



# Our Impact

Swansea Bay Health Charity Impact Report  
2023-24



**Elusen Iechyd**  
Bae Abertawe  

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Swansea Bay  
**Health Charity**



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# Welcome and thank you

I am delighted to welcome you to Swansea Bay Health Charity's first impact report, where you can read about how the dedication of fundraisers and supporters translates into real-life benefits for our patients, their families and our staff.

The official charity of Swansea Bay University Health Board provides those things which are over and above what is paid for by core NHS funding. This includes world-leading research, innovation and equipment which speeds up diagnosis, improves treatments and helps patients to recover and regain their independence. The charity also supports projects that make hospital stays more comfortable and the environment more welcoming, provides resources for meaningful activity and distraction and enhances the wellbeing and development of staff.

It's a big ask as the health board provides care and services to around 400,000 people living across Swansea and Neath Port Talbot and beyond and employs 14,000 staff. But when we work together, we can achieve great things and I'm thrilled that we are able to celebrate so many successes so far.

I'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who supports the charity. I'm really excited about what comes next and I know that, with your support, every £1 we raise can make a real difference.

Diolch,

**Jan Williams**

Swansea Bay University Health Board Chair







# What we do

Swansea Bay Health Charity is the official NHS charity for Swansea Bay University Health Board.

We work with individuals like you – patients, family, friends, the general public and staff – to raise money for good causes, those things not covered by core NHS funding, so that together, we can make a real difference to people's lives.

Funds are raised in a number of different ways:

- Through donations by patients and the public, sponsorship and other contributions from businesses
- Through legacies, wills and gifts in memory of loved ones
- Through fundraising activities and events
- Through bids for funds to other grant-making bodies, such as NHS Charities Together and other organisations, which we submit in partnership with our services.

# Pioneering research

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Our investment of **£107,000** in 2023-24 supported projects including:

- a world-leading trial in partnership with Swansea University to pioneer the use of scans and blood tests to detect pancreatic cancer earlier and improve survival rates.
- boosting innovation in renal services by paying for researchers to access a leading international resource of top-quality data.

You can read more about how your donations support research which benefits patients on the following pages.



## Targeting tumours

Thanks to your generous donations people having cancer treatment are now benefiting from far more targeted radiotherapy.

This is due to a partnership between the South West Wales Cancer Centre at Singleton Hospital and Swansea University, which started in spring 2024 and has been funded by £73,000 from the South West Wales Cancer Fund, one of the funds that comes under the umbrella of Swansea Bay Health Charity.

The money pays for sessions on a very high-spec MRI scanner owned by Swansea University and located in the ILS2 building on the Singleton campus.

These MRI scans can take place on the same day as a CT scan in the hospital just 200 yards away, helping doctors to build up the most accurate picture when planning radiotherapy, meaning the treatment is more targeted and can be started quicker.

Previously, the scans would have been done on separate occasions.

Up to 300 patients will benefit over the next two years. Although it will be used for several types of cancers, it will initially be for patients with brain tumours.

Catherine Sherry, who lives near Neyland, was the first person to benefit from this new approach.

“

It's amazing, they told me they get the results really quickly so they can look at the scans and start the radiotherapy much quicker.

”



Catherine Sherry was the first patient to benefit from the double scan programme

## Better cancer treatments

Money raised by the iconic annual Jiffy's Cancer 50 Challenge bike ride funds Dr Jonathan Helbrow's role at the South West Wales Cancer Centre (SWWCC), where he is undertaking research into improving radiotherapy treatment alongside carrying out patient consultations.

Dr Helbrow has also taken part in the 50-mile ride led by Wales dual code rugby legend Jonathan 'Jiffy' Davies, having seen the significant impact cancer has on patients, families and loved ones.

The August 2024 ride from Cardiff City Stadium to Swansea's Bracelet Bay was the fourth in the series, with more than 340 riders taking part.

Over four years the event has raised more than £250,000, which has been divided equally between the SWWCC at Singleton Hospital in Swansea and Velindre Hospital Charity in Cardiff.

Dr Helbrow's research has focused on radiotherapy techniques and results for oesophageal and gastric cancer patients.

It aims to identify the correct levels of radiotherapy that needs to be applied in procedures, and significantly reduce side effects for patients.

He said: "Radiotherapy is like surgery in that it goes through a process. There are elements of that process which can go very well or not as well as we would like.

"A big part of my research is looking at those individual elements to see where things can be improved."

He is also looking at the use of proton beam therapy before surgery in oesophageal cancer.

At the finish line of the 2024 event Jiffy gave a heartfelt thanks to everyone involved.

He added: "We had people on the ride who are currently having cancer treatment. On the darkest of days, days like this need to be celebrated."



More than 340 riders took part in the fourth event in the series in August 2024.



Top: Jonathan 'Jiffy' Davies during the 2024 Jiffy's Cancer 50 Challenge  
Bottom: Dr Jonathan Helbrow

# Brain injury rehabilitation

Thanks to charitable funds, brain injury rehabilitation is now extending beyond clinic walls into the fresh air, offering patients the opportunity to develop skills and improve confidence through various activities.

The Brain Injury Service collaborates with several organisations to provide opportunities such as surfing, gardening and music.

Research has shown that these activities help support patients to overcome daily life challenges, enabling them to engage with and reconnect to the world, instilling a genuine sense of achievement.

A brain injury can profoundly affect a patient's cognition (how they learn and understand), physical presentation, behaviour, relationships, employment, and overall identity and wellbeing.

By utilising opportunities with community partnerships for neuro-rehabilitation, patients can focus on their wellbeing, share experiences, and learn compensatory strategies, helping them rediscover their confidence and sense of self.

Partnership opportunities are funded by donations to the Community Brain Injury Service, which are raised by supporters like Darren Lewis, a father from Swansea.

Darren suffered a serious brain injury in a motorbike accident in 2021. He received intervention from the Community Brain Injury Service at Morriston Hospital, which offers speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, clinical psychology and music therapy.

He organised a sponsored bike ride to and from Dunvant Rugby Club to Knab Rock in Mumbles, raising over £900 for the service.

Darren felt a sense of achievement by giving back to the service and ensuring future patients are able to access rehabilitation opportunities in the community.

Swansea Bay University Health Board also has a neuro-rehabilitation unit at Neath Port Talbot Hospital.



**Darren Lewis, right, raised money for the Traumatic Brain Injury Service after receiving treatment himself following a motorbike accident. He is pictured with rehab specialist Rob May.**



# Cutting-edge equipment

Our investment of **£294,000** in 2023-24 bought premium medical equipment over and above what NHS core funding provides including:

- A **portable renal scanner** (pictured). This advanced technology allows for bedside assessments, making the kidney dialysis process more efficient and improving the patient experience.
- Two new **Slit Lamps** for ophthalmology, a high-intensity light source which, when used with other equipment, gives a magnified view of the eye making it easier to detect defects and disease.
- A new **ultrasound machine** for Gynaecology Surgical Services, which gives improved images leading to quicker and more accurate diagnosis.
- A new **GlideScope Core System** for the Intensive Therapy Unit, which is an airway visualisation system that can deliver simultaneous video laryngoscopy and bronchoscopy, invaluable when treating critically ill patients.

You can read more about how your donations support new equipment which benefits patients on the following pages.



Cutting-edge equipment: how we make a difference

# Regaining independence

Money you raised has allowed us to harness cutting-edge technology to create relatively simple but life-changing devices to give people with disabilities greater independence.

It helped cover the costs of raw materials which were used to develop a range of personalised devices and aids, such as holders for deodorant, hair curlers and nail varnish.

Using computer-aided design and state-of-the-art 3D printing Jonathan Howard, a clinical scientist at the Rehabilitation Engineering Unit based at Morriston Hospital, produced designs which were then used in the production of devices to meet individuals' needs.

Georgia Sinclair, who has hemiplegia (paralysis of the left-hand side of her body) was among those to benefit from the innovative project.

She said: "I have struggled with trying to be independent again, and Jonathan has been designing products for me to become more independent, such as to help me do my hair.

"The struggle with being a disabled person is that you lack independence on things that you know are so simple. I have become a lot more independent. It has benefited me a lot."

Fellow participant Daniel Jones, who can't use his right hand due to cerebral palsy, had a deodorant holder made which allowed him to put deodorant under his left armpit using his left hand.



Daniel Jones can care for himself using his personalised deodorant holder.



A specially designed holder allows Georgia to paint her own nails.



Clinical scientist Jonathan Howard used computer-aided design to create customised devices for personal care.

# Diagnostic development

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men and affects around one in eight men in the UK during their lifetime.

In Wales, more than 2,800 men are diagnosed every year.

A biopsy, where a small amount of tissue is taken so it can be examined under a microscope, is a key step in confirming a diagnosis.

Charitable funds purchased a piece of equipment that improves this process for both patients and staff.

The Prostate Triplane Transducer was purchased as part of a prostate cancer diagnostic service development.

It uses ultrasound and can accurately target areas of concern, which would have been identified by an MRI scan, producing high-quality images which increase the chances of cancer being spotted and diagnosed.

The way the instrument is designed makes it easy for surgeons to use with one hand, reducing the time the procedure takes and the discomfort for the patient.



Minimising patient discomfort during prostate biopsies.

# Enhancing spaces, patient welfare and amenities

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Our investment of almost **£231,000** in 2023-24 provided a wide range of practical, emotional and wellbeing support to patients and their loved ones including:

- A monthly support group for those affected by secondary breast cancer, which provides a safe space to talk and share feelings.
- Beautiful flowers planted around the Singleton Hospital site, helping patients and visitors stay connected with nature to enhance wellbeing.
- Games, modelling clay, paints, empathy dolls and cooking equipment for older patients in the specialist dementia unit, Ysbryd Y Coed at Cefn Coed Hospital.
- Colour changing ceiling panels for patient wellbeing in part of the Welsh Centre for Burns and Plastic Surgery at Morriston Hospital.

You can read more about how your donations enhance spaces, patient welfare and amenities on the following pages.

Enhancing spaces, patient welfare and amenities: how we make a difference

## A lasting tribute

Stone seating pods with timber benches, inlaid with handmade clay tiles, are a poignant and lasting tribute to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and a quiet outdoor space in which to reflect and recharge.

The £189,000 project – funded entirely through charitable funds – saw the benches built at Morriston, Singleton, Neath Port Talbot and Cefn Coed hospitals following extensive engagement with health board staff.

The inlaid tiles reflected the thoughts of NHS staff, schoolchildren, and members of the public in the Swansea Bay area.

The project was led by health board heritage lead, Martin Thomas. He said: "They are placed in busy hospital sites as we also wanted them to convey hope and resilience, and to be practical and offer usable outdoor spaces for everyone for now and in the future, supporting the wellbeing of the staff, patients and visitors who use them."

The project actively involved a wide range of health board staff, who participated in arts workshops to create clay tiles bearing their heartfelt messages.

Leading the art work was Welsh artist Nigel Talbot, who was chosen because of his previous impressive community involvement including working with schools and the public. Nigel built his vision with the help of award-winning dry stone waller Allan Jones.

Primary school children local to each hospital site also helped to create the clay tiles, and members of the University of the Third Age (U3A) were also engaged in the workshops, adding to the collaborative spirit of the project.

The project was funded through a grant to Swansea Bay Health Charity from NHS Charities Together.

The grant also provided £100,000 for new staff cycle storage across the health board.

Swansea Bay Health Charity funds the maintenance of the commemorative gardens.



Commemorative  
stone seating  
pods at Morriston  
Hospital



Enhancing spaces, patient welfare and amenities: how we make a difference

## Ward's wellbeing room hope

Patient Helen Morgan and colleagues went the extra mile to raise £2,500 for the ward which has saved her life on more than one occasion.

She was also joined by friend Geraldine Williams in a sponsored swim.

Family friend and Wales rugby star Jac Morgan joined Helen to present a cheque to Singleton Hospital's oncology and haematology ward.

The money will be used to help them achieve their ambition of creating a wellbeing room for patients and staff.

Helen has a rare blood disorder that wipes out her immune system and she has to call the ward if she becomes unwell.

Wanting to do something to thank the team, Helen asked her work colleagues at Swansea-based haulage firm, A T Morgan and Son, to accompany her on a 10-mile sponsored walk.

She is full of praise for the ward and its staff.

She said: "The work they do here is sometimes very quietly done. I don't think people know the extent of this ward, the haematology and oncology sides, and how important it is to everybody who does have an issue with immunity or cancer care where immunity is a problem. Until you have actually been and seen it for yourself, which I have several times.

"I'd like to say thank you to them for keeping me alive. I'm still here and I'm still fighting.

"Hopefully, in the future, I will be raising more money for them again."

A T Morgan and Son has raised more than £10,000 over the last three years.

“ They have literally saved my life a few times ”

Helen Morgan



From left to right: Amy Saunders, matron, Jo Woozley, ward manager, Stephen Morgan, Jac Morgan, Helen Morgan, and Lowri Williams, nurse.

# Stepping up to grow rehab service

A stroke survivor who had to learn how to walk, talk and eat again is helping other patients facing similar challenges.

Barbara Thomas, who has limited mobility, completed a sponsored walk to raise more than £3,000 which will go towards creating a sensory garden for the neuro-rehabilitation unit at Neath Port Talbot Hospital.

The aim is to heal and inspire other patients with brain injuries, while thanking staff for the wonderful care she received.

Barbara's three-mile walk with family, friends and hospital staff along Aberavon seafront also got the Royal seal of approval from the Prince and Princess of Wales. A letter from Kensington Palace called her dedication "truly inspiring".

Barbara said: "I have come to a stage in my life where I want to give something back for the wonderful care I have had and continue to have from the neuro-rehabilitation ward.

"I just can't thank all of the staff enough and that's why I wanted to do the challenge.

"They deserve everything. They took great care of me – every single nurse and even the cleaners and food team. They are angels and they were all wonderful to me."



**Top:** Stroke survivor Barbara Thomas raised more than £3,000 by doing a sponsored walk. She is pictured with husband Des.

**Centre:** Barbara Thomas was joined on her sponsored walk by family, friends and staff from the neuro-rehabilitation unit at Neath Port Talbot Hospital.

**Left:** This garden at the neuro-rehabilitation unit will be getting a makeover.



# Staff wellbeing and training

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Investing in staff wellbeing and training helps to improve patient outcomes and experience. Our investment of more than **£100,000** over the past two years in staff wellbeing and **£90,000** in training provided a wide range of support including:

- Breakfast tokens for nursing staff to use in our hospital canteens to mark International Nurses Day.
- A new microwave and fridge freezer for staff in the Y Rhosyn palliative care unit in Neath Port Talbot Hospital so they can prepare and store lunches.
- A new set of rattan furniture for staff at Gorseinon Hospital to take a break and relax on their own. It can also be used by patients.
- Funding to attend training courses and conferences across the UK and further afield, above and beyond those provided by core NHS funding, to enhance learning and techniques.

You can read more about how your donations enhance staff wellbeing and training on the following pages.



# Sharing HOPE

An initiative is helping staff reflect on and open up about the challenges they face.

Sharing HOPE (The Art of Healing Together) is a ground-breaking and award-winning therapeutic arts project which offers safe spaces for expression for all Swansea Bay University Health Board staff.

It is a collaboration between Arts and Heritage and Suicide Prevention Quality Improvement leads.

NHS staff work under pressure and often in environments where lives are in the balance. The arts and creative activities are provided in safe and supportive environments, offering staff new ways of coming together, expressing themselves and improving their own wellbeing, which in turn improves the outcomes and experiences of patients.

In the first two years of the programme more than 1,200 staff members from across Swansea Bay University Health Board engaged with artist facilitators in more than 170 sessions.

As part of the Sharing HOPE project, nurses took part in an art class and a mosaic was created.

Evaluation shows that for most it is a welcome opportunity to relax, reflect and focus on their wellbeing, yet for others it has been a way out of a downward spiral.

Sharing HOPE's success has been recognised with prestigious awards, including the Nursing Times Workforce Award for Best Staff Wellbeing Initiative and the HPMA Cymru Award for Wellbeing. It also won a health board Living Our Values award.

As the health board continues to prioritise staff wellbeing, Sharing HOPE stands as a testament to the power of the arts in promoting mental health and fostering a compassionate workplace culture.



Here's what those who have taken part have to say about the project:

"Lovely, relaxing environment to connect with colleagues and take a break in the work day."

Staff nurse

"Helpful, emotional. I'm glad it's not just me feeling this way. I was thinking of leaving, but will carry on for a moment."

Health Care Support Worker

"Really enjoyed the session after a stressful morning, feel like I am ending the day in a much happier mood."

Student nurse





# Investing in staff training

We provide funding for our staff to attend training courses and conferences across the UK and further afield, above and beyond those provided by core NHS funding, to enhance learning and techniques.

## In 2023-24 these included:

- CFSGBI Conference (Craniofacial Society of Great Britain and Ireland)
- Annual UK Enhancing Practise in Kidney Care course
- PG Certificate in cancer studies
- ESMO Immuno-Oncology Congress
- Oncology nurse-led telephone triage assessment on-line workshop
- Sheffield Hallam University – Expert Practice for Extended roles – Advancing Specialist Practice.
- University of Cumbria – Non-medical prescribing course
- Society for Endocrinology Clinical Update
- University of Plymouth – Advanced Professional Practice
- The Intensive Care Society course
- SCTS Annual Meeting (Society for Clinical Trials)
- British Society for Heart Failure Annual Conference
- Diabetes UK Annual Conference
- BSSPD Conference (British Society of Prosthodontics)





# Small grants scheme for voluntary and community groups

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The Small Grants Scheme is sponsored by Swansea Bay Health Charity and administered by Swansea Council for Voluntary Services. It is a chance for voluntary and community groups who provide or intend to provide local services which improve the health and wellbeing of the local populations of Swansea and Neath Port Talbot to apply for funding.



**In 2023-24 13 projects received funding including:**

- Happy Headwork Community CIC for online and exercise classes to help women going through peri menopause and menopause.
- Resolven Building Blocks for workshops to help with social interaction and learning new skills in order to benefit overall health and wellbeing.
- Your Voice Advocacy to deliver weekly cookery classes for adults with a learning disability, helping them to eat well on a budget.
- The Musical Memories Choir to bring the power of music and singing to those living with dementia and their carers.
- Swansea Community Farm Saturday Club to help children and young people with behavioural and mental health challenges.
- Faith in Families for their Inside-Out Wellness Workshops running across three communities to enhance the health and wellbeing of the families taking part by building self-confidence, skills and relationships while outdoors and enjoying nature.



**Adults with a learning disability  
learned how to eat well on a budget  
thanks to cookery classes delivered  
by Your Voice Advocacy**

# How your donations have been spent

Pioneering research  
**£107,000**



Enhancing spaces,  
patient welfare and  
amenities  
**£231,000**



Small grants scheme  
for voluntary and  
community groups  
**£45,000**

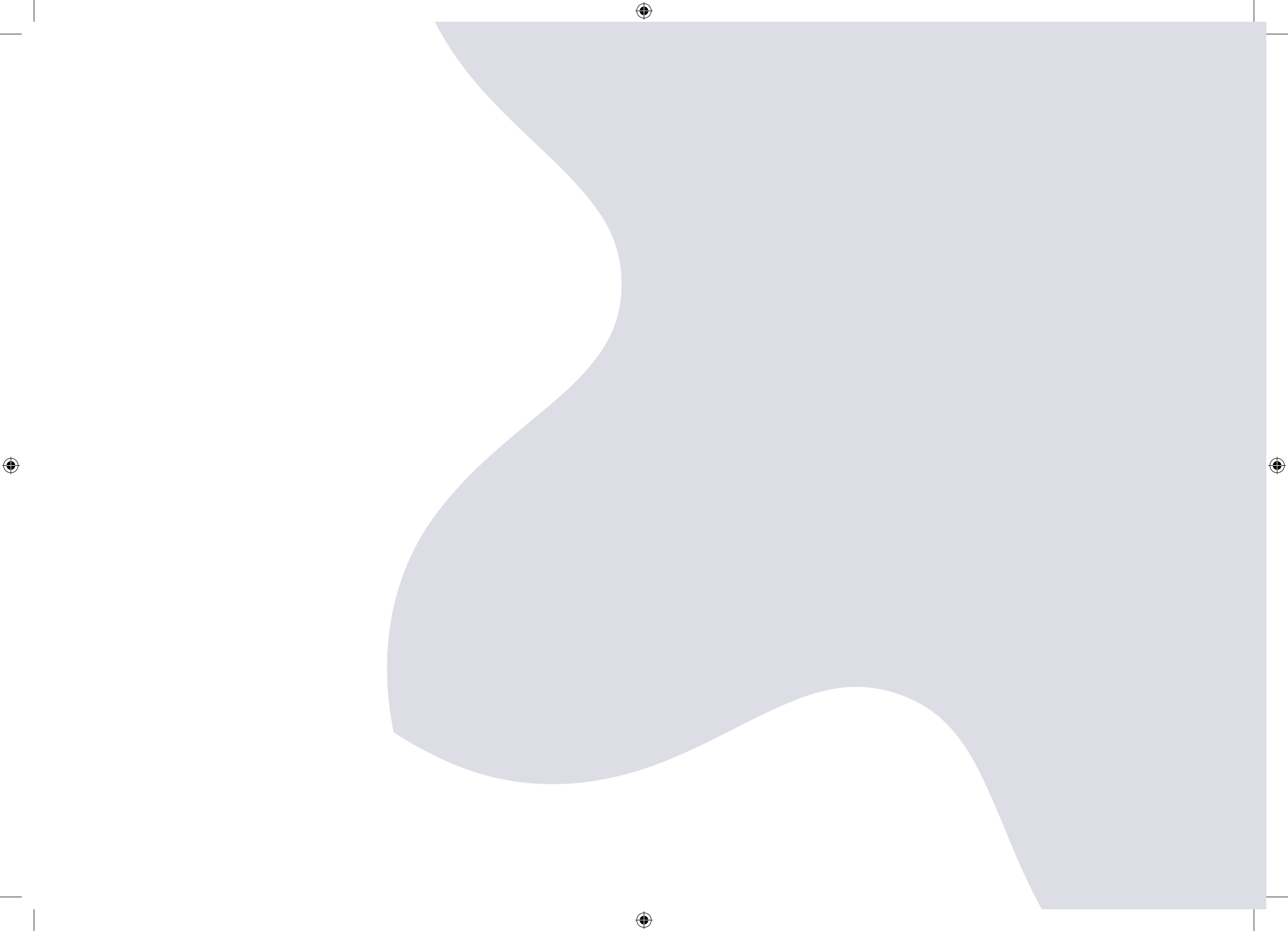


Cutting-edge  
equipment  
**£294,000**



Staff wellbeing and  
training  
**£190,000**





# Thank you

We can't do anything without the fantastic backing of our supporters and we always love to hear about what you're doing and your ideas for getting involved.

## Email

[swanseabay.healthcharity@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:swanseabay.healthcharity@wales.nhs.uk)



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