

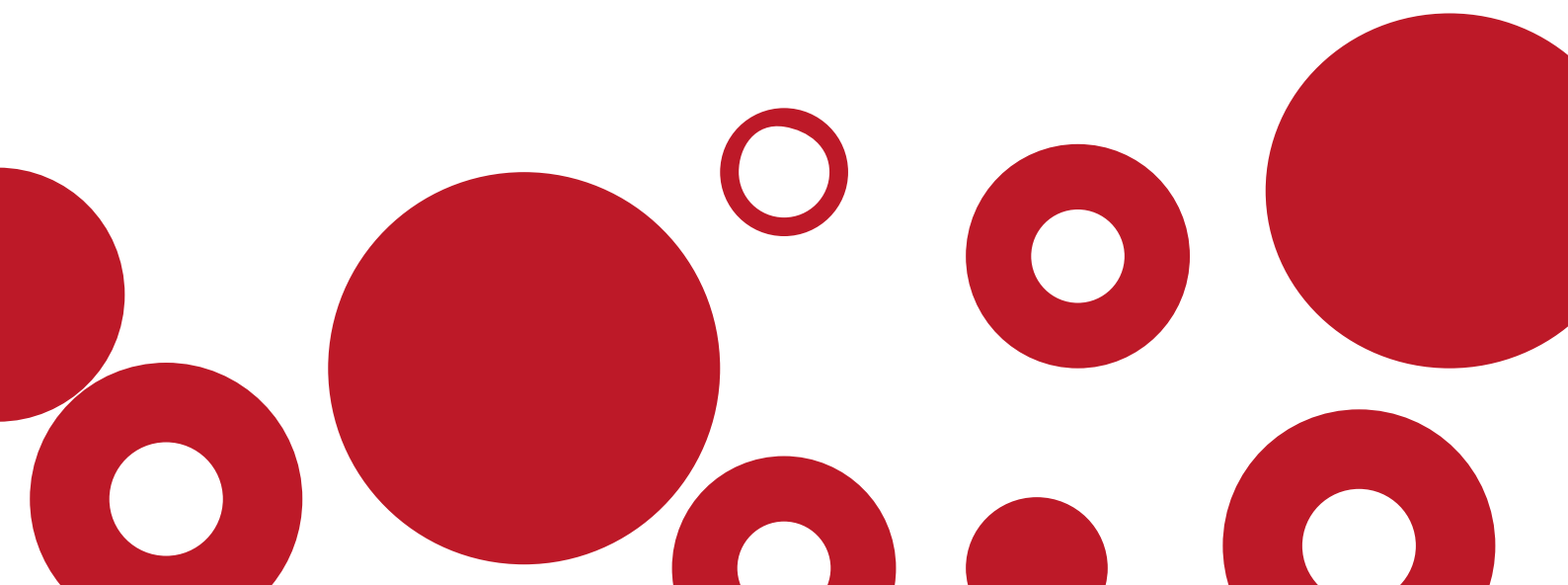


# “Our Community”: Ten actions to support primary care in Wales

The Welsh NHS Confederation Policy Forum believes that we cannot afford to delay efforts to reshape services that provide people’s care, strengthening primary and community care provision.

Primary and community care encompasses a range of services including, but not exclusively, GPs, general practice nurses, pharmacy, dentistry, specialty clinics, optometry, community and district nurses, midwives, health visitors, mental health teams, health promotion teams, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, dietitians, speech and language therapists, podiatrists, phlebotomists, paramedics, public health teams, rehabilitation teams, social workers, other local authority staff and all those people working and volunteering in voluntary organisations which help meet the health and well-being needs of people in our communities.

Some services are directly employed by the NHS or Local Authorities while others have contractual arrangements with Welsh Government (general practice, pharmacy, dentistry and optometry). The wide range of funding and governance arrangements covering primary and community care can impact on the options available to the Welsh Government.



**To ensure a sustainable primary and community care sector the Forum asks Assembly Members to consider and support the following priorities:**

- 1. Vision:** Encourage the development of a long-term vision for primary and community care services, with social services and cross-sector organisations working in partnership to deliver integrated, person-centred care closer to home and the investment required to achieve this. There is a need to develop a preventative approach, where people have access to the right care, at the right time, in the right place and supported by the right people.
- 2. Integrated care:** Support the development of a multi-disciplinary skilled workforce within primary and community care, capable of working with individuals, carers and families. The Welsh Government, and all public sectors, should promote a collaborative culture that emphasises team working across organisational boundaries, including the third sector and third party providers, across services and professions to deliver highly co-ordinated and person-centred care. Bringing together services and budgets will support integrated care.
- 3. Public engagement:** Work with key partners to increase public awareness of primary and community care. Support the development of a re-modelled primary and community care sector which is co-designed and co-produced with people in communities and is underpinned by a holistic, social model of health, social care and well-being. The goal must be integrated care that empowers people to take control of their own health and well-being through providing the public with easy to access information, advice and assistance to support self-management within their communities.
- 4. Primary Care workforce planning:** Support a whole-system strategic approach to planning across primary and community care, with a planned multi-disciplinary workforce. Workforce planning and modelling assumptions in primary and community care need to incorporate new, emerging and more sustainable models of primary care. GPs will be at the heart of the service, but we must ensure that other health and care professionals are integrated into the service so that they can provide necessary support. This approach should include social services, housing and the third, voluntary and independent sectors, as well as secondary care specialists working in the community, to take into account changing service demands and the impact of an ageing population and workforce. Public bodies should invest in quality and accurate workforce data collection across all public sector services and data should be shared across health and social care.
- 5. Promoting health and well-being:** AMs, and the wider public sector workforce, should provide national leadership on public health and early intervention. Actions must engage the whole primary and community care workforce in public health and prevention. The appropriately skilled workforce should be ambassadors for healthy living, working collaboratively to create the right conditions that will support everyone in making healthier lifestyle choices. This should include better and more robust public information and signposting which could empower individuals to manage their own health and well-being.

- 6. Rural health:** Promote the delivery and accessibility of high quality primary and social care services in rural areas; work to attract the necessary workforce, and embrace new models of care and innovative practice to ensure people in rural areas are not disadvantaged. A re-modelled and integrated primary and community care service should be flexible and responsive to local need, with equality of access to all citizens in Wales.
- 7. Developing the workforce:** Develop a long-term focus and a sustainable approach to recruitment and retention in primary and community care to have a workforce with a wider skills mix. NHS Wales and Local Government should support current staff with leadership opportunities, help them gain access to high quality training and commit to equality and diversity in the workplace. There should be support for investment in skills to ensure a more flexible workforce, better able to meet the needs of service users in a variety of primary care settings. Education and training should equip the workforce with the expertise to support older patients with complex needs and to lead and co-ordinate the 'whole care' of patients in the community.
- 8. Welsh language:** Promote and invest in language provision across the primary and community care sector to ensure individuals and families receive person-centred care in their chosen language. This will need to include Welsh as well as other languages. Providing primary care services through the medium of Welsh for those that need it is key to the quality and effectiveness of those services. Make working in primary care a career of choice for Welsh speakers and ensure that education and development opportunities are available.
- 9. Technology:** Primary care must be developed to support the shift of care into the community and to make the most of new technologies to ensure the public have access to the best information to support self-care and long-term conditions management. It is vital that systems are integrated between secondary and primary care to ensure effective information flow amongst all partners to support people in their community.
- 10. Primary Care funding:** Commit to a primary care sector that is innovative, evidence based and uses assets and resources in sustainable ways, but is also properly financed. A long-term funding plan should be provided for primary care, including preventative services and investing in infrastructure, to ensure that the primary care sector is sustainable in the future and resourced to provide high quality, person-centred care. To create the right services, we must better understand the demographics of our communities. It means working with community and third sector groups who have significant data and intelligence about many cohorts, including seldom heard vulnerable groups.

Organisations across Wales have come together through the Welsh NHS Confederation's Policy Forum to outline these key priorities for the health and social care workforce. The following organisations endorse these priorities:



BritishRedCross



Comisiynydd y Gymraeg  
Welsh Language Commissioner



College of Occupational Therapists  
Coleg Therapyddion Galwedigaethol



Coleg Brenhinol y Meddygon (Cymru)



Welsh NHS Confederation  
Tŷ Phoenix, 8 Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF11 9LJ  
Tel: 02920 349850  
www.welshconfed.org @WelshConfed