

	<b>Briefing for Members of the Senedd for the debate on the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) report: Delivering for future generations: the story so far.</b>
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### **Introduction**

This briefing has been prepared for Members of the Senedd ahead of the plenary debate on the PAC's [report](#) into barriers to implementing the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ('the Act').

### **Key points to consider**

- The Welsh NHS Confederation welcomes the PAC report and recognises that NHS organisations and other public sector bodies, are on a journey to raise awareness of the Act and to implement it further across their organisations.
- On behalf of our Members, the seven Health Boards, three NHS Trusts and Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW), we provided [written evidence](#) to the inquiry and supported NHS representatives to provide evidence to the Committee.
- Awareness of the Act and what it means for public bodies is high, particularly among senior NHS Wales managers. However, we feel that further steps are needed to achieve greater awareness among members of the public.
- NHS Wales organisations recognise that implementing the Act should be a key part of core business. Since the Act came into force in 2016, NHS organisations have been working in partnership to deliver innovative care models which help to create long-lasting and positive change for current and future generations.
- Whilst NHS organisations are maximising their contributions to the seven well-being goals, they are also delivering against a backdrop of significant pressure on their Emergency Departments and primary and community care services to support people with COVID-19, whilst also treating those with complex needs or long-term conditions.
- To improve population health and well-being further, it is vital that meaningful person-centred performance measures and frameworks are introduced. While there is a recognition that NHS performance targets have a role to play, we must also look at the bigger picture, instigating whole-system change in the way treatment is delivered, how services are provided and population health measured. A key driver within this is the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. In our election briefing, [Valuing, Engaging and Delivering: A Health and Care System for Future Generations](#), we call on the next Welsh Government to introduce performance measures that focus on quality-based outcomes, prevention, community services and whole-system collaboration.
- NHS Wales organisations recognise that the Commissioner's team produces a significant amount of material, including raising awareness of ways of working that could be adopted at a Health Board/ Trust level to support implementation of the Act.
- We will continue to work with the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales to ensure the principles of the Act are embedded further in decision-making across the Welsh NHS.

### **Awareness of the Act and its implications**

Awareness of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 among NHS Wales Board members (Chairs, Chief Executives and Executive Directors) is high. The Office of the Future Generations Commissioner meets annually with the NHS Chairs Peer Group. The Commissioner has also engaged with individual Health Boards and NHS Trusts, particularly in relation to sharing resources and other materials to support organisations' efforts to implement the Act.

However, the Act is multi-faceted and complex and while NHS Wales organisations welcome the high-level, simplified resources available via the Future Generations Commissioner's website, NHS Wales organisations feel that challenges remain around conveying a single, clear message about what the legislation means for individuals, communities, NHS organisations and their staff.

Moreover, our Members feel that further steps are needed to achieve greater awareness of the Act and what it means for members of the public and for Welsh communities. Our Members recognise that the NHS, as the largest employer in Wales and an institution that plays a key role in contributing to the well-being of local populations, is well-placed to support the Commissioner to increase awareness and understanding of the Act and the principles within it.

### **Resources available to public bodies to support implementation of the Act**

Across Wales, small amounts of funding have been made available to Local Authorities to support the work of Public Service Boards (PSBs) in implementing the Act. However, this funding was not allocated this year (2020 – 21) due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While Health Boards make small financial contributions to PSBs from their own individual budgets, Health Boards do not receive financial support or resources from the Welsh Government to support the implementation of the Act.

The expectation is that implementing the Act falls within a Health Board/Trust's core business responsibilities and so it is therefore absorbed by a number of individuals' budgets within each organisation who lead on implementing the Act. In recent years, many of these roles have had to be broadened to encompass the significant reporting responsibilities that compliance with the Act entails.

NHS Wales organisations recognise that implementing the Act should be a key part of core business, both on an organisational level and an individual level. However, developing the level of knowledge and robust partnerships with key partners, particularly PSBs and Regional Partnership Boards (RPBs), takes time and targeted resource to increase. This has been particularly challenging over the past 12 months as the NHS has responded to COVID-19.

### **Supported provided to public bodies by the Future Generations Commissioner**

NHS Wales organisations have engaged regularly with the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner by responding to a number of requests from the Commissioner's office to provide information e.g. completing self-assessment forms and responding to a specific procurement review. Members of the NHS leadership in

Wales have also frequently attended webinars and virtual workshop events convened by the Commissioner's office.

However, while the Commissioner's office has produced comprehensive material, the extent of its role in adopting a 'hands on' approach to supporting NHS Wales organisations in implementing the Act is not always clear. We welcome the fact that Committee members have recognised this observation explicitly in their report (at para 108 of the PAC report).

### **The leadership role of the Welsh Government**

NHS Wales organisations note that the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is increasingly being referred to in Welsh Government policy documents, guidance and budgets. However, we feel that guidance could be clearer around how accountability and performance management arrangements on an organisational level reflect the legislation's requirements.

One of the key policy drivers for the NHS is the Welsh Government's long-term plan for health and social care, [A Healthier Wales](#). The vision and the Quadruple Aim set out in this plan clearly align with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and provides the mechanism for health and social care to contribute to achieving the goals defined in the Act. *A Healthier Wales* is fundamentally about supporting people to live healthy, happy lives and supporting a cross-sector approach to enable people to stay well at home. NHS organisations welcomed the publication of *A Healthier Wales* in June 2018 and are supportive of the vision for a health and care system that is focused on well-being and preventing illness. This means having a health and care system that enables people to stay well, active and independent. Since *A Healthier Wales* was published, NHS organisations across Wales have been working to deliver the vision set out in the long-term plan for health and social care.

### **How to ensure the Act is implemented successfully in future**

NHS Wales organisations feel that placing the Act 'front and centre' of all future legislation and policy guidance would be a helpful step towards supporting public bodies to implement the Act. This needs to be done alongside increasing awareness of the Act, and the vision it serves to deliver, on a local level. This means engaging more closely with the wider public sector (e.g. schools and community groups) to increase public understanding.

As mentioned previously, the provision of more focused support (whether it be financial or more practical) from Welsh Government would be welcomed by NHS Wales organisations to support the delivery of the Act in future.

HEIW has worked closely with Social Care Wales to produce the first [integrated health and social care workforce strategy](#), which was published in October 2020. One of the objectives of the strategy is to build on the foundations of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to create an engaged, healthy, flexible, responsive and sustainable workforce for the future that is reflective of Wales' diverse population, Welsh language and cultural identity. HEIW is recognised by the Welsh Government as a component part of implementing the Act despite the fact that the

organisation is not listed among the public bodies to which the legislation directly applies.

### **Supporting well-being through the arts and being creative**

The Act has provided the NHS and the Welsh NHS Confederation with the legislative framework to work in partnership with a range of organisations to support the prevention and well-being agenda. For example, in November 2020, we renewed our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Arts Council of Wales to reflect our ongoing commitment to raising awareness of the benefits that the arts can have on people's health and well-being and embed arts and health initiatives across the NHS in Wales. This commitment supports the vision set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 by encouraging innovative approaches to service delivery beyond the traditional performance frameworks. Arts and health approaches also support the vision set out in the Act by facilitating the development of delivery models that promote a more equal, cultural and sustainable Wales.

#### **The Welsh NHS Confederation**

The Welsh NHS Confederation is the only national membership body that represents the leadership of all the statutory NHS organisations in Wales: the seven Local Health Boards, three NHS Trusts and Health Education and Improvement Wales.