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Velindre Cancer Centre: PDF

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New Welsh produce including healthy vending machine compatible meals are among the improvements made within the Velindre Cancer Centre to the food offering for staff, patients and visitors.

Velindre Cancer Service is a leading provider of non-surgical, tertiary oncology services, dedicated to delivering expert cancer care to patients across south-east Wales, serving a population of 1.7 million.

The Trust's 'Food Mission' is laying the foundations for healthier, more sustainable food choices across the organisation as it prepares for the opening of the new Velindre Cancer Centre in Whitchurch, Cardiff. Scheduled to open in Spring 2027, the brand-new hospital will replace the Trust's current hospital, parts of which are over 70 years old.

The project is being delivered in partnership with Menter Môn, which has built a strong reputation for introducing locally sourced, healthy food into schools and public settings across Wales.

Consultant and dietician Beca Lyne-Pirkis is supporting the initiative, bringing her experience as a chef, broadcaster and NHS dietician to help shape the Trust's new approach to food, having herself risen to national prominence on S4C, and The Great British Bake Off.

She said improving food environments in healthcare settings can make a real difference to wellbeing.

"Food has a huge impact on how people feel and function," said Beca. "By improving what's available day-to-day, from healthy vending to fresh Welsh produce, Velindre is helping create an environment where nutritious choices are easy and accessible."

At the heart of the Food Mission is a commitment to promoting Welsh produce and reducing food miles.

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Welsh products are available 3 times a week on the Canteen menu. These products are being highlighted on menus and themed food days continue to encourage the popularity amongst their customers.

Their newest development is the introduction of new lines to the vending machines and other sale points of nutritious soup made in Wales.

Working with Welsh food service company Castell Howell, the Trust has introduced grab-and-go soup pots and meal pots from The Real Soup Co, Ebbw Vale.

The award-winning products are designed specifically for vending machines, providing balanced meals such as soups, curries and risottos in compact single-serve containers suitable for round-the-clock access.

The aim is to give staff healthier alternatives to the traditional snacks often found in vending machines while ensuring nutritious food is available at any time of day.

Velindre's supplier for fruit and vegetables is Welsh company WR Bishops based in Pontyclun. David Wylie, Project Manager at Menter Môn, said the partnership offered an opportunity to rethink food in healthcare environments.

"By working with Velindre we're helping create food options that are both convenient and nourishing," he said. "At the same time, we're supporting Welsh producers and helping reduce food miles, which benefits the environment as well as the local economy."

Sue Sheppard-Murphy, Deputy Operations Manager and Trust Catering Lead, said the Food Mission reflects the organisation's wider commitment to sustainability and wellbeing.

"Our Food Mission is about much more than meals," she said. "It's about supporting recovery, improving staff wellbeing, reducing environmental impact and strengthening the Welsh food economy. As we prepare to move into the new

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Velindre Cancer Centre, this work is helping us build a healthier food culture for everyone who walks through our doors.”

Future plans for the new site include opportunities for engagement with the community to get involved with the communal herb vegetable gardens that will be part of the environment in the new site. Inpatients will be
able to order meals using a digital platform from the bedside. The menus will emphasise the most nutritional option meals and those produced within Wales. This will reduce food waste and ensure patients have visibility of which options support the local economy.

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