

National Assembly for Wales
Environment and Sustainability Committee
WFG 39
Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill
Response from Wales Carers Alliance

Cynghrair
Cynhalwyr Cymru

Cymdeithasau gwirfoddol yng Nghymru yn ymwneud â Chynhalwyr

Wales
Carers Alliance

Voluntary organisations

**Wales Carers Alliance response to the National Assembly for Wales'
Environment and Sustainability Committee Consultation on**

The general principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill

Carers and the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Bill

1. The Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill is the third piece of Welsh legislation to cover strategic planning for carers since 2010.
2. The Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010 was introduced by the Welsh Government, following a proposed Legislative Competence Order by Plaid Cymru. The Measure placed a duty on Local Authorities, Local Health Boards and NHS Trusts to prepare, publish and implement a strategy for carers, with Local Health Boards as the lead agency. The detail of the strategies were provided for by regulations and included amongst other things; identification of carers, the provision of information, training of front-line staff, engagement with GPs and consultation with carers. The Measure came into force in 2012.
3. In 2013 the Welsh Government published the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Bill which repealed the Carers Strategies Measure. The Wales Carers Alliance opposed the repeal of the Measure and the Welsh Government introduced an amendment to the Bill in January 2014 to address these concerns. Section 14.3 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 maintains a duty on LHBs to report to Welsh Ministers on any sections of the local health and wellbeing strategies which relate to carers (via the Single Integrated Plans).
4. The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Bill tabled in July 2014 subsequently repeals section 14.3 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. This Bill, which aims to simplify and streamline strategic planning for public bodies in Wales, putting Public Service Boards on a statutory footing with a duty to assess, plan and report on their objectives to improve the wellbeing of their populations, only contains one reference to carers in section 36.
5. The Wales Carers Alliance is concerned about the oversight of the legislative process which has incrementally diluted the legal status of strategic planning for carers in Wales; in particular the specific duty, as the lead agency for carers strategies, on LHBs and NHS Trusts and the detail of the local carers strategies, provided for by regulations under the Carers Measure.

6. The Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill aims to simplify and streamline strategic planning for public bodies in Wales and to ensure the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. There are major demographic changes facing our society and the ability to meet the increasing demand for care (both paid and un-paid) in a sustainable manner is going to be a considerable challengeⁱ. With regards to meeting this demand, evidence demonstrates that investment in carers-focused services has a positive impact not only on the health and wellbeing of carers but also in reducing the amount of time spent in hospital by people with long-term health conditions and avoiding delays in transfer of care^{ii iii iv}. This aligns with the Wellbeing Goals outlined in section 6 of the Bill (including 'A healthier Wales' and a 'More equal Wales') as well as the sustainable development principle.
7. As such, the role of public bodies in supporting unpaid carers as individuals and through carer-focused services is therefore very relevant to the aims of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill and the Wales Carers Alliance welcomes putting Public Service Boards and local wellbeing plans on a statutory footing. We are concerned however that in the desire to streamline strategic planning important legal provisions for carers have been lost.
8. The only reference to carers in section 36 of the Bill relates to the population needs assessments under section 14 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and in no way replicates the detailed strategic planning for carers outlined in the Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010. Assessments undertaken by the Public Service Boards will have to include carers but the Bill does not specify the content of the local wellbeing plans under section 37. The current Single Integrated Plans are extremely variable in regards to carers, ranging from no mention at all, to one sentence or maybe a paragraph. A number of local authorities though have appropriately included a section on carers in their current Single Plans, acknowledging and summarising their involvement in the local LHB carers strategy e.g. Cardiff, The Vale of Glamorgan, Denbighshire, Merthyr and RCT. Similarly the Bill provides no detail on the content of the reports under section 44 and as there are no regulatory provisions under these sections of the Bill, Welsh Government will not be able to prescribe the content of the local wellbeing plans or reports under regulations either.

Aelodau:

Age Cymru, Anabledd Dysgu Cymru, Cymdeithas Genedlaethol Awtistiaeth Cymru, Cymdeithas Alzheimer, Cymdeithas MS Cymru, Cynhalwyr Cymru, Cyswllt Teulu Cymru, Fforwm Cymru Gyfan, Gofal a Thrwsio Cymru, Hafal, Macmillan Cancer Support, Parkinson's UK, Plant yng Nghymru, SNAP Cymru, Y Gyndeithas Strôc, Ymddiriedolaeth Christan Lewis, Ymddiriedolaeth Gofalwyr

Members:

Age Cymru, All Wales Forum of Parents & Carers, Alzheimer's Society, Care & Repair Cymru, Carers Wales, Children in Wales, Christian Lewis Trust, Contact a Family Wales, Hafal, Learning Disability Wales, Macmillan Cancer Support, MS Society Wales, National Autistic Society Cymru, Parkinson's UK, SNAP Cymru, Carers Trust, The Stroke Association

9. There are over 370,000 carers in Wales^v and for the vast majority of these their main contact with statutory agencies is via a health care professional^{vi}, which is why it is so important to maintain a clear and specific duty on LHBs and NHS Trusts for carers. The Wales Carers Alliance is calling for the Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill to maintain LHBs and NHS Trusts as the lead agencies for carers as well as ensuring that the detail of the current local carers strategies are not lost, such as; the identification of carers, the provision of information, training of front-line staff, engagement with GPs and consultation with carers.
10. The Wales Carers Alliance has provided officials with a number of suggestions for how this can be accomplished and we look forward to working with Ministers and officials to achieve a satisfactory outcome.

September 2014

ⁱ 2011 Census

ⁱⁱ Williams, E, Fitton, F (1991) Survey of carers of elderly patients discharged from hospital. *British Journal of General Practice*, 41, 105 –108

ⁱⁱⁱ Conochie, G (2011) *Supporting Carers: The Case for Change*; London: The Princess Royal Trust for Carers and Crossroads Care.

^{iv} Bebbington, A, Darton, A, Netten, A (2001) *Care Homes for Older People: Volume 2. Admissions, Needs and Outcomes*; University of Kent: Personal Social Services Research Unit

^v Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010 Guidance issues to LHBs, NHS Trusts and Local Authorities Welsh Government (2011)

^{vi} *The Generation Strain: Collective Solutions to Care in an Ageing Society IPPR report (2014)*

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