

Evaluating the Implementation of an Audiology Pathway in the Memory Assessment Service within the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board: A Service Evaluation.

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What is the Pathway?



The purpose is to ensure that every adult accessing assessments from the MAS is not negatively impacted by an unrecognised hearing impairment. Therefore, a screening measure is implemented to recognise the incidence of unidentified hearing losses in PwD and allow interventions to be put in place.



Aims and Objectives

Evaluate the effectiveness of the new pathway.

Evaluate how long-term implementation could positively impact adults living with hearing loss and cognitive impairment, the wider population, and the health board.

Background



Hearing loss in midlife has been found to have the largest risk factor prevalence for dementia at **9%**.



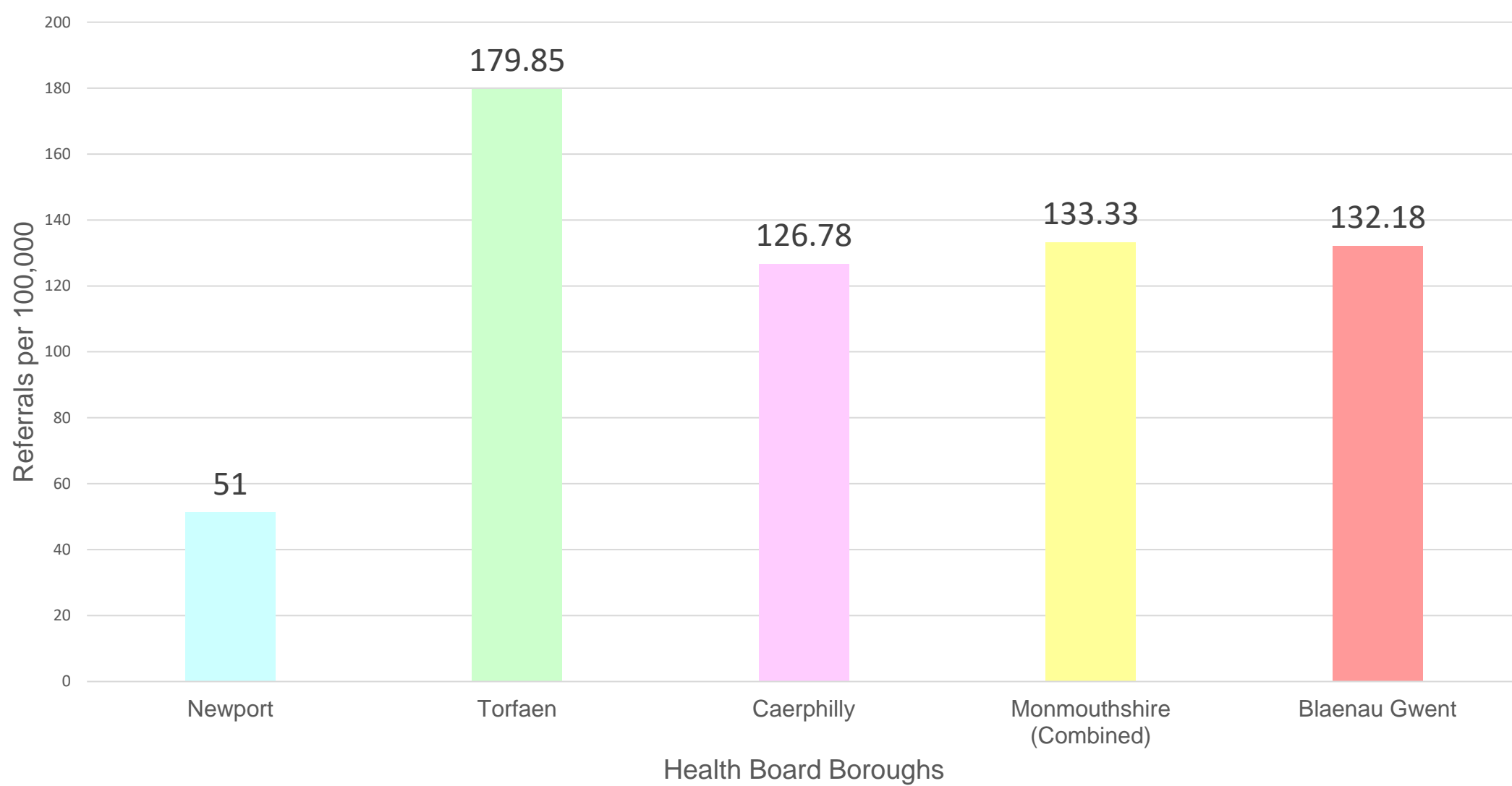
Hearing loss has been linked to poorer performance in cognitive testing and an increased risk of dementia.



Hearing aids may be able to protect against or delay dementia.

Results

MAS Referrals per 100,000 of the Population 2023

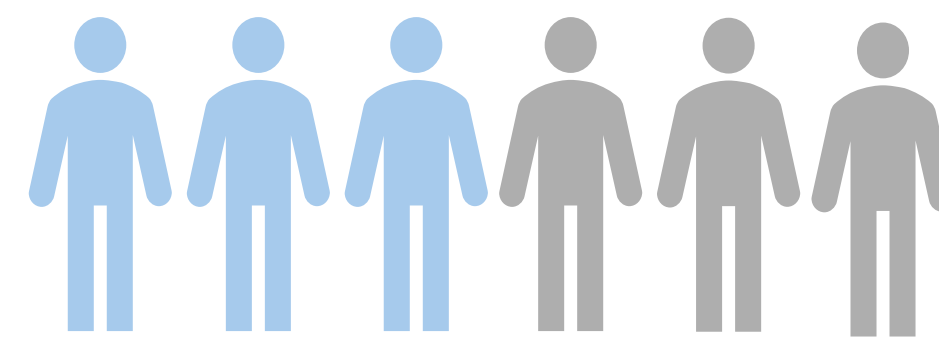


Newport was significantly under-referring patients from the Memory Assessment Service to Audiology. This may be due to socioeconomic factors within the area. Organisational factors may have also played a large part in this, such as a lack of interprofessional understanding and training between the MAS team and Audiology.

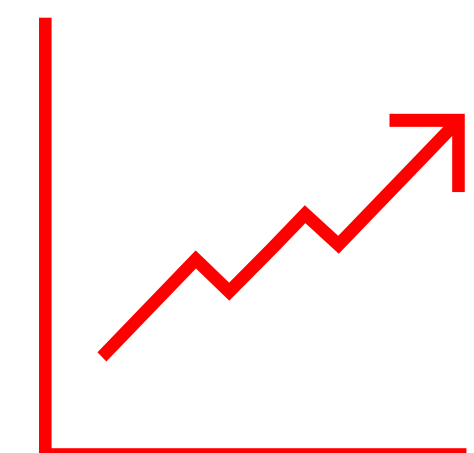
This needs to be addressed to improve the efficacy of the service and ensure equal access across the health board.

Most patients decided to receive Audiological interventions following their screening appointment. Data collection confirms that **99%** of patients referred from the MAS had hearing loss.

Results support the implementation of hearing screening for MAS patients to reduce the impact of hearing impairment on function, quality of life, and risk of cognitive decline.

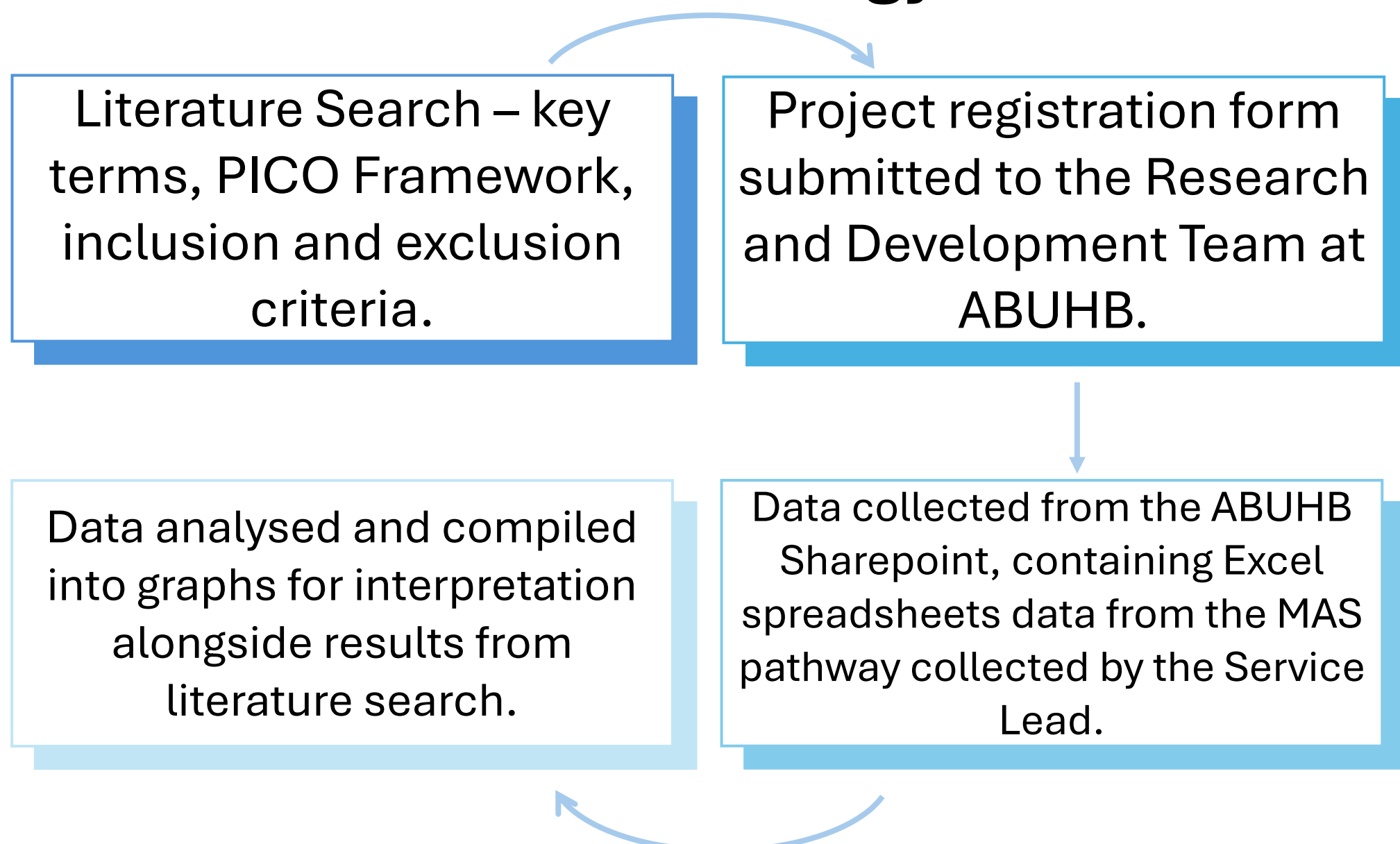


Only **55%** of patients attended their initial Audiology screening in 2024.



32% increase in appointment DNAs between 2023 and 2024.

Methodology



Recommendations



Increase Performance Tracking to Improve Referral Rates



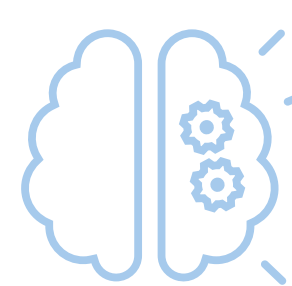
Increase the Clinical Use of Assistive Listening Devices



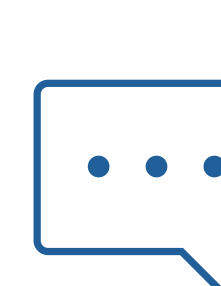
Begin Follow Up Data Collection



Pathway Information Leaflet



Combined Cognitive and Hearing Screening



Reminder Services and Dementia Friendly Communication

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