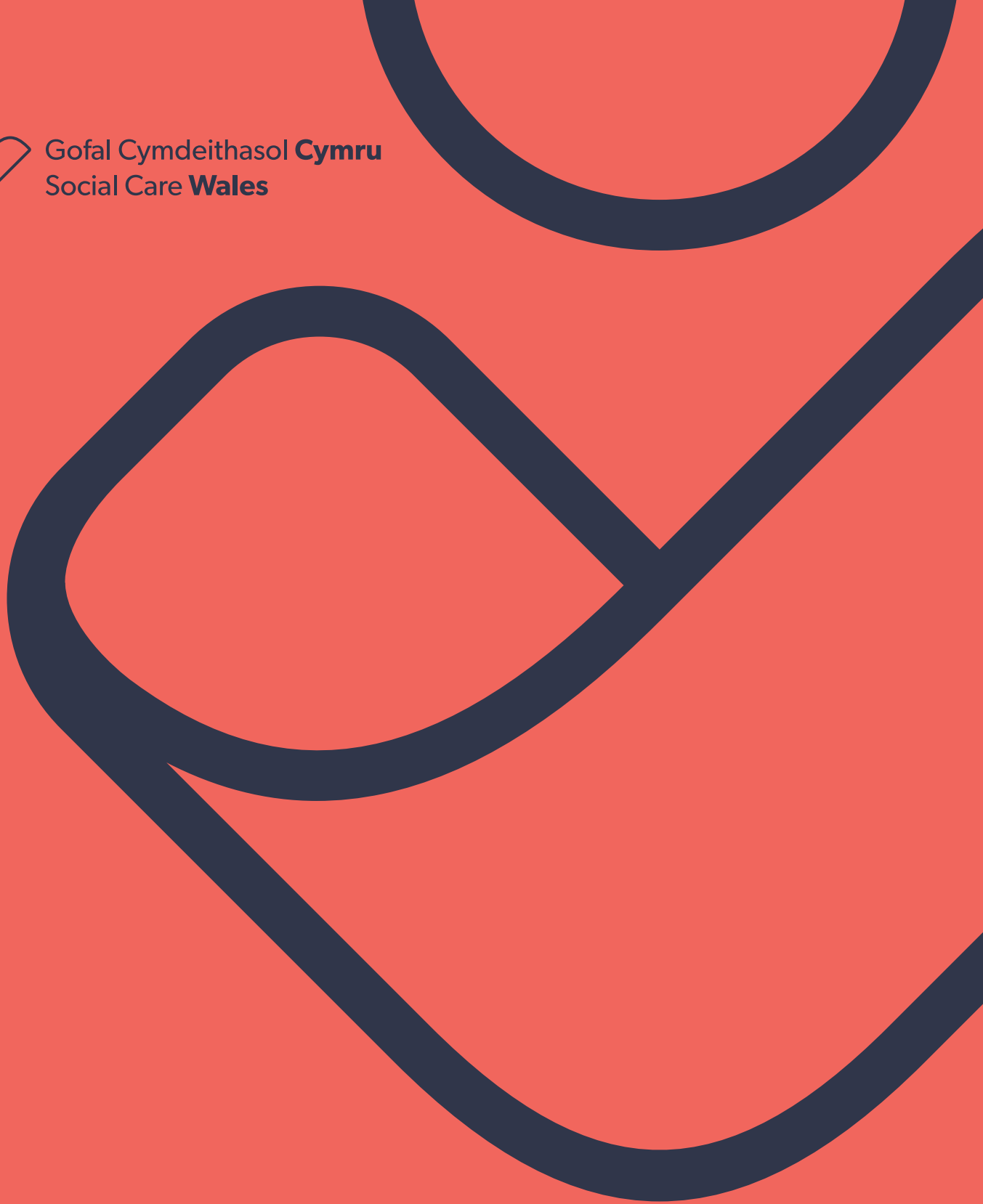




Gofal Cymdeithasol **Cymru**
Social Care **Wales**



The social worker

**Practice guidance for social workers
registered with Social Care Wales**



Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Sponsored by
Welsh Government

Contact Details

Social Care Wales

South Gate House
Wood Street
Cardiff
CF10 1EW

Tel: 0300 3033 444

Minicom: 029 2078 0680

Email: info@socialcare.wales
socialcare.wales

Twitter: [@SocialCareWales](https://twitter.com/SocialCareWales)

© 2019 Social Care Wales

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by means without permission of Social Care Wales. Enquiries for reproduction outside the scope expressly permitted by law should be sent to the Chief Executive of Social Care Wales at the address given above.

Other formats:

This document is available in large text or other formats, if required.

Copies also available in Welsh.

ISBN: 978-1-911463-93-1

1. About this guidance	5
2. How this guidance applies to you	5
3. Social work	6
4. Person-centred social work	6
4.1 Code of Professional Practice for Social Care	6
4.2 Good communication	7
4.3 Welsh language needs	8
4.4 Confidentiality	8
4.5 Families, carers and partners	8
4.6 Professional relationships and boundaries	9
4.7 Rights and protections	10
5. Good social work practice	10
5.1 Assessment and planning	10
5.2 Intervening to achieve change	12
5.3 Resources	12
5.4 Review and evaluation	13
5.5 Advocating on behalf of others	13
5.6 Records and reports	13
5.7 Comments and complaints about services	14
5.8 Ending your professional relationship	14
6. Safeguarding individuals	15
6.1 Understanding safeguarding	15
6.2 Investigating harm or abuse	16
6.3 Risk management	16
6.4 Supporting people to keep themselves safe	17
6.5 Female genital mutilation	17
6.6 Preventing people from being drawn into terrorism	17
7. Developing and managing self	18
7.1 Keeping up-to-date	18
7.2 Using and carrying out research	19
7.3 Supervision and professional reflection	19
7.4 Managing workload	19
7.5 Safety, well-being and resilience	19

8. Working with colleagues	20
8.1 Working in teams	20
8.2 Delegating tasks to others	20
8.3 Contributing to learning and development	21
9. Contributing to service improvement	21
9.1 Acting concerns	22
10. Good conduct	22
10.1 Professional registration	22
10.2 Gifts and donations	23
10.3 Social media	23

1.

About this guidance

This guidance is for social workers registered with Social Care Wales:

It builds on the *Code of Professional Practice for Social Care* and aims to:

- describe what is expected of social workers
- support social workers to deliver a good service.

It is based around social work national occupational standards, the views of people who access care and support, and other key stakeholders.

This guidance will be updated from time to time. It doesn't cover everything and social workers are expected to use their professional judgement, applying the general principles and taking advice, where necessary. Social workers must keep to requirements placed on them in legislation, statutory regulations and guidance including those related to maintaining their registration with us.

2.

How this guidance applies to you

This guidance is for social workers in Wales. It is also relevant to employers – **the *Code of Practice for Social Care Employers* says that employers will support social workers to meet the standards in the guidance.**

The guidance can be used to let individuals, families and the public know what they can expect from you as a social worker.

It is your responsibility to follow this guidance. If you are responsible for leading, managing or supervising other social workers, including social work students, you must promote these same expectations in these staff and address any concerns.

While the *Code of Professional Practice* is a principal document used if there are concerns about a social worker's fitness to practise, this guidance can be used by us to illustrate a failure to keep to the Code.

- The term 'you must' is something you are required to do.
- 'You should' is used where there may be things outside your control that affect how you can follow the guidance.

3. Social work

Social work is defined internationally as:

“a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing.”

(International Association of Schools of Social Work and the International Federation of Social Workers)

To practise as, or to call yourself, a social worker in Wales, you must be registered with us. Students on an approved social work degree course in Wales must also register.

4. Person- centred social work

Person-centred social work means ensuring people using the service have a strong voice on matters that affect them. The relationship with the social worker is a means of enabling people to make the changes they need in their lives and achieve their personal outcomes, recognising the expertise people have about their own, unique situations. It includes working in partnership and seeking creative ways to achieve personal outcomes. High standards of conduct and practice, and good communication are central to a person-centred approach.

4.1 Code of Professional Practice for Social Care

The Code describes the standards expected of social workers. These standards reinforce the importance of a person-centred approach.

As a social worker, you must:

1. Respect the views and wishes, and promote the rights and interests, of individuals and carers.
2. Strive to establish and maintain the trust and confidence of individuals and carers.
3. Promote the well-being, voice and control of individuals and carers while supporting them to stay safe.
4. Respect the rights of individuals while seeking to ensure that their behaviour does not harm themselves or other people.

5. Act with integrity and uphold public trust and confidence in the social care profession.
6. Be accountable for the quality of your work and take responsibility for maintaining and developing knowledge and skills.
7. In addition to sections 1 – 6, if you are responsible for managing leading staff, you must embed the Code in their work.

You must challenge poor conduct and practice and any potential breaches of the Code. You must promote the standards in the Code in any services arranged by you on behalf of people.

4.2 Good communication

Good communication underpins effective social work practice and is essential for working with people using the service and colleagues.

To communicate well you must:

- a. prepare fully for your involvement
- b. be open, accurate and straightforward
- c. take account of a person's language need and preference
- d. get to know and listen to people's views about their strengths, needs and circumstances
- e. talk to people with respect for their age, culture, beliefs, identity and expertise
- f. use the authority of your role responsibly and respectfully and to be clear about expectations
- g. support people to find ways to communicate their views and the outcomes they wish to achieve
- h. actively seek out and share, in a way the person can understand, information about their care, support, rights and entitlements
- i. respond promptly to questions and concerns
- j. make sure people know about confidentiality and how information may be shared.

You should make sure, where practical, arrangements are made to meet a person's language and unique communication needs. You should know how to access independent advocates or interpreters, where required.

4.3 Welsh language needs

Some people can only communicate their needs effectively using the Welsh language. The Welsh Government's framework, *More than Just Words*, sets out good practice standards including moving the responsibility from the person to ask for services in Welsh to the service to make an active offer. This is because people may not be confident or able to ask for services in Welsh.

Your organisation will have a legal obligation to treat English and Welsh equally and to be proactive in offering services in Welsh. You must know your organisation's responsibilities on Welsh language. You must support your employer to implement the active offer principle.

4.4 Confidentiality

You must treat an individual's personal information with discretion. Personal information includes any information relating to an identifiable person who can be directly or indirectly identified, this can include all kinds – spoken, written, photographs and so on. The Data Protection Act 2018 aims to secure the public's trust and confidence in the use of personal information within the digital world.

You must follow legal requirements and your organisation's policies on confidentiality, data protection and information sharing. You must know when you need to share information and with whom, for example, where there are safeguarding concerns.

4.5 Families, carers and partners

You must show respect to family members, carers, partners and others important to the person using the service. You must ensure people are supported to make their preferences known about involving others and that these views are respected.

You must practise in a way that values and listens to the contribution that family, carers, partners and others can make to positive outcomes.

You should identify and address any ethical dilemmas or conflicts related to working with others, including seeking appropriate advice and support. In particular, you may need advice where there are conflicts about what is in a person's best interests.

You must know about and implement specific legal duties relating to carers. This includes a carer's right to an assessment of their needs and circumstances and to information, support and services in their own right, as appropriate.

4.6 Professional relationships and boundaries

Relationships are a fundamental part of social work. The ability to build purposeful and rewarding relationships with individuals, families and carers can have a positive effect on well-being and achieving agreed outcomes. However, relationship centred working may cause uncertainty for some about how to carry out their role and responsibilities.

It is essential to ensure that your relationship with individuals, families and carers remains professional at all times – with the defined purpose of promoting the well-being of the individual using the service.

You must:

- a. make sure you understand your professional role and your limits
- b. keep to your organisation's policy on professional boundaries
- c. apply professional boundaries with fairness, clarity, consistency and transparency
- d. seek support and take sensitive action where an individual misreads or becomes confused about the relationship
- e. make sure all your actions with individuals, carers and families are out in the open for discussion with your manager.

Professional boundaries apply to all forms of communication between social workers and individuals. This includes any use of mobile phones and social media (see also section 10.3).

Some things clearly breach acceptable boundaries. While not a complete list, unacceptable things include:

- a. having a sexual or other improper relationship with an individual
- b. borrowing from or lending money to an individual
- c. giving special privileges to 'favourite' individuals
- d. failing to provide agreed care and support, for example, due to negative feelings about an individual
- e. trying to impose own religious, moral or political beliefs on an individual
- f. acting in any way which harms an individual
- g. any practice specifically prohibited in law or statutory regulations.

The consent of the individual is never a defence for these things.

4.7 Rights and protections

You must familiarise yourself and comply with legal obligations to provide care and support, protect individuals' rights and ensure people are not discriminated against. The relevant legislation includes the:

- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Regulation and Inspection of Social Care Wales (Act) 2016
- Children Act 1989
- Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998.

As well as associated protocols such as the:

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- UN Principles for Older Persons.

You must keep to your organisation's policies on rights and protections, and not unfairly discriminate against any person using the service.

5. Good social work practice

Good social work practice is based on a person-centred, systematic, evidence based, analytical and reflective approach. Sound professional judgement and decision making are vital and underpin all aspects of practice.

You must at all times recognise and work within the limits of your competence, taking advice from managers and colleagues as appropriate. You must seek assistance if you are not able to carry out an aspect of your work, or if not sure how to proceed.

If you make a mistake you must be open and honest about it, including providing a full and prompt explanation to your employer about what has happened. Further guidance on this professional duty of candour is available from us at:

socialcare.wales/fitness-to-practise/codes-of-practice-and-guidance#section-29780-anchor

5.1 Assessment and planning

Assessment is a professional activity in social work. Person-centred, accurate and proportionate assessment helps to ensure that any support offered will truly fit people's lives and

circumstances. The assessment process should recognise that people are experts about their own lives and the outcomes they wish to achieve. Information held by others, including in other agencies and disciplines, may also be crucial.

Good assessment must include:

- a. adequately assessing people's strengths, needs, risks and circumstances
- b. listening to people's own accounts of their situation
- c. assisting people to identify what would help them build on their strengths, abilities and achievements
- d. assisting people to identify the outcomes they wish to achieve
- e. working with others to gather information and informed opinion relevant to the assessment
- f. analysing the nature, level, urgency and implications of any risks identified
- g. assessing the balance of people's rights and responsibilities in relation to risks
- h. making professional judgements to inform planning
- i. informing people about the steps you are going to take and their rights in the matter
- j. recording the assessment accurately.

Planning within social work is about finding creative ways to achieve outcomes – not matching people to traditional services and not creating dependency on services. Solutions may be found within people themselves, their personal networks, the wider community and by exploring what tailor made support might look like.

Planning for positive outcomes must include:

- a. supporting people to understand the planning process and their rights and responsibilities in it
- b. working with people to agree the outcomes in the plan and how they will be measured
- c. exploring with people a range of possible solutions and their feasibility
- d. building on strengths and encouraging aspiration, choice and decision making
- e. promoting stability in relationships and community involvement
- f. agreeing how risks will be managed positively
- g. supporting people to adjust to new circumstances, where necessary
- h. recognising when people may need extra support for significant life events

- i. designing a plan based on all the information
- j. agreeing the plan with those involved or affected
- k. agreeing timescales and how the plan will be implemented, monitored and reviewed
- l. involving and informing people if changes are made
- m. agreeing arrangements for keeping in contact
- n. recording the plan.

You must take any action required of you to implement the plan such as arranging services, finding information or making referrals to other organisations, in a timely way.

You should identify and address any dilemmas, conflicts or disputes relating to the assessment and planning processes. You must be able to explain your professional judgement, be able to modify your judgement where new evidence is presented and take advice, when necessary.

5.2 Intervening to achieve change

Social workers require knowledge of a range of evidence-based interventions. Different interventions will be needed for different situations and the choice explained, when necessary. Your chosen intervention should include:

- a. a clear rationale
- b. a focus on prevention and enabling people to maintain independence, health and well-being
- c. positive and informed risk management
- d. a plan for reflecting on and monitoring progress
- e. a way of revising the approach, as needed.

You must be open to learning about new methods and models of social work intervention.

5.3 Resources

You must confirm with people the planned outcomes which require resources. You must carry out any actions required of you to secure resources – and keep people informed of progress or any problems. You must be open and honest about resource constraints. If there is a dispute, you should inform people of their rights and relevant processes.

You must be mindful of your responsibility to make effective use of limited resources.

5.4 Review and evaluation

You must work with others to review and evaluate the outcomes of practice for people, as appropriate. This should include reviewing the assessment and progress on outcomes with the person, as well as the effectiveness of resources.

5.5 Advocating on behalf of others

Some people may need the support of an advocate to represent their views when they are not able to do so themselves. If people require advocacy, you should first work with the person to decide on the appropriate approach, for example, informal advocacy by family or friends, peer advocacy, non-statutory independent advocacy, advocacy by professionals as part of their role, Independent Mental Health Act Advocacy or Independent Mental Capacity Act Advocacy.

You must arrange advocacy in accordance with legal requirements and your organisation's policy¹. In some cases, and where there is no conflict of interest, it may be appropriate for you to take on the advocacy role. If you do, you must:

- clarify the desired outcomes of the advocacy
- support people to participate to the extent they are able
- work with people to prepare a case
- make representation to achieve the outcomes
- communicate the outcomes of the advocacy in ways that are understood
- review the effectiveness of the advocacy.

5.6 Records and reports

People have a right to expect that information about them is recorded and reported accurately and used appropriately. You must ensure that legal and agreed policies and procedures for completing records and reports are adhered to by you.

You should ensure that records and reports produced by you:

- a. are accurate, objective, understandable, complete and up-to-date
- b. fully reflect and respect the views of the person concerned
- c. contain an appropriate level of analysis to support decisions made

¹ Local authorities must arrange independent professional advocacy when a person can only overcome the barriers to participate fully in the assessment, care and support planning, review and safeguarding processes with assistance from an appropriate individual – see Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, Part 10 Code of Practice (Advocacy).

- d. evidence sound professional judgement and decision making
- e. include an up-to-date and accurate history and chronology
- f. can be understood by those with a right to see them
- g. are presented to those who need to make decisions or take actions
- h. are stored, shared and retained in accordance with organisational policy and legal requirements, including data protection.

You must not falsify, manipulate or backdate records or reports.

5.7 Comments and complaints about services

You must be familiar with your organisation's and other relevant complaints and reporting procedures. You should ensure people have information on how to comment and complain on any aspect of their care or support, including how they can escalate their complaint if they are not satisfied.

You should be familiar with the role of Care Inspectorate Wales, the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales and other sources of assistance with complaints. Both the Older People's Commissioner and the Children's Commissioner have powers to assist people using services, parents, carers and professionals.

If there is a complaint about your practice, you must cooperate with the investigation. You should be open to reflect on and learn from feedback.

If you are responsible for investigating complaints, you must treat those involved in a fair way and follow proper procedures for investigation. You must promote and facilitate access to independent advocacy arrangements, where required.

5.8 Ending your professional relationship

Your professional relationship with a person or family may end because of changes in their circumstances, because planned outcomes are achieved or because of a change of social worker. Sensitive endings, planned in advance, show respect and provide reassurance for people.

You should:

- a. agree a plan for ending your involvement
- b. explain to people the reason for ending your involvement
- c. provide people with information on the closure or continuity of support for them

- d. provide people with information on other sources of support such as community or other sectors
- e. inform people how they can provide feedback on the service, where appropriate
- f. arrange for the transfers or closure of information
- g. complete required documentation to close your involvement.

You must keep to your organisation's policy on ending involvement.

6. Safeguarding individuals

Social workers play a key role in promoting safeguarding. As well as responding to cases of actual or potential abuse, this involves practising in a way that actively promotes people's rights and supports people to keep themselves safe. Social workers need to know how to respond to a range of potential risks including:

- neglect
- self-neglect
- self-harm
- suicide
- substance misuse
- abuse
- domestic abuse
- sexual exploitation
- criminal exploitation
- financial exploitation
- scams
- slavery
- human trafficking
- bullying, including online bullying.

The Welsh Government has issued statutory guidance relating to safeguarding children and adults, which is available at: socialcare.wales/hub

6.1 Understanding safeguarding

You must maintain your understanding of harm, abuse and safeguarding and familiarise yourself with:

- a. the factors that may lead to harm, neglect or abuse
- b. relevant legal requirements, statutory guidance and national and local procedures
- c. your responsibility and accountability where a person has been or is in danger of harm, neglect or abuse.

6.2 Investigating harm, neglect or abuse

Investigating harm, neglect or abuse is complex and demanding. It involves working closely with other disciplines and agencies, being professionally assertive in situations where there may be hostility, making difficult judgements and developing options for action which may have far reaching consequences. All this must be done in the context of legal and organisational requirements. Social workers must maintain a focus on the person at risk, whatever other needs or issues come to light.

If you are responsible for investigating suspected harm, neglect or abuse, either in a lead role or contributing to the process, you must:

- a. work within agreed procedures and in partnership with others to plan the investigation
- b. keep a focus on safeguarding the person at risk, their views and their personal outcomes for any procedures or services
- c. use persistence and assertiveness to gather evidence
- d. co-ordinate evidence from a variety of sources to assess the level of risk
- e. make a professional judgement in partnership with others on the level and nature of the intervention required
- f. develop options for achieving immediate and longer term outcomes
- g. make recommendations in partnership with others about the intervention required
- h. record the investigation accurately and in accordance with requirements.

6.3 Risk management

Where risk of harm, neglect or abuse has been investigated and confirmed, plans to address the risk must be agreed urgently with relevant agencies. While the initial focus is on short term safety, other objectives must also be addressed. These include planning for restorative approaches, where possible, in the longer term.

If you are responsible for developing or contributing to plans you must:

- a. identify the degree of risk to an individual or others
- b. work with the person, those close to them and other professionals to develop a plan that will protect the person, those in their network and the community
- c. support the person to be as involved as possible in the planning process

- d. negotiate agreement on the least restrictive plan for short term safety
- e. develop a long term plan
- f. review plans with others at agreed times
- g. make changes to the plan according to the results of the intervention in consultation with others
- h. produce records and reports to document plans, progress, changes to the plan and outcomes.

6.4 Supporting people to keep themselves safe

You must practise in a way that supports people to keep themselves safe. This includes:

- a. promoting person-centred care and support
- b. assessing the person's capacity to make decisions regarding risk
- c. working with the person and others to develop risk management plans
- d. supporting people to recognise when behaviour towards them is inappropriate
- e. working with people to put risk management plans in place, where needed
- f. supporting people to express concerns or make complaints
- g. acting on concerns or complaints promptly, openly and fairly.

6.5 Female genital mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a criminal offence in England and Wales under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. All social care workers, including social workers, are under a duty to notify the police if, in the course of their work, they discover that an act of female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Further guidance on this duty to report is available from the UK Government at: socialcare.wales/fitness-to-practise/codes-of-practice-and-guidance#section-29780-anchor

6.6 Preventing people from being drawn into terrorism

Your organisation has a legal duty to have regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The UK Government has published guidance on this. You must support your employer to implement the guidance, for example, by attending training.

7.

Developing and managing self

Learning and development is essential to providing a good service for people. Your employer has a responsibility to provide you with professional supervision and opportunities to develop your professional knowledge, skills and understanding. You are responsible for your efforts to engage in continuing professional development and keeping abreast of relevant new developments and research.

7.1 Keeping up-to-date

You must keep your social work knowledge and skills up-to-date, working with your employer to find ways to meet your learning and development needs.

You must:

- a. routinely review and update knowledge of legal, practice, policy, regulatory and procedural frameworks
- b. keep up-to-date with relevant literature and research
- c. listen and learn from others including people using the service, relatives, carers and other professionals
- d. seek help with critical gaps in your knowledge and skills
- e. use your learning to support improved outcomes for people
- f. make sure you meet the post-registration training and learning requirements for your professional registration.

You should use a variety of methods to keep up-to-date such as reading, attending courses, engaging with the Continuing Professional Education and Learning framework and other post-qualifying training for social workers, learning from visits and placements, contributing to professional forums, accessing or contributing to research.

You should keep up-to-date with information about relevant local services.

If you are responsible for managing or supervising social work or other professional staff, including students, you should make particular efforts to develop your knowledge and skills as a leader of excellent social work practice.

7.2 Using and carrying out research

High quality social work research is a priority, contributing to and enriching evidence-based practice. You should seek out and use the best available research to inform your practice. You should be willing to contribute to research activity. If you are involved, you must put the participants' interests first and follow appropriate research governance and ethical guidelines.

7.3 Supervision and professional reflection

You must use the supervision opportunities available to you to identify and clarify your work and personal development objectives, to reflect on and improve your practice and to share and discuss concerns, including about your own well-being.

You must:

- a. prepare for supervision to maximise effectiveness
- b. use feedback to reflect on, evaluate and improve your practice
- c. implement actions agreed in supervision.

You must meet your responsibilities set out in your employers' supervision and appraisal policy.

7.4 Managing workload

You should prioritise your workload to use your time effectively, working within your organisation's policies. You should be good at timekeeping, meeting deadlines, proactively managing cases and avoiding unnecessary delay. You should practise logically and systematically, even under time pressure and be able to evidence this. You must seek support managing your time and workload, as appropriate. You must alert your employer if you have concerns about managing your time and workload safely.

7.5 Safety, well-being and resilience

You must take steps to stay safe in situations where there is a risk of harm to you. This includes working with your employer as they carry out their duty of care to you. You must adhere to relevant policies such as health and safety, managing behaviour, violence against staff and lone working.

You should recognise the effect that challenging work situations may have on you. You should work with your employer to identify ways to support your well-being and develop resilience.

8.

Working with colleagues

Most social workers work in teams with colleagues, including from other professions. Effective joint working is essential, helping to make best use of the range of skills and resources available.

8.1 Working in teams

Good team work is the responsibility of all team members, not just the manager. When working in a team you should act as a positive role model and try to motivate and inspire your colleagues.

You must:

- a. promote the rights and well-being of the person using the service
- b. make every effort to understand roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of colleagues
- c. communicate effectively
- d. respect the skills, expertise and contributions of your colleagues
- e. strive to address differences and disagreements

f. keep to agreed joint working and information sharing protocols. When working in a multi disciplinary team, in addition to a-f above, you must:

- g. uphold the role of social work and use independent professional judgement
- h. uphold social work principles and the *Code of Professional Practice*
- i. contribute to agreeing the objectives of multi-disciplinary work
- j. challenge judgements that appear to conflict with the evidence or work against people's well-being
- k. contribute to evaluating the effectiveness of multi-disciplinary work.

8.2 Delegating tasks to others

Delegation involves asking a colleague to undertake a task on your behalf. In the right circumstances, delegation can support service delivery and staff development. Although you will not be accountable for the decisions and actions of those to whom you delegate, you remain responsible for the overall management of the task and accountable for your decision to delegate. When you delegate a task, you must be satisfied that delegating the task complies with legal, regulatory and organisational requirements.

You must:

- a. be satisfied that the benefits of delegating the task outweigh any risks
- b. be satisfied that the person to whom you delegate has the qualifications, experience, knowledge and skills and capacity required
- c. pass on sufficient information about the task to the person to whom you are delegating
- d. ensure the person to whom you are delegating has access to appropriate supervision
- e. ensure that consent is gained from people using the service, where necessary
- f. intervene if the person to whom you have delegated is not able to carry out the task safely.

8.3 Contributing to learning and development

All social workers have a responsibility to contribute to the learning and development of other professionals, including training social work students. This can be achieved in a wide variety of ways such as sharing information and expertise, contributing to discussions, delivering training or acting as a practice assessor, coach, mentor or consultant. If you are involved in these activities, you must be prepared to develop the necessary competence.

You must do all you can to promote a learning culture in the workplace. You should contribute to an environment where others are able to share good practice, raise concerns, contribute ideas, be creative and consider research findings.

9. Contributing to service improvement

Social workers may contribute to a range of activities to ensure a good service for people. These may include developing policies, contributing to service planning, review and evaluation. If you are involved, make sure your contribution is focused on quality and improvement, in particular the rights, safety and well-being of people using the service. You should use feedback from people using the service to inform the activity.

9.1 Acting on concerns

You must inform your employer if you have concerns about ineffective policies or procedures or gaps in these.

Similarly, you must act on any concerns, for example, about poor systems, resources, facilities and equipment, skill mix, breaches of regulatory standards or codes, gaps in policies and procedures, inadequate supervision, poor or unlawful practice by any person.

You should be familiar with policies and procedures for reporting concerns, for example, bullying and harassment, and whistleblowing.

If those responsible don't take adequate action, you must seek independent advice from an appropriate regulatory or advisory body (such as professional association or union)². You must record your concerns and the steps you have taken to try and resolve them.

10. Good conduct

Good conduct includes being honest and trustworthy, and acting with integrity. It requires you, both in work and outside work, to behave in a way that justifies the trust people using the service, families, the public and colleagues place in you.

10.1 Professional registration

You must keep your professional registration with us up-to-date.

You must tell us, without delay, about anything which may call into question your suitability to work as a social worker.

This includes:

- a. criminal proceedings and ongoing police investigations
- b. cautions, court orders, fixed penalties or convictions
- c. disciplinary proceedings
- d. any change in your mental or physical condition that may affect your ability to work in social care.

Note: telling us about these things will not necessarily affect your registration.

² Examples include Care Inspectorate Wales, Social Care Wales, Protect (formerly Public Concern at Work), Children's Commissioner for Wales, Older People's Commissioner for Wales, Public Service Ombudsman, BASW Cymru

To keep your registration, we must be able to contact you. You must tell us promptly about any changes to your contact details including name, title, home address, work address, email and employment details.

10.2 Gifts and donations

You must keep to your organisation's policies about gifts, donations and bequests.

You mustn't encourage people using the service or their families to lend or give property, money or gifts that will directly or indirectly benefit you personally.

You mustn't put pressure on people to make donations to other people or organisations.

10.3 Social media

It is recognised that you may use social media sites (Facebook, Twitter and so on) including to share general information with your colleagues. If you do, you must not discuss or post inappropriate comments online about any persons connected with your work. This is to protect confidentiality, personal and professional integrity.

Think carefully about how you present yourself on social media and how your online presence – both now and in the future – may be seen by others including people using the service and their families, members of the public and other professionals.

How you behave on social media should be at the same high standards as your day-to-day behaviour and you must maintain professional boundaries at all times.

You must keep to your organisation's policy on use of social media.

Further guidance on using social media responsibly is available from us.



Gofal Cymdeithasol **Cymru**
Social Care **Wales**



For more information visit
socialcare.wales

South Gate House, Wood Street, Cardiff, CF10 1EW



Ariennir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Funded by
Welsh Government