

QE 13

Ymchwiliad i Fil Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol (Ansawdd ac Ymgysylltu) (Cymru)

Inquiry into the Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Bill

Ymateb gan Unigolyn

Response from an Individual

Consultation on Health & Social Care (Quality & Engagement (Wales)) Bill

To the Health, Social Care & Sport Committee

I am broadly in agreement with the provisions of this bill except in two respects.

The new Citizens' Voice Body should have the right of entry to health and social care establishments on announced and unannounced visits to collect the views of patients where they are receiving care. These visits have an entirely different function from those carried out by HIW. The current CHC members' visits take place at much more frequent intervals than those organised by HIW and can be rapidly organised where patients or visitors report concerns. The visits often pick up things that can be fairly easily rectified by the Health Board such as buzzers not working, store rooms not locked, patients with inadequate numbers of blankets. Patients display considerable trust when CHC members state that they are volunteers visiting on behalf of a body independent of the Health authorities and are often very forthcoming with valuable information.

It would be tragic if this invaluable contribution to NHS improvement was lost together with the opportunity to extend it to Social Care establishments.

Health and Social Care organisations should be required to respond to representations and not merely have regard to them. This is so that citizens can be assured that their voices will be heard and that it is worth their while expressing their views. The new Citizens' Voice body must be seen to be effective. Its ability to scrutinize and challenge, but also to explain issues to the public are very important if we are to see the desired for transformations in the health and social care services that are needed if they are to be sustainable.

The new body must be resourced sufficiently to enable it to do the job envisaged for it. Using committed and trained volunteers to carry out much of its work is very cost-effective but staff are needed to recruit, train and organise them.

I hope the Committee will take these points into consideration and recommend amendments to the bill along these lines