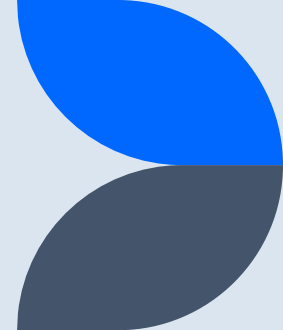


The Welsh Community Innovation



Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped our lives, communities, and world in ways we could never have imagined. In this presentation, we will explore the challenges and responses specific to Wales as it faced this unprecedented public health crisis Atkinson et al, 2017.



Welsh response

However, it is within the responses of individual nations that we find stories of resilience, adaptation, and community spirit. Today, we will take a closer look at how Wales, with its unique cultural identity and devolved government, addressed the challenges posed by COVID-19 Burton et al, 2004.

Health integration

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, healthcare digital technologies have been increasingly integrated into the healthcare system in Wales, offering several benefits for both patients and healthcare providers. These technologies aim to improve access to healthcare services, enhance patient outcomes, and streamline healthcare processes. Here are some key aspects of healthcare digital technologies for the community of Wales National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, 2016.



Electronic Health Care Records



EHRs are digital records that contain a patient's medical history, treatment plans, test results, and other essential healthcare information. In Wales, there has been a significant push to digitize patient records, making it easier for healthcare providers to access and share patient information across the country. This leads to more coordinated and efficient care Public Health Wales, 2018.



Health and Telemedicine

Telehealth and telemedicine technologies allow patients in Wales to consult with healthcare providers remotely. This is particularly beneficial for people living in remote or rural areas, as it increases access to healthcare services and reduces the need for long journeys to see specialists.

Telehealth can involve video consultations, remote monitoring of chronic conditions, and even mobile health apps for self-management Public Health Wales, 2018.



Prescription Management



Digital technologies enable patients to request prescription refills, receive electronic prescriptions, and access medication information online. This simplifies the prescription process and helps patients manage their medications more effectively
Wallerstein, 2006.



Challenges and opportunities



Wales, like any other region, faces a unique set of challenges and opportunities within its communities. These challenges and opportunities are influenced by factors such as geography, economy, culture, and political context. Here's an overview of some key challenges and opportunities in Welsh communities Baum, 2008.



Economic disparities



Wales has both urban and rural areas, and economic disparities exist between these regions. Rural areas often face limited job opportunities and lower incomes, while urban centers like Cardiff have more robust economies. Bridging this gap and ensuring economic opportunities for all communities is a significant challenge Brunton et al, 2015a.





Health inequalities

Health inequalities persist in Wales, with some communities experiencing poorer health outcomes and reduced access to healthcare services. This is particularly challenging in areas with high levels of poverty and social deprivation Marmot, 2005.

Advantages of the Digital tools during and after Covid-19 Pandemic



Face-to-face communication while maintaining social distancing



enable remote work and virtual events



Access to medical care without leaving home



Maintain productivity while working from home



Access to a wide range of educational resources globally



Contactless payment and delivery



Stay connected with friends and family



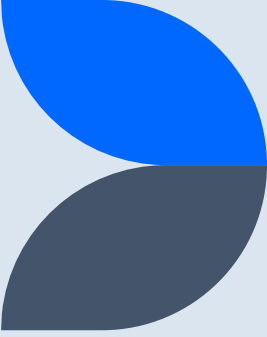
Engage with online communities



Disadvantages of the Digital tools during and after COVID-19 pandemic

- Potential for 'zoom fatigue' due to excessive screen time
- Security and privacy concerns
- Potential for information overload
- Technical barriers for those without reliable internet
- Limited to non-emergency medical issues
- Challenges for patients without the necessary technology
- Risk of misinformation and online harassment
- Technical challenges for some patients
- Cost of equipment and subscription services.
- Lack of social interaction compared to group fitness Cyril et al, 2015.b

Public-Private Partnerships



PPPs can facilitate the expansion of broadband and telecommunications infrastructure in underserved or remote areas.

Private sector expertise and investment, combined with public sector regulatory support, can help bridge the digital divide.

PPPs can support digital literacy and skills development programs, ensuring community members have the necessary knowledge to participate in the digital economy

Community Engagement and feedback



Feedback helps identify areas where services can be enhanced or where new services are needed
Ramsbottom et al, 2018.



Conclusion

Advantages included enhanced connectivity, access to services, convenience, and adaptability. Video conferencing, remote work tools, e-learning platforms, telehealth played pivotal roles in keeping the community engaged and functional. However, these tools also brought disadvantages, such as screen fatigue, security concerns, potential isolation, and unequal access, which required addressing. Many communities found ways to adapt and cope, utilising social media for mutual support and coordinating aid efforts.

Looking ahead, these digital tools are likely to maintain their importance, even as the pandemic recedes. Their future impact could involve more innovative applications, greater inclusivity, and improved privacy and security measures. As technology is involved, these tools will continue to play a vital role in community building, fostering connectivity, and adapting to a changing world.



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Thank you

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