Introduction
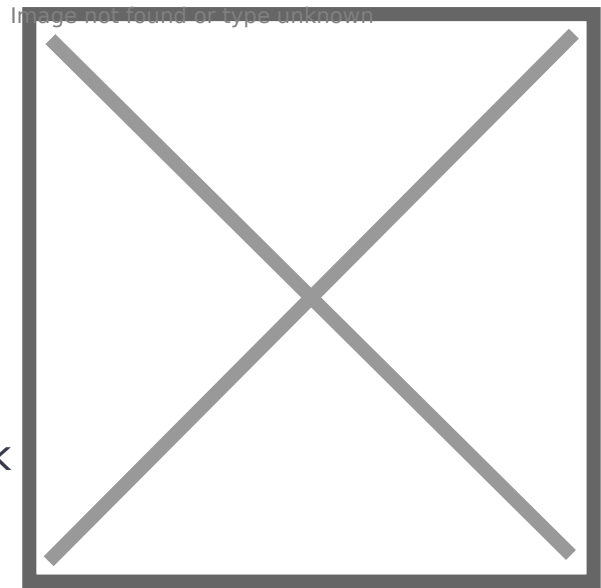
Information about the framework

First published: 12 June 2023

Last updated: 28 July 2023

Working in social care, early years and childcare can be hugely rewarding. As a workforce, we change lives for the better.

We can be there at the start of a life to the end, helping people to live the best life they can. We can make a massive difference to the people we support. As a career, that sense of purpose and achievement in a role that is valued can really improve our well-being.

There is already much in the sector that is good for health and well-being. This framework aims to build on what you are already doing and to create a culture of well-being.

Four commitments

We're asking workplaces to make four commitments:

1. create safe working environments which are continuously improving and supports health and well-being
2. fair treatment, dignity and respect for all
3. establish workplace cultures where everyone is involved and informed
4. prioritise a culture of continuous learning and development.

We've developed the framework and commitments through engagement and feedback. We'll continue to develop this framework, using emerging data and research and by working with you.

You can contact us on wellbeing@socialcare.wales if you want to be a part of that journey.

Who this framework is for
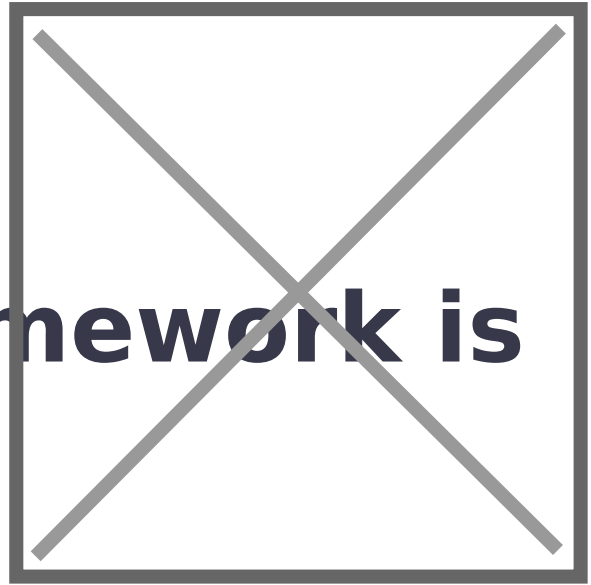
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This framework is for the social care, early years and childcare sector and its workforce.

When we talk about the sector, we mean local authorities, independent or private and third sector organisations and settings that deliver social care, early years or childcare.

When we talk about workforce, we mean people who work in social care, early years and childcare.

This workforce includes a wide range of roles with different levels of responsibility. The workforce includes people who are self-employed, such as childminders and personal assistants. Some may be volunteers, and some may be employed.

This framework has three categories, with specific actions for:

- organisations (the employers)
- managers (managers with responsibility for staff)
- individual members of staff in the workforce).

Why use this framework
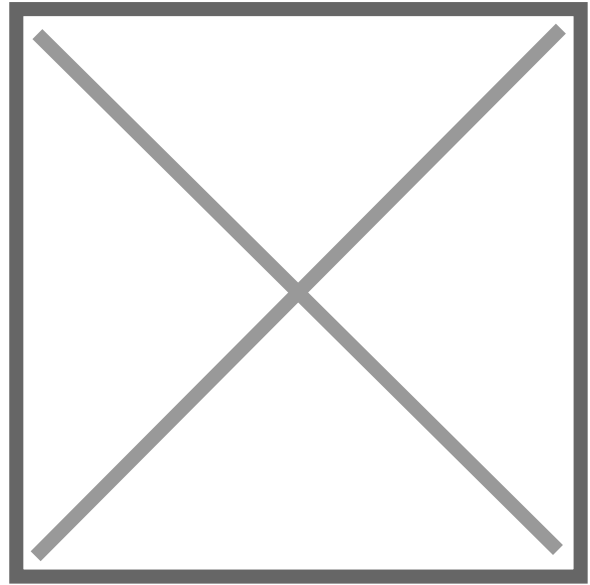
Explains why you should use the framework.

First published: 12 June 2023

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Explains why you should use the framework.

An engaged, healthy and motivated workforce is one of the key aims of the workforce strategy for health and social care.

Research has shown that having the right working environment is good for the health and well-being of staff. Staff who are positive about their job and their organisation deliver better services. For the sector, this means a culture of compassionate, high quality and safe care for people who need support.

Staff who are supported with their well-being are also more likely to stay with an organisation.

In recent years, legislation, policy and strategy have focused more on well-being. We understand better conversations with the sector about workforce well-being are important, and help us understand the challenges and issues.

The clear and strong message from the sector is that the workforce needs to feel better valued and supported, with the following issues being contributing factors:

- differences in terms and conditions – particularly in lower paid jobs
- unachievable workload impacted by recruitment and retention issues
- a lack of training or vision for digital solutions in the sector.

We recognise there are longer-term solutions needed to address these issues. This framework can't resolve these issues, but it does offer ideas to manage these pressures.

Further research with the sector identified two main themes for this framework:

- creating working environments which support good health and well-being

- supporting the workforce to maintain and improve their health and well-being.

This framework will help you make positive changes within your organisation where you can. You should use it to improve the health and well-being of the workforce, with an emphasis on culture, inclusion and compassionate leadership.

Email wellbeing@socialcare.wales for more information about how the framework model was developed and a description of each stage.

How to use this framework
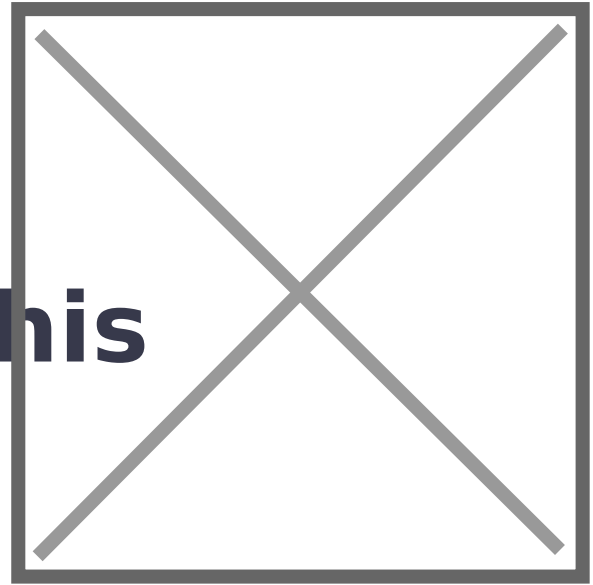
First published: 12 June 2023

Last updated: 29 January 2025

You can use this framework flexibly to meet the needs of your organisation.

We know you may be at the start of your journey. We also recognise you may have already been doing things to improve the well-being of your workforce. We designed this framework to help you work towards the commitments and support you to build an engaged, healthy and motivated workforce.

There are four sections in this framework, one for each commitment. Each section describes what that commitment means to an organisation, a manager and an individual. It provides links to resources that can help you use the framework.

Each section encompasses the seven elements of workforce well-being as described in the graphic.

We suggest you read the commitments first. Then, to help you further, we've developed three tools to help you make changes.

Supporting tools

- **My well-being plan (for organisations)**

For those responsible for the well-being of staff in an organisation, setting or department, we've provided an action plan template to get you started. The organisational well-being plan allows you to self-assess against each commitment where you are now as an organisation and where you would like to get to.

If you've already developed your own strategy or plan, you can use this to cross check and compare.

- **Well-being conversation guide (for managers)**

The well-being conversation guide is a resource to support well-being conversations in the workplace. It's a semi-structured set of questions and can help to identify support needs when appropriate. Email mailto:wellbeing@socialcare.wales to get a copy.

- **Personal well-being checklist (for workers)**

You're encouraged here to explore ways to greater well-being that may work for you and to think about whether there's anything stopping you caring for yourself that bit better. This resource may be useful if you work as an individual and not an organisation. It's also useful for individuals working in an organisation in any role.

- **Personal well-being tips poster**

Simple things you can do to look after your well-being.

- **Your well-being matters poster**

The four commitments and the seven elements contributing to workforce well-being.

Commitment 1. create safe working environments which are continuously improving and support health and well-being
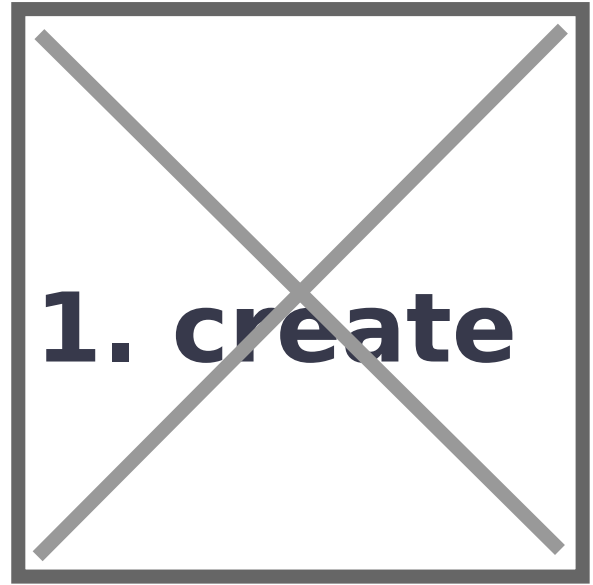
Guidance and resources to help create safe working environments which are continuously improving and support health and well-being

First published: 12 June 2023

Last updated: 18 December 2024

Guidance and resources to help create safe working environments which are continuously improving and support health and well-being.

It's important to take a broad approach to support people's physical health and safety, mental health, and financial well-being.

Organisations should provide safe working environments for employees.

Organisations should offer to help, or refer or signpost to services that can provide support. This could include counselling, an employee assistance programme or occupational health services. Organisations should encourage staff to have a good self-care routine which includes a healthy approach to diet, physical activity, relaxation and sleep. Staff should have good access to services who can help with financial advice.

It's important that managers have guidance they need to support their teams, so they can have sensitive conversations with the people they manage and signpost to expert help when needed. Anyone who shares information about a health condition will be treated fairly and with compassion, and have equal career opportunities.

This links to the:

- Code of Practice for Social Care employers, section 5.7
- Code of Professional Practice for Social Care workers, sections 1.5 and 4.5

In an organisation this means:

- a culture of well-being
- understand that what happens in our lives affects us in our work
- recognising the signs of work-related stress and burnout
- recognising and supporting staff with long-term conditions to do their job

- promote well-being, for staff and for the people they work with, through policies, procedures and ways of working
- access to occupational health
- providing the right equipment for the job
- signposting to or providing emotional support, including peer support
- clear health and safety processes, for staff and for people they work with, including risk assessments
- workloads are reasonable and manageable and regularly reviewed.

To do this, organisations can:

- have health and safety and people policies that are clearly visible to your workforce and review them regularly
- reflect well-being in organisational policies and ways of working
- signpost to support for issues that affect staff well-being, such as financial well-being
- offer appropriate occupational health assessments and adaptations, to prevent physical poor health
- offer adaptations to support workers with long term physical or mental health conditions to do their job
- create space for well-being and peer support
- identify ways of assessing stress and burnout
- have clear risk assessments and risk management in place that are visible to your workforce
- provide staff with the equipment they need to do their job
- support workforce planning that means a reasonable workload for staff.

As a manager I:

- engage with support to look after myself as well as my staff

- recognise what my staff need to improve their well-being and offer support
- be aware of the support in place and sharing it with my staff
- raise common issues with senior leadership.

As an individual I:

- support my colleagues and they support me
- engage with the support my organisation offers
- read and understand my organisation's health, safety and risk policies.

Where can I see examples?

For organisations

- Stress in the workplace factsheet (English only) **– CIPD**
  Explains the signs of stress, the causes and how to deal with them.

For managers

- Stress in the workplace factsheet (English only) **– CIPD**
  Explains the signs of stress, the causes and how to deal with them.
- Well-being leadership webinar (English only) **– Skills for care**
  Explains how managers can create a supportive workplace
- Greater resilience, better care guide **– Skills for care**
  Explains how adult social care managers can reduce work-related stress and help make staff more resilient.

For everyone

[Mental health at work support](#) **– able futures**

Free mental health information and resources.

[Mental health advice](#) **– Public Health Wales**

Resources and guidance to support mental health in the workplace.

[Workplace resources](#) (English only) **– Skills for care**

Webinars on what good well-being in the workplace looks like, including tips and ideas for support.

[Health and well-being resources](#) **– Social Care Wales**

Resources available to support well-being.

[Canopi](#) **– NHS Wales**

Free and confidential mental health support for NHS and social care staff across Wales

[Money helper](#)

Free help and advice about money.

[Healthy Working Wales](#) **– Public Health Wales**

Information about workplace health matters.

Commitment 2. fair treatment, dignity and respect for all

Guidance and resources to make sure there's fair treatment, dignity and respect for all.

First published: 12 June 2023

Last updated: 28 July 2023

Guidance and resources to make sure there's fair treatment, dignity and respect for all.

A positive workplace is vital to our well-being. Employers should create positive cultures with fair treatment, dignity and respect for the people they employ and they people they support.

All workers regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation must be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness and must not be subject to harassment, discrimination, abuse, or inhuman degrading treatment.

This links to the:

- Code of Practice for Social Care employers, sections 1.3 and 1.6
- Code of Professional Practice for Social Care workers, section 3.2

In an organisation this means:

- staff understand the values of the organisation
- treating staff with dignity and respect
- treating staff equally
- working with staff to review and improve how we work
- staff feel valued and empowered
- staff feel they are highly esteemed
- a safe place to raise concerns.

To do this, organisations can:

- ensure your values are clearly visible and communicated to your workforce
- where possible, create a strategy for the organisation that in centred around these values
- demonstrate your commitment to equality, diversity, rights and dignity, through policies or ways of working
- recognise and support staff with long term mental or physical health conditions to do their job
- provide meaningful, strengths-based supervision so staff feel valued, reflect and grow
- challenge behaviours in your workforce that don't reflect your core values and support your staff to do the same.

As a manager I:

- lead by example by working in the way I'd like others to work and treating others the way I'd like to be treated
- challenge my leaders or managers if I'm not being treated in line with the organisation's values
- make sure I have regular supervisions for myself and do regular supervision sessions for my staff
- ask for the same supervision from my manager if this isn't in place for me
- support staff when challenging poor behaviours or practice.

As an individual I:

- work in a way that reflects the values of our organisation
- treat my colleagues and the people we support with dignity and respect
- understand our responsibilities and what that means for us and the people we support
- be aware of the codes of practice and work to them

- be empowered to challenge poor practice, bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Where can I see examples?

For organisations

- **Factsheet: why well-being is good for an organisation** (English only) – **CIPD**

  Helps you understand the links between work, health and well-being.
- **What a good supervision is** – **Social Care Wales**

  Guide for anyone responsible for carrying out supervision in an organisation.
- **How to do supervisions** – **Social Care Wales**

  How to take an outcomes-focused approach to reflective practice and supervision.

  For managers

- **Video: creating a culture of well-being** – **Skills for Care**

  A manager talks about creating a culture of kindness and leadership.
- **First steps in management guide** – **Social Care Wales**

  A guide to help new managers in the social care sector.
- **What a good supervision is** – **Social Care Wales**

  Guide for anyone responsible for carrying out supervision in an organisation.
- **How to do supervisions** – **Social Care Wales**

  Taking an outcomes-focused approach to reflective practice and supervision.
- **How to have a good two-way discussion** – **Social Care Wales**

  Video showing an example outcomes-focused supervision session.
- **How to have difficult conversations with staff** – **Social Care Wales**

  How to have a difficult conversation with your staff.
- **Healthy Working Wales: fair work for health, well-being and equity** – **Public Health Wales**

Information on becoming a fair work employer.

For everyone

- **Factsheet: employee voice** (English only) – **CIPD**
Explains how the employee voice can make positive changes in an organisation.

Commitment 3. establish workplace cultures where everyone is involved and informed

Guidance and resources to help establish workplace cultures where everyone is involved and informed.

First published: 12 June 2023

Last updated: 28 March 2024

framework/commitment-3-establish-workplace-cultures-where-everyone-is-involved-and-informed for the latest version.

Guidance and resources to help establish workplace cultures where everyone is involved and informed.

People feel valued and respected when they have a voice and are included in change. This could be a change to how the organisation works or a change in the way you deliver care and support. In social care, early years and childcare, we understand the value of co-production. This is for people who work for us as well as the people we work with.

This links to the:

- Code of Professional Practice for Social Care workers, sections 6.5 and 6.9

In an organisation this means:

- there are regular and consistent methods of seeking the views of staff
- staff have a voice in the decisions that affect them
- staff are asked about their health and well-being, the working environment and how the organisation can improve
- change and development is co-designed with staff
- staff are informed of the results of their feedback
- staff see action as a result of their input.

To do this, organisations can:

- involve staff in changes to the organisation, including any changes to policies and procedures
- establish ways for staff to have their voice heard, such as staff surveys, staff forums and representatives and information on unions

- establish a well-being survey for staff, or similar method to help you understand what affects your staff well-being
- clearly communicate with staff how you have taken action as a result of their input.

As a manager I:

- get involved in changing and improving my organisation and encourage my staff to do the same
- promote and take part in staff surveys and other opportunities to say how I'm feeling
- share changes with staff that have happened as a result of their feedback.

As an individual I:

- get involved in changing and improving my organisation
- take part in staff surveys and other opportunities to say how I'm feeling
- take time to look at the support available to me
- don't have to wait to be asked to make a suggestion or contribute to change.
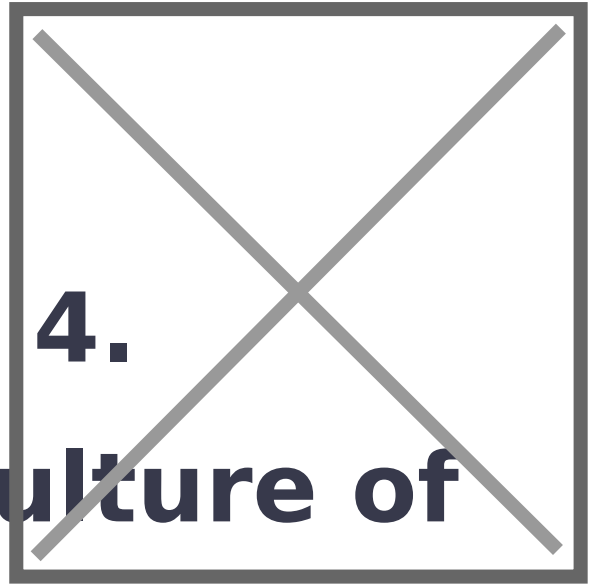
Where can I see examples?

For organisations

- **Survey questions to measure well-being** (English only) **– What Works Wellbeing**
  A bank of questions that you can use to measure well-being in the workplace.

Commitment 4. prioritise a culture of continuous learning and development

Guidance and resources to help prioritise a culture of continuous learning and development.

First published: 12 June 2023

Last updated: 28 July 2023

Guidance and resources to help prioritise a culture of continuous learning and development.

Feeling fulfilled in work can improve our well-being. We recognise that working in social care, early years and childcare is a skilled job and our workforce needs to be supported to learn and grow and feel confident and competent in the work that they do. People learn in different ways. We can create positive learning environments where staff are nurtured, feel a sense of purpose and belonging.

As a registered workforce, it's important we support staff to be trained and offered opportunities to continue their professional development.

This links to the:

- Code of Practice for Social Care employers, sections 1.1 and 1.2

In an organisation this means:

- an inspiring place to work, where we celebrate what we do well
- a culture of planned, continuous learning and development
- creating a positive learning environment, where staff can learn from each other
- training staff adequately and appropriately to do their job from the start
- supporting staff and managers when they change roles, including moving into management roles
- equal access to appropriate learning and development opportunities
- people who want to progress are supported and trained to do so.

As a manager I:

* inspire others to learn by learning myself
* encourage people to learn and develop by protecting time for them to do so
* ask for time for my own learning and development.

As an individual I:

* take the opportunities to learn when I can
* share my learning with others in my team or organisation
* know what I'm required to do to remain competent and knowledgeable.

Where can I see examples?

For organisations

The five ways of working – **DEEP Cymru**

Helps you create better learning environments.**SENSES** **framework**
Helps nurture positive learning environments.

For managers

* **Principles and processes of reflective practice** (English only) **– Iriss**
Introduces learners to some of the principles and processes involved in
becoming a reflective practitioner.
* *All Wales induction framework (AWIF) for social care managers* – **Social**
Care Wales
Explains the knowledge and practice that should be shown over time by social
care managers who are new to their role.

For workers

* **Principles and processes of reflective practice** (English only) **– Iriss**
Introduces learners to some of the principles and processes involved in

becoming a reflective practitioner.

- **Continuing professional development (CPD)** – **Social Care Wales**

  A toolkit to help workers take responsibility for their professional development.

  For everyone

- **Codes of practice for the registered workforce** – **Social Care Wales**

  The Code of Practice that all registered workers must comply with.

- **Continuing professional development (CPD) in early years and childcare** – **Social Care Wales**

  A guide for continued professional development for early years and childcare workers.

- **Money guiders** – **Money and Pensions Service**

  Advice and support on having conversations about money and financial well-being.

- **Financial well-being stories** – **Money and Pensions Service**

  Videos showing the links between money and well-being.