THE WELSH NHS CONFEDERATION
CONFFEDERASIWN GIG CYMRU

Delivering a sustainable, seamless health and social care system: Our priorities for the next Welsh Government

Health and social care organisations across Wales have come together through the Welsh NHS Confederation's Policy Forum to outline the key issues and shared priorities ahead of the Senedd 2021 election.

This will be the first Senedd election with the UK outside the European Union and will mark the beginning of a markedly different international and political landscape. The health and care system will need to adapt to work within this new context.

Since COVID-19 swept across the globe, health and social care organisations in Wales have been united in addressing the challenges the pandemic has brought with it. As well as those public bodies and organisations that traditionally deliver health and social care, many other community-based organisations, such as housing associations and the third sector, have played an important role in protecting the health and wellbeing of the communities they serve.

We believe that the unprecedented impact the pandemic has had on the health and social care system, and the inequalities in health outcomes experienced by different socio-economic groups, provides us with a unique opportunity to learn from the progress we've made. This means working across sectors and supporting the next Welsh Government to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales.

Our united response to the pandemic also reinforces the case for effective cross-sector collaboration, beyond the traditional boundaries of health and social care, enabling people to stay active, healthy and independent in their own homes and communities for longer.

We call on all political parties to commit to delivering on the following health and social care priorities:

- **Long-Term Vision:** Continue to support the long-term vision of "*one seamless system for Wales*", as set out in the Parliamentary Review of Health and Social Care, by publishing an action plan that crosses all Welsh Government departments and works with organisations across all sectors. A seamless system should include care that is:
  ◊ Organised around the individual and their family, as close to home as possible
  ◊ Preventative, easily accessible and of high quality regardless of where someone lives or who they are
  ◊ Enabled by evidence-based innovations and digital technology when appropriate, delivering outcomes that matter to patients, service users and the wider public
  ◊ Without artificial barriers between physical and mental health, primary and secondary care, or health and social care
  ◊ Fully integrated with housing, and recognises the importance of a good quality, safe, warm home to people's health, wellbeing and independence
  ◊ Recognises the role the public, voluntary and independent sectors play in meeting the needs of the population now and in the future.

- **Measuring performance:** Introduce proportionate, meaningful, patient-centred performance measures and frameworks across health and social care that reflect real-world experience of patients and service users based on quality and community-based outcomes, whole-system collaboration and prevention. The next Welsh Government should commit to transparent and regular publishing of performance measures, alongside service-user feedback, to inform service development and drive improvements. Where gaps exist, priority should be given to improving access and quality of data.

- **Workforce:** Priorities and promote the physical and emotional health and wellbeing of the health and social care workforce and improve diversity to ensure Wales remains an attractive place to work, live, study, train and develop. This will need to be done by delivering an inclusive, representative, multi-professional, digitally-enabled, sustainable, flexible and responsive health and social care workforce that is fit for the future. This should include the voluntary and not-for-profit sector workforce and recognise the broad range of support they provide, including through volunteering. Resources should also be provided to support organisations and individuals in health and social care to upskill and continue their professional development, helping to ensure parity across the health and social care workforce and recognising the value of all people working in health and social care in a meaningful way.

- **Rehabilitation:** Commit to a cross-sector approach to the delivery of rehabilitation services in Wales that involves the NHS, local government, social care providers, housing associations and the third sector.
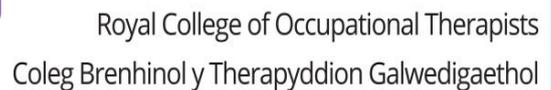
- **Innovation and Technology:** Continue to maximise the potential of evidence-based innovation and digital technology as a driver of positive change. Investment is needed in digital infrastructure that helps people to access services remotely and supports the shift to a preventative model of health and social care. Innovation and technology should be accessible to all, underpinned by the principle of service-user choice and with no barriers to equality of opportunity. Resource should focus on preventing digital isolation and supporting the entire health, social care and housing workforce to deliver care and support that enable patients and service users to maintain their independence. This should seek to continue fostering the spirit of rapid innovation that has been embraced across organisations in Wales since the start of the pandemic.

- **Health inequalities:** Provide a cross-governmental, whole-sector response to physical and mental health inequalities to create the economic, social, natural and home environment that supports positive wellbeing throughout the life-course for all people in Wales and reduce inequalities for the next generation. This should include ensuring everyone in Wales has a good quality, safe, warm home that can adapt as their needs change. Priority should be given to service-user engagement and acting upon the views and experiences of communities and people who have unequal outcomes or experience challenges in accessing services.

- **Engaging with the public:** Invest in a cross-governmental, national programme, backed by a comprehensive and inclusive awareness and engagement campaign, to support the public to live healthier lives and maintain their independence, take more responsibility for their health and wellbeing, manage their conditions and know how to use services responsibly.

- **Social care:** Ensure parity of esteem between health and social care though sustainable and adequate funding for services. The next Welsh Government should recognise explicitly that there is an intrinsic link between health and social care and the overall health of the population depends on far more than just the quality of healthcare services. There should be a clear recognition also that the social care sector plays a crucial role in reducing pressure on the NHS. A long-term, sustainable solution to the way social care is funded is essential if we are to deliver a system that is organised around the individual and their family which meets their needs with safe and high-quality services.

- **Finance:** Ensure that health, social care and wellbeing services are appropriately resourced to deliver sustainable, high quality, person-centred care. Priority should also be given to investing in community services and in the NHS and social care estate to make them more sustainable and to reduce carbon emissions.

- **Mental health:** Improve the mental and emotional wellbeing of children, young people and adults in a way that supports the drive for valuing mental health equally with physical health. This means making mental health a cross-cutting priority across the Welsh Government and delivering a targeted engagement programme that addresses stigma in communities and drives improved employment practices to make workplaces more accessible and inclusive for those who live with mental health conditions. There needs to a whole system approach that invests in both treating mental ill-health, as well as a locally-led approach to promoting people's mental health throughout their lives, including earlier intervention and targeted support for those who need it.

- **Research:** Improve the research environment so Wales can live up to its potential as a key player in international research and development in health and social care. The next Welsh Government should continue to support research in Wales' universities to support innovative treatments and service models across health and social care and attract industry-leading researchers to Wales. This means bringing together industry and stakeholders to develop a framework for key innovations, which enables greater frontline medical research and greater public participation in research projects.

- **Delivery:** Reimagine current long-term Delivery Plans to ensure their relevance to patients, the public and all delivery organisations in Wales who have a role to play in improving the health and wellbeing of the population of Wales, from acute to preventative care. There needs to be a strong emphasis on implementation through key performance indicators overseen at a national level and strengthened by new accountability arrangements.

This document is endorsed by:

Alzheimer's Society Cymru
Unedig Yn Erbyn Dementia
United Against Dementia

abpi
Bringing medicines to *life*
Dod a meddyginiaeth i *fywyd*
Cymru | Wales

asthma UK

British Lung Foundation

BASW Cymru

BDA The Association of UK Dietitians

British Heart Foundation Cymru

BMA
Cymru Wales

BritishRedCross

CANCER RESEARCH UK

CHARTERED SOCIETY OF PHYSIOTHERAPY
CYMDEITHAS SIARTREDIG FFISIOTHERAPI

The COLLEGE *of* PODIATRY

Cartrefi Cymunedol Cymru | Community Housing Cymru

hospice UK

MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

Marie Curie
Gofal a chefnogaeth drwy salwch terfynol
Care and support through terminal illness

mnda
motor neurone disease association
cymdeithas clefyd motor niwron

MS Society Cymru

PARKINSON'S UK CYMRU
CHANGE ATTITUDES. FIND A CURE. JOIN US.

PROSTATE CANCER UK

RCGP CYMRU WALES

Royal College of Occupational Therapists
Coleg Brenhinol y Therapyddion Galwedigaethol

Royal College of Physicians | Coleg Brenhinol y Meddygon (Cymru)

RC PSYCH
ROYAL COLLEGE OF PSYCHIATRISTS

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPISTS

THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF EDINBURGH | COLEG BRENHINOL LLAWFEDDYGON CAEREDIN

RCS ENGLAND IN WALES

RNIB Cymru
Golwg gwahanol
See differently

ROYAL PHARMACEUTICAL SOCIETY
Wales Cymru

SAMARITANS Cymru

Cymdeithas Strôc | Stroke Association

tenovus
cancer care
gofal canser

WcVA CgGC

THE WELSH NHS CONFEDERATION
CONFFEDERASIWN GIG CYMRU