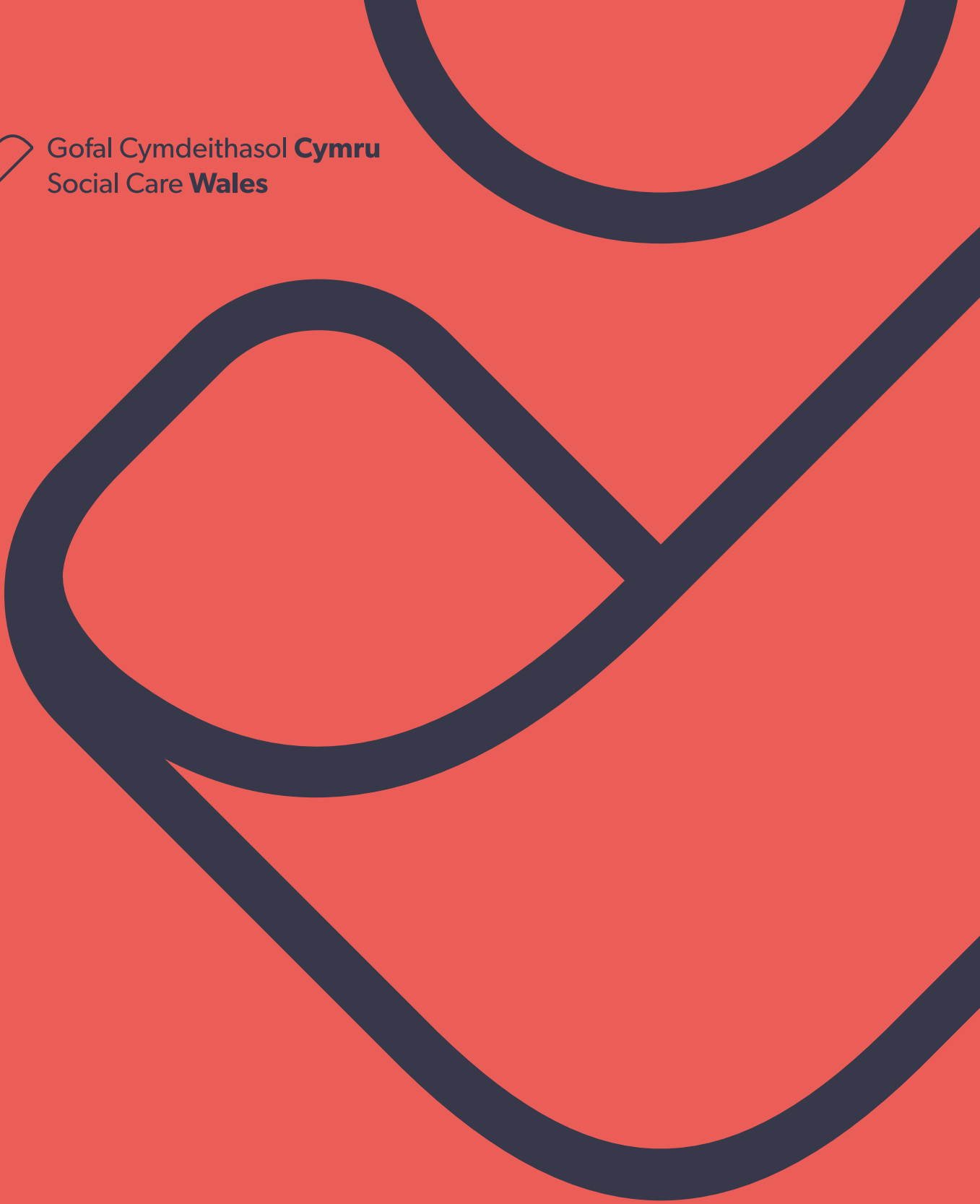




Gofal Cymdeithasol **Cymru**  
Social Care **Wales**



# The social worker

Practice guidance for social workers  
registered with Social Care Wales



Noddir gan  
**Lywodraeth Cymru**  
Sponsored by  
**Welsh Government**

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ISBN: 978-1-911463-30-6  
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## Other formats

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

Copies also available in Welsh.

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# Code of Professional Practice for Social Care

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## The Code

Social Care Wales expects social care workers, which includes social workers, to meet the Code of Professional Practice for Social Care and may take action if registered workers fail to do so.

Employers of social care workers are expected to take account of the Code in making decisions about the conduct of their staff.

### **As a social care 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 or leading staff, you must embed the Code in their work.

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# About this practice guidance

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## This practice guidance is for social workers registered with Social Care Wales

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The guidance, which builds on the Code of Professional Practice for Social Care, aims to:

- Describe what is expected of social workers
- Provide a practical tool, aiding social workers in their practice
- Provide guidance which supports social workers to deliver a high quality, citizen-centred<sup>1</sup> social work service
- Provide the basis for the development of more detailed practice guidance to support best practice.

The guidance also contains links to other information intended to support social workers in their practice.

The guidance has been developed with reference to the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Social Workers published in 2011.

This is a dynamic document which will be reviewed and updated periodically. It is not intended to cover all situations or areas of practice. Social workers are expected to use their professional judgement, applying the general principles and the Code of Professional Practice for Social Care. Social workers must adhere to requirements on them set out in legislation, statutory regulations and guidance.

<sup>1</sup>*Citizen-centred services is a key theme in Sustainable Social Services in Wales: A Framework for Action. It provides for a strong voice for service users and carers in the design and delivery of social services. It encompasses adults and children and young people.*



# How this guidance applies to you

This guidance is addressed to social workers in Wales. It is also relevant to social work employers and can be used to assess whether appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure a professional, citizen-centred and safe service. It can be used to let individuals, families, carers, groups and the public know what they can expect from social workers.

It is the social worker's responsibility to be familiar with and follow the guidance. Social workers must use their judgement to apply the guidance in different situations.

If a social worker is responsible for leading, managing, supervising, mentoring or supporting other social workers, including social work students, they should promote these same expectations in these staff and address any concerns.

Whilst the Code of Professional Practice for Social Care (the Code) remains the primary document setting out the core principles around which allegations of misconduct or impaired fitness to practise would be framed, this guidance may be used to illustrate a potential failure to uphold the standards in the Code. Serious or persistent failure to follow this guidance may therefore put your registration at risk.

In the guidance the terms '**you must**' and '**you should**' are used in the following ways:

- '**You must**' is an overriding principle.
- '**You should**' is used when providing an explanation of how you will meet an overriding principle.
- '**You should**' is also used where the principle will not apply in all situations, or where there are factors outside your control that affect how you can follow the guidance.

## 2

# The social work profession

The starting point for this guidance is the international definition of social work:

“Social work is 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 well-being.”

**International Association of Schools of Social Work and the International Federation of Social Workers.**

To practise as a social worker in Wales or call yourself a social worker while working in Wales, you must be registered with Social Care Wales (Protection of Title introduced 1 April 2005).

Students participating on an approved social work degree course in Wales must also register with Social Care Wales.



# 3

## Citizen-centred social work

Citizen-centred social work means ensuring that all people and groups using the service have a strong voice over matters that affect them. The relationship with the social worker is seen as a means to enable people to make the changes they need in their lives, while recognising the expertise that people have about their own unique situations. It includes working in partnership and seeking creative ways to achieve outcomes and not limiting intervention to matching people to traditional or existing services. High standards of conduct and practice and good communication are fundamental to and underpin a citizen-centred approach. As a social worker, you are accountable for ensuring your own practice is citizen-centred and leading and promoting this approach with others.

# 4

## Standards of conduct

The Code describes the standards of professional conduct and practice required of social workers in order to deliver a citizen-centred service. The Code ensures that employers, colleagues, service users, carers and the public know what they can expect of social workers. You must ensure that you meet the standards set out in the Code and that no act or omission on your part harms the well-being of service users.

You should use the Code to:

- a. examine and reflect on your own conduct and practice, identifying and addressing areas in which you can improve in the light of your experiences
- b. promote high standards of conduct and practice with colleagues
- c. promote high standards of practice, dignity and respect in any services arranged by you on behalf of people
- d. challenge poor conduct and practice and escalate your concerns, where necessary
- e. inform people using the service about the standards they can expect.

## 5

# Good communication

To communicate effectively with people you must:

- a. prepare fully for social work involvement
- b. be open, accurate and straightforward
- c. take account of the language need and preference of people
- d. talk to people with due respect for their age, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or belief, understanding and needs
- e. use both verbal and non-verbal cues to aid understanding
- g. use the authority of your role in a responsible and respectful manner
- h. listen to people, ask for and respect their views about their strengths, needs, risks and circumstances
- i. support people to find effective ways to communicate their views, needs and preferences
- j. actively seek out and share with people, in a way they can understand, information they want or need about their care and support, rights and entitlements
- k. respond to people's questions and concerns
- l. make sure people are informed about how information may be shared and confidentiality.

You must make sure, wherever possible, that arrangements are made to meet people's unique communication needs.

## 6

# Responding to Welsh language needs

Language 'choice' is a familiar concept to public service providers in Wales. Welsh language legislation means that public organisations are duty bound to treat English and Welsh on an equal basis when providing services, ensuring language choice for users. Language is considered a core component of providing sensitive and accessible services. In the context of health and social care, it is important to recognise that the person using services is not always in a position to express their choice. People are often vulnerable, and not confident to ask for services in Welsh. This means moving the responsibility from the person to ask for services through the medium of Welsh, to the service to make an 'active offer'<sup>2</sup>. You should support your employer to implement the 'active offer' principle.

<sup>2</sup>The 'active offer' is a key principle in *More than Just Words, Strategic Framework for Welsh Language Services in Health, Social Services and Social Care, Welsh Government, 2012* and in the follow on strategic framework for Welsh language services in Health, Social Services and Social Care 2016-2019

# 7

## Children and young people

The Human Rights Act 1998 applies to children and young people and adults. There are associated United Nations conventions and protocols for specific groups (see paragraph 11 below). If you are working with children and young people, it is essential that you fully recognise their distinct needs and specific rights that may be different to those that apply to adults. In particular, you must familiarise yourself with and apply the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to your practice. This is in order for children and young people receiving services to get the support they need to enjoy the levels of well-being experienced by their peers, and in order that their rights under the UNCRC are realised.

The seven core aims developed by Welsh Government summarise the UNCRC and form the basis for decisions on priorities and objectives nationally. They should also form the basis for decisions on strategy, service provision and practice locally.

The seven core aims are that children and young people:

- 1 have a flying start in life
- 2 have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities
- 3 enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation
- 4 have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities
- 5 are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised
- 6 have a safe home and a community which supports physical emotional well-being
- 7 are not disadvantaged by poverty.



## Confidentiality

You must treat a person's personal information with discretion. You should be familiar with and adhere to legal requirements and local policy and procedures relating to confidentiality and information sharing (see also paragraph 37). You should not share information unless the law permits it.

You should know about and take the necessary action in relation to sharing information due to serious risk to the well-being of the individual or others.



## Families, carers and partners

You must be respectful to family members, carers and partners, and others close or important to the person using the service. You should be sensitive and responsive in providing information and support.

You should ensure that people using the service are supported to make their views and preferences known about the involvement of family members, carers and partners in their lives and that these views are respected. You should practise in a way that values the contribution that family members, carers and partners can make to positive outcomes for people.

You should identify and address any ethical dilemmas or conflicts related to working with family members, carers and partners, including seeking appropriate advice and support for your own practice. In particular, you may need advice and support where there are conflicts about what is in the person's best interests.

You must familiarise yourself with and implement legislation and guidance relating to support for carers. This includes a carer's right to an assessment of their needs and circumstances, and to information, support or services in their own right, as appropriate.

## 10

# Appropriate relationships and personal boundaries

The relationship between a social worker and a person using the service will often involve an imbalance of power. This arises, for example, because the social worker has access to information or resources, or because the person is in a vulnerable situation.

Recognising this imbalance of power, you must not:

- a. use your professional position to establish or pursue a sexual or improper relationship with a person using the service or someone close to them
- b. express to people using the service your personal beliefs, including political, religious or moral beliefs, in ways that exploit their vulnerability or are likely to cause them distress.

You must report to and seek guidance from a manager about any improper overture made to you by a person using the service.

## 11

# Legislation and guidance

You must familiarise yourself and comply with organisational policies and procedures, relevant legislation and guidance, including the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014; Equality Act 2010; Human Rights Act 1998, and associated conventions and protocols such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and UN Principles for Older Persons; Mental Capacity Act 2005 and associated Code of Practice; Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards; Welsh Language Act 1993; Welsh Language Measure 2011 and Data Protection Act 1998.

You should promote equality of opportunity and inclusion for people, including those from protected characteristic groups. The Equality Act 2010 covers the following groups – age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity.

## 12

# Good social work practice

Good social work practice is based on a citizen-centred, systematic, evidence based and reflective approach. Sound professional judgement and decision making are vital and underpin all aspects of practice. In practising social work, you must at all times recognise and work within the limits of your competence, consulting and taking advice from managers and colleagues, as appropriate. You must seek assistance if you are not able to carry out an aspect of work, or if not sure how to proceed.

If you make a mistake you must be open and honest about it, including providing full and prompt explanation to your manager about what has happened. You should be willing to reflect on and learn from mistakes. Further guidance on this Professional Duty of Candour<sup>3</sup> is available on our website.

## 13

# Assessment and planning

Assessment is a professional activity within social work. Accurate, proportionate and citizen-centred assessment helps to ensure that consequent social work involvement will truly fit people's lives and circumstances. The assessment process should recognise that people are experts about their own lives and that information held by others, including those in other agencies or disciplines, also has a crucial role to play. Planning cannot begin until initial assessment is complete.

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 further 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 any risks identified
- h. making professional judgements about needs, risks and protective factors to inform planning
- i. informing people what steps you are going to take and their rights
- j. recording assessment information accurately and in accordance with organisational requirements.

Planning within social work is about seeking creative ways to achieve outcomes, not about matching people to traditional or existing services and not about creating dependency on services. Solutions may be found within people themselves or their personal networks, the wider community, through combining established services in new ways, or by specifying what tailor-made support might look like.

Planning for good outcomes must include:

- a. supporting people to understand the planning process and their rights and responsibilities within it
- b. working with people to agree the outcomes that the plan should achieve and how these 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. supporting people to adjust to new circumstances, where necessary
- g. recognising when people may need extra support, for example, during transitions and significant life events
- h. formulating a plan based on the collated information
- i. explaining and agreeing the plan with those involved in it or affected by it
- j. agreeing timescales and how the plan will be implemented, monitored and reviewed and by whom
- k. involving and informing people if changes are made
- l. agreeing how contact will be maintained
- m. recording the plan and any issues or needs that the plan does not seek to address.

You should take any action required of you to implement the plan, such as arranging services, finding information or referral to other organisations, in a timely fashion.

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

Where a person finds it difficult to take part in the assessment and planning processes, you should involve others who are able to represent their best interests.



## Taking action to achieve change

Sound knowledge of a range of evidence-based interventions, coupled with a social worker's use of self in applying them, stand as a key resource in social work practice. Different interventions will need to be selected for different situations, and the choice explained when necessary. Your social work intervention should be based on research into, or consideration of, a range of methods and models of intervention and should include:

- a. a focus on prevention and enabling, supporting people to develop and / or maintain autonomy, independence, health and well-being
- b. positive and informed risk management
- c. a clear rationale for choosing a particular intervention
- d. monitoring the effectiveness of the intervention
- e. reflecting on the effectiveness of the intervention
- f. revising the intervention to take account of monitoring and reflection.

You should be open to learn about new methods and models of intervention.



15

## Resources

You must confirm with people the planned outcomes which resources are required to achieve. You should carry out any actions required of you to secure resources, whilst keeping people informed of progress, delays or other problems. You should be open and honest about any resource constraints. In situations of contention, you should inform people of their rights and the means open to them to seek the resources they require.

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

16

## Review and evaluation

You must review and evaluate the outcomes of your social work practice for people using the service, their families and communities, as appropriate. This should include reviewing the assessment and the (outcome-focused) plan with the person and their family, as appropriate, as well as the effectiveness of resources in achieving outcomes. You should revise plans for your practice and interventions to take account of review and evaluation.

17

## Advocating on behalf of others

In a particular situation or over a longer period of time, it may be necessary to represent people's views, needs or wishes when they are not in a position to do so for themselves. If people require advocacy, you must first work with the person to determine an appropriate approach. Independent advocacy has many potential benefits and you should support people to access information about this option and be proactive in making arrangements, where appropriate.

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 so, you must:

- a. clarify the desired and other possible outcomes of the advocacy
- b. support people to participate to the extent that they are able

- c. collaborate with people to prepare a case that represents their best interests
- d. make representation to achieve desired outcomes
- e. communicate outcomes of the advocacy in ways that can be understood
- f. review the effectiveness of the advocacy.

## 18

## 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 you adhere to legal and agreed policies and procedures for completing records and reports. You should ensure that records and reports produced by yourself:

- a. are accurate, coherent, complete and up-to-date
- b. contain an appropriate level of analysis to support decisions made
- c. evidence sound professional judgement and decision making
- d. include an up-to-date and accurate history and chronology
- e. can be understood by those who have a right to see them
- f. comply with legal and organisational requirements
- g. are presented to others who need to make decisions or take actions
- h. are stored, shared and retained in accordance with confidentiality agreements and legal requirements, including data protection legislation.

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

# 19

## Comments and complaints about services

You must be familiar with the complaints procedure at a local level. You should ensure that people have information on how to comment and complain, including how they can escalate their complaint if they are not satisfied with a response.

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

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

If you are responsible for investigating complaints, you must treat the complaints / complainants in a fair way and follow proper procedures for investigation. You should promote and facilitate access to appropriate independent advocacy arrangements, where necessary.



## Ending your professional relationship with a person or family

Your professional relationship with a person or family may end because of changes in their circumstances, because planned outcomes are achieved or are no longer appropriate, or because of a change of social worker. Sensitive endings, planned in advance, demonstrate respect for the people involved while clarity of information provides reassurance.

You should:

- a. agree a plan for ending your involvement
- b. explain to people the reasons 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 voluntary sector, as appropriate
- e. inform people about how they can provide feedback on the service, where appropriate
- f. arrange for the transfer or closure of information relating to social work involvement
- g. complete required documentation to close your involvement.

## 21

# Safeguarding individuals

Social work practice that promotes the safeguarding of people permeates all your work. It includes understanding safeguarding and action that must be taken in cases of actual or potential harm or abuse. It includes supporting relationships that promote safeguarding and leading practices that support the rights, inclusion and well-being of people and keeping themselves safe.

The Welsh Government has issued statutory guidance in relation to the safeguarding of adults and children<sup>4</sup>.

## 22

# Understanding safeguarding in relation to harm and abuse

You must maintain and refresh your own understanding of harm, abuse and safeguarding by undertaking training and familiarising yourself with:

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

<sup>4</sup> Welsh Government statutory guidance for safeguarding [socialcare.wales/hub](https://socialcare.wales/hub)

# 23

## Investigating harm or abuse

Investigating harm or abuse is a complex and demanding activity, which has at its heart the safeguarding of a vulnerable adult, young person or child. It involves working closely with other disciplines and agencies; exercising professional assertiveness in situations where there may be overt or covert 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, organisational and other binding requirements. At all times, social workers must maintain a focus on the person who is at risk, whatever other needs or issues may come to light during the investigation process.

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

- a. work within organisational procedures and in partnership with others to plan an investigation
- b. maintain a focus on safeguarding the person at risk
- c. use persistence and assertiveness to gather evidence
- d. co-ordinate evidence from a variety of sources and disciplines to assess the level of risk
- e. make a professional judgement in partnership with others on the level and nature of 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 information relating to the investigation accurately and in accordance with organisational and legal requirements.

# 24

## Risk management plans

Where risk of harm or abuse has been investigated and confirmed, plans to address the risk must be agreed as a matter of urgency within a multiagency framework. While the initial focus must be on securing short-term safety, other objectives must also be addressed. These will include identifying the least damaging plan of action for the short term and planning for restorative approaches, where possible, in the longer term.

If you are responsible for agreeing plans where there is risk of harm or abuse, either in a lead role or contributing to the process, you must:

- a. analyse from the outcome of an investigation the degree of risk to a person, to their immediate or extended network, or to the community
- b. collaborate with the person, those close to them, colleagues and professionals from other disciplines to develop a plan that will protect the person, those in their networks and the community
- c. support the person to be as fully involved as possible in the planning process
- d. negotiate agreement on the least restrictive and least damaging plan of action that will offer short term safety in respect of the risks evidenced
- e. develop a long-term plan to restore or continue to provide protection
- f. review plans with others at agreed times
- g. make changes to the plan in response to the direction of the intervention in consultation with others
- h. produce professional records and reports to document plans, progress, changes to plans and outcomes.

## 25

# Supporting people to keep themselves safe

You must practise social work that supports people to keep themselves safe or promotes their safety. This will include:

- a. promoting citizen-centred care and support
- b. assessing the person's capacity to make decisions regarding risk
- c. working with the person and those in a caring and supportive role to develop risk management plans
- d. supporting people to recognise when behaviour towards them is inappropriate or unacceptable, where possible
- e. supporting individuals to express concerns or make complaints when this is within their capacity
- f. acting on concerns or complaints in a prompt, open, honest and fair manner.

## 26

# Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. Section 5B of the 2003 Act introduces a mandatory reporting duty which requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers to report known cases of FGM in under 18s which they identify in the course of their work to the police. Further [guidance on this duty to report](#) is available from the UK Government<sup>5</sup>.

## 27

# Preventing people from being drawn into terrorism

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on certain bodies (including local authorities) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The UK Government has published guidance on this topic. The guidance includes requirements for staff training. You should support your employer to implement the guidance.

<sup>5</sup>Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multiagency-statutory-guidance-on-femalegenital-mutilation>



## 28

# Developing and managing self

In order to practise safely and professionally, social workers must continually equip themselves with a body of knowledge and evidence that draws on academic literature, research, legislation, and local understanding. Social work also makes demands on personal capacities and social workers need to plan best use of time, energy and expertise, as well as how to best stay safe in situations where there is risk. Employers have a responsibility to support social workers in these areas.

## 29

# Keeping up-to-date

You must keep your knowledge, skills and competence up-to-date throughout your career, proactively seeking out development opportunities that will meet your learning needs and priorities.

You should:

- a. routinely review and update knowledge of legal, practice, policy, regulatory and procedural frameworks
- b. review the outcomes of previous social work practice
- c. review your knowledge about issues of equality, fairness, access and anti-discriminatory practice
- d. seek assistance with critical gaps in your knowledge and skills
- e. use your learning to support the improvement of practice and services.

You should make use of a variety of methods to keep up-to-date such as reading, attending courses, engaging with the Continuing Professional Education and Learning Framework for Social Workers in Wales, learning from other professionals, visits and placements, contributing to professional groups and forums, accessing or contributing to research.

You should keep up-to-date with information about local services that may be relevant to the people you are working with.

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

## 30

### Use of research

Strengthening the quality and quantity of social work and social care research in Wales, contributing to evidence-based / enriched practice is a priority. You should seek out and integrate best available current and emerging research into your own practice, seeking support from others to achieve this, as necessary.

You should be willing to contribute to research activity (see also paragraph 48).

## 31

### Supervision and reflection

Professional supervision and personal reflection are essential to the development of practice, and social workers must make effective use of both. These in turn need to be informed by feedback from others, and supplemented with less formal support when this is helpful or necessary.

You must use professional supervision to develop accountable social work practice. You should:

- a. prepare for supervision in ways that will maximise its effectiveness
- b. access additional sources of support compatible with professional social work principles
- c. use feedback from supervision and other sources to inform critical reflection on and evaluation of your practice
- d. integrate learning from supervision and reflection within your practice.

## 32

### Workload management

You should prioritise your work in order to use your time effectively, working within organisational policies. You should be good at timekeeping, meeting agreed 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 should seek support with managing your time and workload, as appropriate. You should alert your employer if you have concerns about managing your time and workload safely (see also paragraph 45).

## 33

# Safety, well-being and resilience

You must take steps to ensure your safety in situations where there is risk of harm to you. This includes working with your employer as they carry out their duty of care to you, ensuring that you are aware of and implement relevant organisational policies and procedures such as managing behaviour, violence against staff, lone working and managing pressure.

You should recognise the effect that challenging work situations may have on your well-being and your practice. You should proactively identify and implement strategies to support your well-being and develop your personal and professional resilience.

## 34

# Working with colleagues

Most social workers work in teams with colleagues, including from other professions. Effective joint working is an essential component of social work practice, helping to maximise the use of skills and resources to the benefit of people using the service.

## 35

# Working in teams

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

- a. make every effort to understand roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of key colleagues
- b. communicate effectively
- c. promote the rights of the person/s using services
- d. respect the skills, expertise and contributions of your colleagues
- e. strive to manage conflicts constructively
- f. prepare for and positively contribute to meetings.

You should be open to consider new ideas and ways of working together.

## 36

# Working in a multi-disciplinary context

When working in a multi-disciplinary context, in addition to a-f above, you should:

- g. uphold the role and function of social work, including exercising independent professional judgement
- h. ensure that social work principles, the Code and values are promoted
- i. contribute to identifying and agreeing the goals and objectives of multi-disciplinary work
- j. challenge judgements of others that appear to conflict with the evidence or to work against people's best interests
- k. apply social work knowledge, skills and values to deal constructively with disagreements and conflicts
- l. contribute to evaluating the effectiveness of multi-disciplinary work.

## 37

# Information sharing

Sharing information appropriately with colleagues, other professionals and teams is an important aspect of social work practice. You must ensure that you are familiar with agreed systems for the exchange of information. You must adhere to agreed information sharing protocols. If you have concerns about the effectiveness of information sharing protocols or practice, you should raise these with your employer.

# 38

## 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 contribute to staff development. Although you will not be accountable for the decisions and actions of those to whom you delegate, you will still be 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 should:

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

# 39

## Contributing to the development of others

As well as addressing their own learning needs, all social workers have a responsibility to contribute to the learning and development of others, including the training of future social work professionals. This can be achieved in a variety of ways, ranging from sharing information, contributing to team meetings and discussions to more formal activities such as delivering training, undertaking the practice assessor role, coaching, mentoring and consultancy.

40

## Learning culture

You should do all that you can to actively promote a learning culture in the workplace.

You should contribute to an environment where all have the opportunity to share and disseminate good practice, learning and ideas; access research; critically reflect on practice; and to be creative and innovative.

41

## Supporting the learning of colleagues and students

Coaching, mentoring, training and assessing colleagues and students, including those undertaking qualifications, are crucial for the profession now and in the future. You should be willing to contribute to these activities and, if you are involved, to develop the necessary competence.

42

## Contributing to the service

Social workers may undertake a range of tasks to ensure safe and effective service delivery. These may include, for example, implementing agreed policies; contributing to planning and policy development; managing resources; review and evaluation; and performance management tasks. You are responsible for maintaining professional standards and the quality of work in these areas.

43

## Health and safety

You must familiarise yourself with and comply with statutory and organisational health, safety and security requirements including, amongst others, the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.



## Service development

You should actively contribute to the development of an effective social work service in your area.

In contributing to service development you should:

- a. uphold social work values, promoting and complying with the Code
- b. ensure your contribution is focused on quality and improvement, in particular the rights, safety and well-being of people using the service
- c. use feedback from people using the service to inform the task.



## Raising concerns with your employer

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

Similarly, you must act on any concerns, for example, about poor systems, available resources, work overload, bullying, facilities and equipment, skill mix, breaches of regulatory standards or codes, ethical concerns, poor or unlawful conduct or practice. You should be familiar with relevant policies and procedures for reporting concerns.

If your employer does not take adequate action, you should seek independent advice from an appropriate regulatory or advisory body such as a professional association or union. You should record your concerns and the steps you have taken to try and resolve them.



## Probity

Probity means being honest and trustworthy and acting with integrity. It is at the heart of social work professionalism. It requires you to conduct yourself at all times in a way that justifies the trust individuals, relatives, carers, staff and the public place in you.



## Professional registration

You must maintain your professional registration and comply with post-registration training and learning, continuing professional education and learning, and fitness to practise requirements.

You should inform us without delay about any matters which may call into question your suitability to work in social work, including (but not limited to):

- a. pending criminal proceedings
- b. cautions, fixed penalties or convictions
- c. disciplinary proceedings pending or taken  
and / or
- d. any change in your physical or mental health condition that may affect your ability to undertake your work in social care.

**Note:** telling us about these matters will not necessarily prevent you from being registered, or affect an existing registration.

You should inform us about any changes to your contact details including name, title, home address, work address, e-mail and employment details.



## Undertaking research

Research involving people who use services directly or indirectly is vital in improving services and practice. If you are involved in designing, organising or undertaking research, you must:

- a. put the protection of the participants' interests first
- b. act with honesty and integrity
- c. seek out and follow appropriate research governance and ethical guidelines.



## 49

### Gifts and donations

You must not encourage people using the service, their partners, relatives or carers to give, lend or bequeath money, goods or gifts that will directly or indirectly benefit you personally.

You must not put pressure on people using the service, their partners, relatives or carers to make donations to other people or organisations.

You must comply with relevant statutory regulations concerning gifts, donations and bequests.

## 50

### Conduct and social media sites

It is recognised that social workers may communicate with colleagues through social media sites online such as Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter; these sites can provide a helpful source of peer support and information sharing. However, you must not discuss or post comments online about individuals connected with your work. This is in the interests of protecting all parties' confidentiality, and personal and professional integrity. You should also carefully consider how you represent yourself on social media sites and how your online presence may be perceived by others, including members of the public and other professionals.

You should not communicate with people using the service using your personal social media accounts.

# Additional information

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## Carers

Carers Trust	<a href="http://www.carers.org">www.carers.org</a>
Carers Wales	<a href="http://www.carersuk.org/wales">www.carersuk.org/wales</a>

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## Children and young people

Children's Commissioner for Wales	<a href="http://www.childcom.org.uk">www.childcom.org.uk</a>
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## Complaints

Public Service Ombudsman for Wales	<a href="http://www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk">www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk</a>
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## Engaging with individuals

Standards for Children and Young People's Participation	<a href="http://www.childreninwales.org.uk/our-work/participation/Standards%20for%20Children%20and%20Young%20People's%20Participation">www.childreninwales.org.uk/our-work/participation/Standards for Children and Young People's Participation</a>
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## Equalities

Equality and Human Rights Commission	<a href="http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/commission-wales">www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/commission-wales</a>
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## Health and safety

Health and Safety Executive	<a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk">www.hse.gov.uk</a>
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## National occupational standards

Social Care Wales	<a href="http://socialcare.wales">socialcare.wales</a>
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## Older people

Older People's Commissioner for Wales	<a href="http://www.olderpeoplewales.com">www.olderpeoplewales.com</a>
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## Professional association and trade unions

British Association of Social Work Cymru	<a href="http://www.basw.co.uk/wales/">www.basw.co.uk/wales/</a>
GMB Trade Union	<a href="http://www.gmb.org.uk">www.gmb.org.uk</a>
UNISON	<a href="http://www.unison.org.uk">www.unison.org.uk</a>

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## Regulation of services

Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales	<a href="http://www.cssiw.org.uk">www.cssiw.org.uk</a>
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## Regulation of the workforce

Social Care Wales	<a href="http://socialcare.wales">socialcare.wales</a>
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## Safeguarding

Welsh Government statutory guidance for safeguarding	<a href="http://socialcare.wales/hub">socialcare.wales/hub</a>
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## Service development

Health and Care Research Wales	<a href="http://www.healthandcareresearch.gov.wales/">www.healthandcareresearch.gov.wales/</a>
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Social Care Institute for Excellence	<a href="http://www.scie.org.uk">www.scie.org.uk</a>
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Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014	<a href="http://socialcare.wales/hub">socialcare.wales/hub</a>
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## Voluntary sector

Wales Council for Voluntary Action	<a href="http://www.wcva.org.uk">www.wcva.org.uk</a>
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## Welsh language

Welsh Language Commissioner	<a href="http://www.comisiynyddygydraeg.org">www.comisiynyddygydraeg.org</a>
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## Workforce development

Social Care Wales	<a href="http://socialcare.wales">socialcare.wales</a>
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For more information visit  
**socialcare.wales**

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

