project delivery.

A key element of the Health Impact Assessment of the Enable Project will be a participatory stakeholder workshop, where key individuals will be brought together to examine the proposal for the centre.

You have been identified as a key stakeholder in this process, and we would like to invite you to join us at the participatory stakeholder workshop, which take place at Caia Park Partnership, on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September, from 10am to 4pm.

I would be grateful if you would complete the form attached with this letter and return to the undersigned. If you are unable to attend but would like to nominate a colleague to represent you, please complete the form with their details. Additionally, in your absence if you would like to make any comments about the Project, please add these onto the attached sheet.

In the meantime, if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me. Otherwise I look forward to meeting you at the workshop.

Yours sincerely

**Jo Perera**  
**Mentor/Support Worker**

**Sharon Mason**  
**Mentor/Support Worker**



## **Appendix 4 - Full programme of day**

### ***PROGRAMME FOR THE HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT***

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2005

9.30	Registration
10.00	Presentation by Liz Green, Health Impact Assessment Unit
10.20	Presentation by Alison Hill, Caia Park Partnership
10.30	Presentation by Jo Perera/Sharon Mason, Enable Project
10.45	Coffee Break
11.0	Scoping
12.0	Feedback and priorities
12.30	Lunch
1.30	Appraisal of evidence
2.45	Recommendations
3.30	Close

## Appendix 5 –

<b><i>Vulnerable and/or disadvantaged population groups</i></b>	
<b>Age related groups</b>	
• Children and young people	
• Older People	
<b>Income related groups</b>	
• People on low income	
• Economically inactive	
• Unemployed	
• People who are unable to work due to ill health	
<b>Groups who suffer discrimination or other social disadvantage</b>	
• People with disabilities	
• Refugee groups	
• People seeking asylum	
• Travellers	
• Single parent families	
• Lesbian and gay people	
• Ethnic minority groups	
• Religious groups	
<b>Geographical issues</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> People living in areas known to exhibit poor economic and/or health indicators	
<input type="checkbox"/> People living in isolated areas	
<input type="checkbox"/> People unable to access services and facilities	

### ***Adapted from:***

Improving Health and Reducing Inequalities: A practical guide to health impact assessment. Welsh Assembly Government. September 2004



**Appendix 6**  
**HEALTH AND WELLBEING DETERMINANTS**  
**CHECKLIST**

*(Please note that this list is a guide and is not exhaustive)*

1. Lifestyles	<input type="checkbox"/> Diet <input type="checkbox"/> Physical exercise <input type="checkbox"/> Use of alcohol, cigarettes, non-prescribed drugs <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual activity <input type="checkbox"/> Other risk-taking activity
2. Social and community influences on health	<input type="checkbox"/> Family organisation and roles <input type="checkbox"/> Citizen power and influence <input type="checkbox"/> Social support and social networks <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbourliness <input type="checkbox"/> Sense of belonging <input type="checkbox"/> Local pride <input type="checkbox"/> Divisions in community <input type="checkbox"/> Social isolation <input type="checkbox"/> Peer pressure <input type="checkbox"/> Community identity <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural and spiritual ethos <input type="checkbox"/> Racism <input type="checkbox"/> Other social exclusion
3. Living/ environmental conditions affecting health	<input type="checkbox"/> Built environment <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbourhood design <input type="checkbox"/> Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Indoor environment <input type="checkbox"/> Noise <input type="checkbox"/> Air and water quality <input type="checkbox"/> Attractiveness of area <input type="checkbox"/> Community safety <input type="checkbox"/> Smell/odour <input type="checkbox"/> Waste disposal <input type="checkbox"/> Road hazards <input type="checkbox"/> Injury hazards <input type="checkbox"/> Quality and safety of play areas
4. Economic conditions affecting health	<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment <input type="checkbox"/> Income <input type="checkbox"/> Economic inactivity <input type="checkbox"/> Type of employment <input type="checkbox"/> Workplace conditions
5. Access and quality of services	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical services <input type="checkbox"/> Other caring services <input type="checkbox"/> Careers advice <input type="checkbox"/> Shops and commercial services <input type="checkbox"/> Public amenities <input type="checkbox"/> Transport <input type="checkbox"/> Education and training <input type="checkbox"/> Information technology
6. Macro-economic, environmental and sustainability factors	<input type="checkbox"/> Government policies <input type="checkbox"/> Gross Domestic Product <input type="checkbox"/> Economic development <input type="checkbox"/> Biological diversity <input type="checkbox"/> Climate

**Source:**

Improving Health and Reducing Inequalities: A practical guide to health impact assessment. Welsh Assembly Government. September 2004