Population Assessment

1. **What is a population assessment report?**

A population assessment report is a clear evidence-based assessment of people’s care and support needs.

The Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014 places a duty on local authorities and local health boards to jointly carry out an assessment of care and support needs (including the support needs of carers). Working in partnership (see FAQ 2), local authorities and the local health boards must produce a combined population assessment report of the whole local health board area. The report must also include an assessment of the range and level of services required to meet the identified need, including the range and level of preventative services (see FAQ 8).

1. **Who is responsible for producing a population assessment report?**

All local authorities in a local health board area must form a partnership arrangement with that health board to undertake a population assessment, and produce a combined population assessment report. The partnership arrangements are set out in [The Care and Support (Partnership Arrangements for Population Assessments) (Wales) Regulations 2015](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2015/1495/pdfs/wsi_20151495_mi.pdf).

Local authorities and the local health board must engage with citizens, as well as the third and private sectors, in the process of undertaking a population assessment.

1. **When is the first population assessment report required, and how frequently does a population assessment report need to be undertaken?**

Local authorities and local health boards must produce the first combined population assessment report by April 2017, and one combined population assessment report per local government electoral cycle thereafter.

1. **Is a population assessment report the same as an assessment of local well-being required under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015?**

A population assessment report, as required under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, focuses specifically on identifying and meeting care and support needs including the needs of carers and of the population in the partnership area (see FAQs 1 and 2).

The population assessment of care and support needs will inform the broader assessment of well-being as required under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (see FAQ 5).

1. **How does a population assessment report relate to assessments of   
   local well-being?**

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 specifies that population assessments undertaken as a result of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, must be taken into account by the Public Services Board as part of the process of undertaking their local well-being assessment.

The local well-being plan, which the boards will produce, will need to have regard to the matters raised in the assessment of local well-being.

The local well-being plan operates at local authority level and is focused more broadly on strategically improving the overall well-being of citizens in that area.

1. **How does the timescale for the production of the population assessment report relate to production of the assessments of local well-being?**

The first population assessment report is required by April 2017 (see FAQ 3). The first assessment of local well-being will need to be produced by May 2017. This means the gathering of evidence can be done once, and analysed for both purposes.

1. **Does the population assessment report inform other strategic plans?**

A population assessment report will be a rich source of information and will contribute significantly to the development of a wide range of strategic plans relating to health and social services, including integrated medium term plans. The report should be used to inform various planning and operational decisions to help develop services   
to meet the needs of people in a preventative manner, and assist local authorities   
in meeting their duty under Section 16 of the Act to promote social enterprises,   
co-operative organisations, co-operative arrangements and third sector organisations to provide care and support and preventative services in their area.

1. **How does the population assessment relate to preventative services?**

The population assessment report (see FAQ 1) must identify the range and level of preventative services required within the local authority’s area. Local authorities must arrange or provide services designed to prevent, delay or reduce needs for care and support. Local health boards are required to have regard to the importance of achieving these preventative purposes when exercising their functions.

1. **Where can I find details on how to prepare a population assessment report?**

Details on how to undertake a population assessment are set out in the [Part 2 Code of Practice](http://gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/151218part2en.pdf) (General Functions).

[WHC (2015) 045: Implications of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 for NHS University Health Boards and Trusts (September 2015)](http://gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/150925whc045en.pdf).