

## Wrexham team helping the homeless praised by First Minister

The Community Care Hub, which has benefited from Welsh Government funding, provides health and social care services to rough sleepers, together with housing and welfare advice and a range of other services.

The hub was founded in 2016 by Wrexham GP Dr Karen Sankey, Dewi Richards, a mental health manager at Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and Tanya Jones from homeless charity The Wallich.

It holds weekly drop-in sessions with a number of organisations, including the health board, Department for Work and Pensions and Wrexham Council. The hub now supports more than 100 people who are homeless, sleeping rough or have mental health or substance misuse problems.

The First Minister joined one of the drop-in sessions at the Salvation Army building in Wrexham.

Mark Drakeford said:

“As the weather turns colder it is vital the right support is available for people who are homeless and sleeping rough.

“We’ve recently announced £1.34m to tackle rough sleeping in Wales this winter, including £54,000 for the Community Care Hub, in Wrexham.

“The multi-agency approach here, with everyone available in one place to provide vital advice and support is exemplary. There are a number of complex reasons why people find themselves homeless and it is important they have the opportunity to access the right support at the right time – as they do here.

“I would like to thank all those involved in this project for their hard work and dedication.”

Dr Sankey said:

“I am delighted with what the community care collaborative has achieved at the hub in partnership with AVOW and the Salvation Army, working with a wide range of voluntary and statutory sector partners.

“The hub is an innovative model of primary care offering an accessible, holistic, person-centred approach that meets the health and wellbeing needs of some of the most vulnerable people in our

community.

“The success of the hub has attracted funding support from the Welsh Government, the Steve Morgan Foundation, the Waterloo Foundation and the Allen Lane Foundation, enabling the collaborative to employ care navigators – one of whom was a hub user in its early days.

“Working with the health board, we are exploring how the model could be replicated as an alternative model of primary care provision for the wider community.”

Major Roger Batt, Salvation Army Divisional Commander for NW England & North Wales:

“I am so pleased that First Minister, Mark Drakeford has come along today to Wrexham Salvation Army to see for himself what a vital service the care hub is providing to people experiencing homelessness in and around the town.

“The fact that visitors who may have primarily just dropped in to the church to get a hot meal and a change of clothes can also get to see a GP, go to the harm reduction surgery or get advice on benefits while they’re here is just brilliant.

“The care hub is really helping to reconnect people to the support they need to overcome homelessness and I am full of admiration for everyone involved in the partnership for making it such a success.”