



Llywodraeth Cymru
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Strategic Framework for Welsh Language Services in Health, Social Services and Social Care

More *than just* **words**....



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Context

1. The Welsh Government is committed to delivering high quality health, social services and social care services that are centred on users' needs. This strategic framework is built on the values that all users should be treated with dignity and respect and should receive accurate assessments and appropriate care.
2. It is important for people working in health, social service and social care to recognise that many people can only communicate their care needs effectively through the medium of Welsh. For many Welsh speakers being able to use your own language has to be seen as a core component of care, not an optional extra.
3. Many service users are very vulnerable, so placing a responsibility on them to ask for services through the medium of Welsh is unfair. It is the responsibility of service providers to meet these care needs. Organisations are expected to mainstream Welsh language services as an integral element of service planning and delivery.

Why should Welsh language services be strengthened

4. Public services in Wales are committed to providing citizen centred services. Health, social services and social care focus on caring for people as individuals, placing the user at the centre of care. Many people can only communicate and participate in their care as equal partners effectively through the medium of Welsh. Service providers have a responsibility to meet these care needs.
5. There are four good reasons for getting this right:
 - improving the quality of care – it is important to recognise the concept of language need. For many Welsh speakers, language is an integral element of their care e.g. some people with dementia, or who have suffered a stroke, and children under the age of five
 - maintaining professional standards – numerous professional standards in health and social care list

effective communication as a key requirement and highlight the need to maintain respect and dignity

- meeting the language need of users – organisations have a responsibility to recognise and accept responsibility to respond to language need as an integral element of care. In the strategic framework we refer to this as the “Active Offer”
- comply with legal and statutory requirements – organisations in the public sector have a responsibility to comply with the new Welsh Language (Wales) Measure. This will create standards regarding Welsh, which will result in rights being established that will ensure Welsh speakers can receive services in Welsh.

The Present Situation

6. Currently there is some good practice, but more often than not it is the result of the commitment of individuals, not a planned element of service provision. There is lack of capacity within the workforce and differing levels of understanding among staff regarding the Welsh language as a component of care. There is also inadequate use of the hidden Welsh language skills among the workforce.
7. In most organisations there is inconsistent leadership and ownership of Welsh language services and little evidence that it is mainstreamed into key systems such as workforce and service planning, education and training programmes and quality frameworks.
8. The challenge now is to spread good practice in a systematic way and to mainstream into all aspects of service planning and delivery.

The Strategic Framework

9. The Strategic Framework provides a means to achieve this. The policy document provides the evidence for change, an overview of current provision and the strategic direction to improve services. Our vision is for Welsh speakers to receive services that meet their needs as a natural part of their care.
10. The Strategic Framework outlines the six key objectives that all organisations need to work towards:
 - implementing a systematic approach to Welsh language services as an integral element of service planning and delivery
 - building on current best practice and planning, commissioning and providing care based on the “Active Offer” service
 - increasing the capability of the workforce to provide Welsh language services in priority areas and language awareness among all staff
 - creating leaders who will foster a supportive ethos within organisations, so that Welsh speaking users receive language sensitive services as a natural part of their care
 - providing education, learning and development programmes which reflect the services’ responsibility to plan and provide Welsh language services
 - ensuring that all national strategies, policies and leadership programmes mainstream Welsh language services.

Three Year Action Plans

11. The Strategic Framework is supported by three-year Action Plans – one for the NHS and one for Social Services. While they are complementary and some of the actions should be taken forward in partnership, they reflect the very different accountability systems and processes within both sectors.
12. The action plans detail the practical steps needed to achieve this, starting in April 2013.
13. In November 2015 a second cycle of Action Plans will be published.
14. Achieving progress in the first year is crucial to ensure the foundations are in place for the future, to initiate immediate impact and to reflect the determination of Welsh Government to meet the needs of Welsh speakers.
15. Key expectations during this period include strengthening leadership, mapping the workforce and starting the process of accepting responsibility for meeting users' language needs by increasing awareness of the "Active Offer" principle.

Monitoring Progress

16. A robust monitoring system will be implemented in partnership with the service. The system will be based on the principles that the service users' voice will be central to the process, the focus will be on users' experience and that it is integrated into existing monitoring systems.
17. Organisations will be expected to report progress to their local community through open meetings of their Boards and Councils.
18. The system will operate at local and national level.
19. The focus of the monitoring system will be on providing support, to enable organisations to deliver high quality care.

Strategic Objective 1: Social Services Departments and Social Care providers to implement a systematic approach to Welsh language services as an integral element of service planning and delivery

Outcomes	Actions	Lead Responsibility	Cycle 1 April 2013 - March 2016 Completed by end of year	How will we monitor progress
1. People receive language sensitive care, because social services and social care providers mainstream Welsh language services into all aspects of planning, commissioning and delivery.	1.1 Informed by the Directors of Public Health needs assessments, the Care Council for Wales working with NLIAH and the Welsh Language Unit to issue guidance on how to analyse community language needs.	Directors of Public Health, The Care Council for Wales, NLIAH and the Welsh Language Unit	1	Through: Evidence from User Experience Surveys and engagement / involvement networks Evidence in service plans
	1.2 Under the leadership of the Director of Social Services, departments to establish their Welsh language community profile and use this information as a baseline for planning local services.	LA Director of Social Services	1	
	1.3 Planning and commissioning systems to include reference to the linguistic profile of their communities and ensure this is reflected in their planning, commissioning and service delivery.	LA Director of Social Services	2	
	1.4 To expect all registered providers to provide information to potential and current users, and their families, on the level of bilingual provision. To ensure that the staff register includes information on the Welsh language skills of staff.	CSSIW	3	
	1.5 To offer and record the user's language of need and ensure that subsequent care is linguistically sensitive.	Directors of Social Services	3	

Outcomes	Actions	Lead Responsibility	Cycle 1 April 2013 - March 2016 Completed by end of year	How will we monitor progress
2. ICT systems support front line staff to provide services for users and carers in their own language.	2.1 Increase awareness of the impact of language sensitivity (quality care issues and the organisations' legal responsibilities) among ICT staff that support social services.	Director of Social Services and ICT Service Manager	1	Through: User Record Systems Evidence from ICT commissioning documentation
	2.2 ICT specifications to include details of the Welsh language dimension of the service being commissioned.	Directors of Social Services	3	
	2.3 Data systems enable the service to operate bilingually e.g. allow Welsh speaking users to be matched with Welsh speaking staff; workforce data systems record staff language skills; language need/choice recorded on client data systems.	Directors of Social Services	3	Feedback from staff on ability to operate bilingually

Outcomes	Actions	Lead Responsibility	Cycle 1 April 2013 - March 2016 Completed by end of year	How will we monitor progress
3. People receive a person centred service from commissioned services in line with <i>Sustainable Social Service for Wales: A plan for Action</i> .	3.1 Support commissioners to contract services that are sensitive to the needs of Welsh speakers, by issuing national guidance on commissioning bilingual services, supported by training for procurement/commissioning teams.	DHSSC	1	Through: A section on expected Welsh language service standards to be in the National Framework Contract
	3.2 LA procurement to follow the Welsh Language Commissioners guidance on commissioning services.	DHSSC and Director of Social Services	2	
	3.3 The National Framework Contract for care homes and non-residential services to specify in detail the Welsh language dimension of the service.	HSSC	2	

Strategic Objective 2: To build on current best practice and plan, commission and provide care based on the 'Active Offer'

Outcomes	Actions	Lead Responsibility	Completed by end of year	How will we monitor progress
1. In line with the emphasis on individual-centred services in Sustainable Social Services for Wales, raise awareness of the "Active Offer" among social services and social care staff.	1.1 Develop and disseminate guidance to the service on the principle of meeting users' language need by offering an "Active Offer" service to social service departments and independent providers. (to include examples of current practice).	DHSSC	1	Through: Established systems such as staff surveys, internal OD and professional development programmes
	1.2 Provide staff training on the "Active Offer" Service within the organisations and ensure that it is mainstreamed into induction and other training programmes.	Local Authority HR departments	3	
	1.3 Take practical steps to implement the "Active Offer" service in an incremental way, starting with the first point of contact service and information services. Record when able to respond.	Directors of Social Services	1	
2. More accurate assessments and effective services provided for Welsh speaking users by mainstreaming the "Active Offer" Service into the integrated dementia services.	2.1 Map current provision and capacity to deliver an "Active Offer" service within dementia services.	Directors of Social Services	2	Through: Established mechanisms within organisations such as user forums CSSIW Reports
	2.2 Develop and issue Welsh language versions of core dementia assessment tools (for non copyright tools) to the service.	DHSSC	1	
	2.3 Take action to ensure that staff teams have the capacity to provide services through the medium of Welsh.	Director of Social Services	3	

Outcomes	Actions	Lead Responsibility	Completed by end of year	How will we monitor progress
3. Welsh speaking service users and carers will have a stronger voice and be able to exercise greater control over their services if the "Active Offer" Service is mainstreamed into other priority services.	3.1 Map current provision and capacity to deliver an "Active Offer" service in other priority areas e.g. children under 5 yrs, speech and language therapy services.	Director of Social Services	3	Through: CSSIW Reports
	3.2 Service Heads to consider appropriate ways of delivering Welsh language services according to capacity, language skills, willingness and confidence of staff to use the language. (in designing services the Welsh and English service models do not need to reflect each other).	Service Heads within SS Departments	3	Organisations' established user feedback systems
4. Users and carers will be empowered if they are able to speak with staff in their first language	4.1 Welsh Language Champions within Social Services Departments and local authority HR Departments to disseminate current best practice, particularly to service heads.	Welsh Language Champions and local authority HR Departments	1	Ongoing
	4.2 Create an e-resource centre so that practitioners have access to existing Welsh language resources such as Porth Termau, Cysgair.	DHSSC Welsh Language Unit	2	
	4.3 Welsh Language Champions within Social Service's Departments and local authority HR Departments to lead a staff "iaith gofal yn y gwaith" (language of care in the workplace) initiative – to increase staff confidence to speak the language at work.	Welsh Language Champions and local authority HR Departments	2	
	4.4 Encourage social service and social care staff to wear the "Working Welsh" logo and incorporate the "Working Welsh" logo into uniforms they provide for some workers.	Commissioners and Providers	Ongoing from 1	

Strategic Objective 3: To increase the capability of the workforce to provide Welsh language services in priority areas and language awareness among all staff

Outcomes	Actions	Lead Responsibility	Completed by end of year	How will we monitor progress
1. Users are empowered because workforce plans that are informed by an analysis of community language needs and reliable data on the Welsh language skills of staff, will enable organisations to meet their needs.	1.1 Workforce planning methodology to incorporate assessment of community Welsh language needs and the Welsh language skills of the workforce.	Directors of Social Services	1	Through: Organisations' workforce plans
	1.2 The Care Council for Wales to quality assess the workforce information to ensure that data includes information on community language needs and the workforce's Welsh language skills.	The Care Council for Wales	1	Care Council for Wales workforce planning reports / data
	1.3 Welsh language skills to be included in the mandatory social care workforce information being collected through the regulatory system (or any system subsequently implemented), in line with the statutory role of the Director of Social Service.	CSSIW, DHSSC	2	
	1.4 The statutory Annual Report of the Director of Social Services in Wales to include information on Welsh language skills within workforce plans, and how this responds to community needs.	Director of Social Social Services in Wales	1	
	1.5 Workforce policies to mainstream the need to strengthen Welsh language services in all areas of social services provision.	DHSSC	1	
	1.6 Policy leads within DHSSC and the Care Council for Wales, in collaboration with partners, to promote the principle that workforce plans and commissioned training enables the service to strengthen Welsh language services.	DHSSC and The Care Council for Wales and lead responsibility for SCDW Plans	2	

Outcomes	Actions	Lead Responsibility	Completed by end of year	How will we monitor progress
	1.7 Social Services Departments to report on Welsh language skills within their workforce, as part of the LA data collection, for their Welsh Language Scheme performance.	LA Director of Social Services	1	
2. Adopting a planned approach to tackle the shortage of Welsh speaking staff, focusing initially on priority areas will fill the gap between the need for Welsh language services and current provision.	2.1 DHSSC, Care Council for Wales and NLI AH to analyse the current position, consider the options to tackle the shortages and work with the higher and further education sectors to address this.	DHSSC, Care Council for Wales and NLI AH	2	Through: Organisations' workforce plans
	2.2 Careers Wales to help Social Services Departments, and the independent sector to target and actively recruit Welsh speakers.	Careers Wales	2	
	2.3 To expect all social services departments to operate in line with the Welsh Language Commissioner's recruitment guidelines.	Directors of Social Services	2	
	2.4 To expect Social Work Degree Partnerships to set and review targets for recruiting students who have Welsh language skills, to reflect the needs of the local community and local workforce.	Social Work Degree Partnerships The Care Council for Wales	3	

Strategic Objective 4: To create leaders who will foster a supportive ethos within organisations, so that Welsh speaking users and carers receive language sensitive services as a natural part of their care.

Outcomes	Actions	Lead Responsibility	Completed by end of year	How will we monitor progress
1. Visible leadership and commitment from political leaders and senior officers to strengthen Welsh language services and create a bilingual culture within organisations, will ensure more user centred services that respect people's cultural identity.	1.1 To ask political leaders, Directors of Social Services to issue a statement setting out: - their wish to see sensitivity to the Welsh language reflected throughout their organisation to ensure quality care and effective services - the importance of responding to users' Welsh language needs in assessing and caring for users.	Local Authority Social Services Portfolio Holder and Director of Social Services	1	Through: Director of SS Wales Annual Report LA Director of Social Services reports Public Statements in Board / Council meetings on Welsh language service provision
	1.2 Agree the steps they will take to satisfy themselves that the services they provide are sensitive and appropriate.	Portfolio Holders and Directors of Social Services	1	
	1.3 Directors to put arrangements in place to monitor how the National Strategic Framework and Action Plan is being implemented.	Directors of Social Services	1	
	1.4 Directors of Social Services to publish a Welsh Language Strategic Framework and Action Plan for the services they deliver, commission and contract.	Directors of Social Services	2	
	1.5 Directors of Social Services to designate a senior officer as Welsh Language Champion within the Department.	Director of Social Services	1	

Outcomes	Actions	Lead Responsibility	Completed by end of year	How will we monitor progress
	1.6 Leadership training programmes to include a strand on the impact of language sensitivity on the effectiveness of care, and language as an integral element of planning.	Directors of Social Services	2	
	1.7 Organisations in the independent and private sector to indicate the steps they will take to ensure language sensitivity within their organisation and their service delivery.	Care Forum Wales and the UK Home Care Association	2	
	1.8 To extend the current NHS Welsh language network to include Welsh language leads from Social Services and Social Care and ensure that they work closely with the WLGA network – “Rhwydiaith”.	Welsh Language Policy Unit in DHSSC	1	

Strategic Objective 5: To design and provide education, learning and development programmes which reflect the services' responsibility to plan and provide Welsh language services.

Outcomes	Actions	Lead Responsibility	Completed by end of year	How will we monitor progress
1. Mainstreaming the Welsh language dimension into health and social care training and professional development programmes will enable the service to meet users and carers needs more effectively.	1.1 Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol in partnership with, HEIs and FEIs to explore and maximise opportunities for access to resources, education and training for continuous professional development.	Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, HEIs and FEIs	3	Through: Care Council for Wales reports
	1.2 Education, training and professional development programmes for health and social care to include language awareness training, focusing particularly on the principles of language need and the "Active Offer".	Social Work Degree Partnerships	2	
	1.3 Social work training and professional development programmes to include a module/strand on the impact of language sensitivity on the effectiveness of assessments and care; and the responsibility of Social Services Departments to provide services in both English and Welsh.	The Care Council for Wales LAs and Higher Education Sector	2	
	1.4 The HEFCW to map the provision of Welsh language modules within the Further Education sector for students studying health and social care programmes.	HEFCW, and DHSSC	2	
	1.5 DHSSC to ensure that the Welsh language dimension is mainstreamed into structural systems and processes for education and training within health and social care.	DHSSC	1	

Outcomes	Actions	Lead Responsibility	Completed by end of year	How will we monitor progress
2. Building capacity and resources for Welsh medium services in health, social care education and professional development will ensure greater language sensitivity among staff.	2.1 Senior management development programmes to improve awareness of the impact of language on the effectiveness of care services and ensure that the "Active Offer" is integral to these.	Care Council for Wales, PMSW, ADSS and SSIA	2 and ongoing	
	2.2 Social Services and Social Care organisations to ensure that the principles of linguistic awareness and the "Active Offer" service forms part of all induction programmes.	All care service providers		
	2.3 Training and staff development programmes to increase the capacity of staff to provide services through the medium of Welsh, and to initially target training at increasing the confidence of existing Welsh speakers to use the language at work, and raise awareness among key staff particularly front line staff and team managers.	Director of Social Services and senior managers of all care providers	1 and ongoing	
	2.4 NLIAH and the Care Council for Wales to make recommendations to the Ministerial Taskforce on how to enhance professional development opportunities through the medium of Welsh.	NLIAH and Care Council for Wales	3	

Strategic Objective 6: National strategies, policies and leadership.

Outcomes	Actions	Lead Responsibility	Completed by end of year	How will we monitor progress
1. Mainstreaming Welsh language provision into all developments arising from <i>Sustainable Social Services for Wales; A Framework for Action</i> will ensure that service users and carers' cultural identity is respected and that they have a much stronger voice in the services they receive.	1.1 The National Outcomes Framework being developed reflects the commitment and need to plan, commission and deliver services through the medium of Welsh.	DHSSC – Director of Social Services Wales	2	Through: Evidence that this is mainstreamed into Modernisation of Social Services Programme
	1.2 To ensure that Welsh language provision is mainstreamed into all aspects of the work of the National Social Services Partnership Forum.	DHSSC – Director of Social Services Wales	2	
	1.3 Service developments such as the proposed “information hub” for social services and the comprehensive advocacy service for older people is bilingual.	DHSSC – Director of Social Services Wales	2	
	1.4 To ensure that the proposals for coherent assessment process across social services reflect people's needs/wish to be assessed through the medium of Welsh.	DHSSC – Director of Social Services Wales	2	
	1.5 Developments on safeguarding and promoting the well being of citizens - the statutory framework for adult protection in Wales and the National Safeguarding Boards for adults and children - reflect the responsibility to provide services through the medium of Welsh, particularly to frail and vulnerable people.	DHSSC – Director of Social Services Wales	2	

Outcomes	Actions	Lead Responsibility	Completed by end of year	How will we monitor progress
2. Strengthening the evidence base will improve service effectiveness.	2.1 NISCHR, who support research in health and social care, to support this area during the next three years, to strengthen the evidence base in Wales and establish the most effective interventions for service delivery.	NISCHR	3	Through: Published research reports relating Welsh speaking
	2.2 To expect SSIA, who provide a focus for social care improvement, to implement a programme of work to improve awareness and understanding of this work among social services and social care, particularly amongst team managers and front line workers.	SSIA	2	
	2.3 To ask the WCVA, Care Forum Wales, UK Home Care Association and other relevant organisations to consider leading a professional development programme to increase awareness in the independent sector of the impact of language sensitivity on the effectiveness of care, focusing particularly on the principle of language need and the “Active Offer” service.	WCVA, Care Forum Wales and UK Home Care Association	2	
	2.4 To include a language awareness raising module to be delivered as part of all social work training through SCWDP. This to include the principle of language need and the active offer service.	SCWDP	2	
	2.5 To ask NISCHR, SSIA and the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to explore opportunities for joint working, to improve the Welsh language evidence base available to the service.	NISCHR	3	

Outcomes	Actions	Lead Responsibility	Completed by end of year	How will we monitor progress
3. Strong leadership from Government Departments to strengthen Welsh language services will ensure priority is given to providing better quality services for Welsh speaking users.	3.1 The Annual Report of the Director of Social Service Wales to include a section on how service provision is meeting users' needs and report on progress and improvement targets.	Director of Social Services Wales	1	Through: Published policies and strategies reflect the principles of "More than just Words....."
	3.2 All service audits of existing policies / actions plans, should be reviewed to ensure that they include a question on Welsh language provision.	DHSSC	1	
	3.3 All policy and strategy documents to make explicit reference to the responsibility to provide services through the medium of Welsh and English and ensure that all documents are subject to a Welsh language gateway review.	DHSSC	1	
	3.4 Contract specifications and grant funding processes stipulate the requirements for services through the medium of Welsh and give guidance on the way this should be addressed.	DHSSC	1	
	3.5 Value Wales to issue guidance on Welsh language procurement / commissioning in line with the Welsh Language Commissioner's procurement guidance.	Value Wales	1	

Outcomes	Actions	Lead Responsibility	Completed by end of year	How will we monitor progress
	3.6 Commissioning and contracting work undertaken by DHSSC and national agencies to operate in accordance with the Welsh Language Commissioner's procurement guidelines.	DHSSC and national agencies	1	
4. Strong and visible leadership from ADSS Cymru to the Welsh Language Strategic Framework.	4.1 ADSS Cymru to commit and demonstrate visible leadership to the implementation of the Strategic Framework.	ADSS Cymru	1	Public statements by ADSSC and engagement in implementation programme
5. Leadership from CSSIW and HIW to mainstream the Welsh language dimension of care into inspection work will strengthen Welsh language services and ensure equality for service users.	5.1 CSSIW, working with HIW where appropriate, to undertake a thematic review of Welsh language provision against the strategic objectives of the framework. This will provide baseline information for development.	CSSIW	2	Through: Evidence in their inspection reports

Outcomes	Actions	Lead Responsibility	Completed by end of year	How will we monitor progress
	5.2 To ensure that the Welsh Language Inspection Toolkit is implemented as part of the new regulatory inspection system.	CSSIW	2	
	5.3 To ensure that the review of the regulatory framework and modernisation of registration and inspection, mainstreams the responsibility to plan and deliver services through both Welsh and English.	CSSIW	2	

