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Medicines and GP Induction Pilot (MAGPI)

Reducing health inequalities
in continuity of care for
people in contact with
Criminal Justice System:
a collaboration between
Health and Probation
Services in North Wales

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The MAGPI pilot is a collaborative in North Wales between HMP Berwyn Health Care Pharmacy Department, Health and Justice Team in Probation service, Approved Premises (AP) and their linked General Practices. The pilot aims to offer a seamless transfer of medication from custody to the community and prerelease GP registration for those leaving HMP Berwyn and moving to one of the two Approved Premises (APs) in North Wales.

There are four APs in Wales accommodating approximately 100 male residents at any one time and many of whom have complex health and social care needs. APs provide a key mechanism for the transition of risk management with the aim to; reduce the likelihood of further offending, protect the public through effective resettlement support alongside, a supportive and structured environment (HMIP, 2023) The stay at the AP is approximately twelve weeks before moving on to accommodation within the community. Therefore, time at the AP affords a final opportunity to address underlying health and social care needs.

HMP Berwyn is a Category C men's prison located in Wrexham, North Wales. Opened in 2017, it is the largest prison in the UK, designed to house over 2,000 prisoners. Committed to the vision of [The Prisons White Paper published in 2021](#), the prison operates with a focus on reducing health inequalities, including health and wellbeing of prison populations in their care, rehabilitation, education, and reducing reoffending.

With a focus on improving health and wellbeing, the health and justice team in partnership with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB), carried out a health and social care needs assessment for residents and staff in all four Welsh Approved Premises. The findings of the Health Needs Assessment (HNA) recommended the need for continuity of care in general and the need for sufficient supply of medication to residents who arrive at the Approved Premises in particular.

Why Medicines and GP Induction (MAGPI) pilot?

Everyone in Wales should have the opportunity to be healthy and for that we need the right building blocks in place such as nurturing childhood, good quality homes, fair work, safe and strong relationships. In too many parts of Wales these building blocks are not strong enough, or they are missing altogether. These differences in health often arise early in our lives and can worsen over our lifetime affecting our mental and physical wellbeing, behaviour and access to services which can increase health inequalities. For example, nearly half of prisoners report experiencing four or more [Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\)](#), mortality rate in prisoners is [50% higher](#) than the rest of the population. They also face increased barriers to meet their health needs through accessing services. Continuity of care between community and secure environments is key to minimise the risk to this group who are one of our most vulnerable populations.

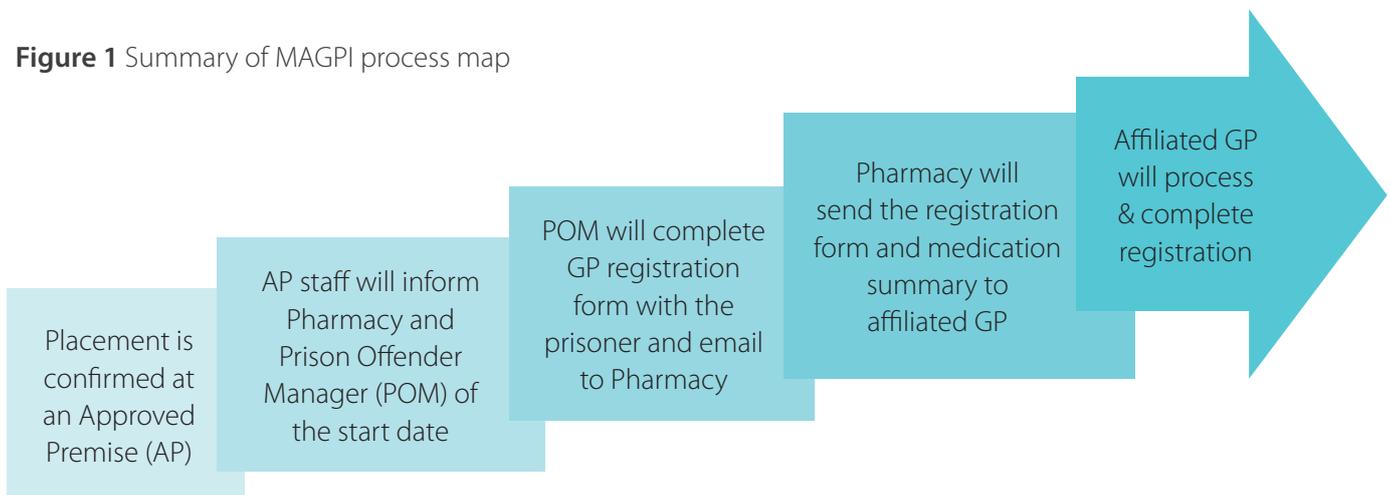
The HNA was carried out across Wales and highlighted that currently GP registration happens post release from custody. Due to high demands on community services including primary care, obtaining an appointment to enable continuity of care and reestablish a supply of medication could take a long time - in some cases days or weeks after arriving at the AP. This gap in provision was considered as a high priority since it could lead to destabilisation of residents' mental and physical health at a time of heightened need.

What did we do?

We established the following process:

Once AP staff are notified of a prisoner's placement, they will inform the prison pharmacy and the Prison Offender Manager (POM). The offender manager will retrieve a GP registration form from within the Prison and help the prisoner complete it. This form will be sent to the prison pharmacy team. The prison pharmacy will then contact the GP surgery linked to the AP. This communication aids in GP registration and prescription continuity. Both the registration form and medication summary will be sent to the GP practice, enhancing care continuity. Stakeholders in this process include HMP Berwyn Pharmacy, POMs, AP staff, and the health and justice team and relevant GP practices.

Figure 1 Summary of MAGPI process map



What have we achieved so far?

Below is a quote from one of AP resident sharing experience:

"I ran out after the second week here, so that was a learning curve because I've never come off antidepressants before so, you know, that was difficult."

Since the MAGPI pilot began on 25th October 2024, we received 30 notifications. Of these, 27 cases (90%) led to continuity of medicine at transfer to AP, and 22 cases (73%) achieved both medicine continuity and GP registration.

We are pleased to receive positive feedback from our service users, indicating that the project has contributed to reduction in their stress levels about their continuity of care.

The following quotes are a few examples:

"It takes a lot of pressure off, especially when you get here (to the AP), and have less to do."

"I think (MAGPI) is excellent as people won't feel stressed or low or worried."

"If it's all done before I get here then that's one less thing for me to think about."

Our current process is being refined, but our findings have been very positive. This pilot has reaffirmed the effectiveness of collaboration between health and justice teams.

Our learning so far

Continuity of Care is a shared priority between health and justice and this pilot proved that working together can be transformational within a short period of time. For this to happen prompt actions and staff awareness are essential in both health and justice.

Whilst this pilot was designed to alleviate existing challenges within approved premises footprint, it has also opened opportunities to look beyond immediate outcomes such as continued community compliance, and prescription compliance and maintenance in the community.

Recommendation

MAGPI offers a functional process demonstrating how agencies and departments can effectively work together to address the challenges faced. It offers opportunity to test and evaluate delivery and impact and joint working arrangements with an aim for expansion across Wales to achieve person centred, seamless and integrated response to ensure effective continuity of care.

We recommend incremental expanding of the pilot to all prisons across Wales.

For more information about this initiative please contact:

- Amber O'Brien, Pharmacy Lead HMP Berwyn – Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, Amber.O'Brien@wales.nhs.uk
- Peter Salami, Health and Justice Partnership Coordinator- North Wales Peter.Salami@justice.gov.uk

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