



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



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

Making a positive  
difference to social  
care in Wales

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**Our strategic plan**  
**2017-2022**

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# Foreword

Our strategic plan sets out our vision for the next five years; what we aim to achieve, what our focus will be and how we will work with you to realise our ambition.

The vision for social care in Wales is clear: the focus is on well-being. Social care has an important role in improving the well-being of people to help them achieve what matters to them by working with partners across public services and communities.

Giving people a strong voice and control over the care and support they receive is the essence of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. The act will guide public services for the years ahead, alongside the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016, which will modernise regulation and improvement arrangements, and focus on regulation for success.

Social Care Wales was established in April 2017 bringing together social care workforce regulation, workforce development and service improvement in one organisation. We will have an influential role in shaping research priorities and building strong links with stakeholders to improve care and support.

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We will be a partner in the new social care landscape in Wales to provide a strong national leadership voice for social care and early years.

We will need to reflect and respond to the sector and ministerial priorities to shape our work, and inform and support the work of others. We will work in partnership, build on our experience and expertise, learn from best practice and take advantage of technological advances to communicate and engage.

Our purpose, vision and aims reflect our legal powers and responsibilities<sup>1</sup>, and the views of the sector and stakeholders involved in our creation.

As a Welsh Government Sponsored Body we are committed to supporting *Taking Wales Forward*, the Programme for Government 2016-2021, the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and our responsibilities as a Welsh public service organisation.

By developing and building on the skills of the care workforce, we will help children, adults and older people who receive care and support to improve their health and well-being and achieve what matters to

them. We want to improve the quality and status of social care and early years employment through regulation and training to ensure better jobs, that are closer to home, for people across Wales.

There is excellent social care and early years practice in Wales, provided by many committed and experienced professionals who are highly valued. Our role in leading and supporting continuous improvement, and new models of support will help ensure best practice is rolled out across Wales.

We can only achieve our aims by working together with people and with other public sector bodies and care providers across Wales. We will be answerable to the people of Wales through the National Assembly and Welsh Ministers.

We listened to you following our consultation receiving general positive support about our aims and priorities. We have considered your views and thought through what will be different as a result of our actions and have demonstrated this in our strategic plan.

We are living in an ever changing environment and have to live with ambiguity and uncertainty. We want to ensure

our Strategic Plan provides strategic direction, but remains flexible and responsive to ensure that what we deliver is fit for purpose. The detail of our actions and activities will be published annually through our business plan and our progress on the delivery of our aims will be published through an annual impact report.



Arwel Ellis Owen - Chair



Sue Evans - Chief Executive

<sup>1</sup> The legislative white paper, *Sustainable Social Services for Wales: A Framework for Action*, was published in 2011. The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 subsequently created Social Care Wales.

# Setting the scene

Social care in Wales is changing. More people require care and support. They are rightly demanding care and support that meets their personal needs and choices.

The social care and early years sectors provide a critical contribution to life in Wales: – improving well-being by protecting vulnerable children and adults, offering reassurance they will receive care and support when they need it, and supporting people to take part in their communities.

These sectors are important as they make a substantial contribution to the Welsh economy as major employers and by enabling people to pursue education or work opportunities. Most parts of the sector generate jobs and demand is growing.

This contributes to the amount of money families have to spend – their buying power.

Social care services are facing increases in demand to meet society's needs:

- The demography of our society is changing, with increasing need for public service support. We are an ageing society. The number of people aged 65 and over is projected to increase by 292,000 (44 per cent) between 2014 and 2039. There are more people in their middle years with significant disabilities who expect to live fulfilled lives. We are seeing more children with significant disabilities or disadvantages who need good quality support that protects them and helps them achieve their full potential.

- Wales has relatively higher numbers of children who are looked after than other parts of the UK. In Wales, 90 per 10,000 children are looked after. In England, the rate is 60 per 10,000.

- Unpaid carers provide the majority of the support to vulnerable and disabled people, which allows them to stay at home and contribute to society. It's estimated carers and families provide 96 per cent of the care in Wales. Health and social care services depend on the valuable contribution of unpaid carers, family, friends and neighbours, and more could be done to provide consistent information, advice and support.

- In Wales, one in every seven adults aged 18-69 years have experienced four or more adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) during their childhood. These adverse childhood experiences (such as domestic or sexual abuse and violence) can lead to poor development and poorer life chances.

- The financial outlook is challenging with public spending constraints in place and anticipated for the years ahead. This leads to difficult and innovative choices for government and organisations that provide services, including preventative support provided by the community and third sector services.





## Opportunities for Wales

Significant legislation and policies are now in place in Wales that have wide support from national and regional leaders. The well-being goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 focus on prevention, integration, long-term thinking, collaboration and involvement. We will work with partners from across public services in Wales to demonstrate these principles in action.

The Programme for Government<sup>2</sup> and *Prosperity for All*<sup>3</sup> defines social care and early years as sectors of national strategic importance – making sure care and support reflects the needs of our modern society, with closer links with health, education, community services, housing and offering a better deal on childcare to remove barriers to secure employment. We will use our evidence, data and research to influence and support the Welsh Government's recognition that social care and early years are sectors of national strategic importance.

Valuing and supporting the social care workforce is already a priority for Welsh

Government and for us all working in the social care arena. But it should be a priority for everyone as it is fundamental to helping to protect, empower and support children and adults facing difficulties in their lives. We will continue to underline the importance of values-based training, which includes themes such as dignity and respect, equality and human rights. This is essential to ensure that people receive the care they require in a sensitive and supportive way that meets their needs.

The interim report from the Parliamentary Review of Health and Social Care, which was published on 11 July 2017, sets out a clear case for change. The review panel has been asked to assess and make recommendations about how the health and care systems might provide improved health and well-being outcomes for people across Wales. The panel are looking at how to best support the sustainability of the health and social care system and opportunities for improvement over the next five to 10 years.

We have used the themes from these main policies as evidence to inform our priorities for the next five years.

<sup>2</sup> *Taking Wales Forward*, Welsh Government, November 2016

<sup>3</sup> *Prosperity for All: the National Strategy*, Welsh Government, September 2017

# Who we are

Social Care Wales was established as one of the first acts of primary legislation passed by the National Assembly. This reflects the national importance of social care in Wales.

We have a responsibility, in legislation, to “protect, promote and maintain the safety and well-being of the public in Wales”.

We want to lead and support improvement in Wales by creating an environment of working together and developing new relationships across the Welsh public service.

We will work with stakeholders across organisational and

service boundaries, with people who access care and support, with carers and with Welsh Government on the best way forward.

As a new organisation, we will build on the good work that has already been done to improve social care in Wales and grasp opportunities to further develop our improvement role. We will build on our relationships with the sector to make sure our identified priorities make a positive difference.

We worked with partners and consulted widely during 2016/17 on identifying these priorities. Three initial national priorities for improvement have

been agreed, which we will focus on in our first five years:

- dementia
- children who are looked after
- care and support at home.

Work is already taking place to address these issues through national strategies and we will make sure our priorities are aligned.

Over the next five years we will identify and inform future national priorities for improvement using evidence and research. We will continue to carry out our core work, which goes beyond these three national improvement priorities.

# What we do



# Our vision and purpose

This plan sets out our vision, purpose, aims and outcomes. It also explains what will be different, what we will do and how we will work. It will not set out the detail of what we will be doing; this will be included in our annual business plans ([socialcare.wales/about/strategic-and-corporate-plan](https://socialcare.wales/about/strategic-and-corporate-plan)).

We will reflect each year to ensure we are continuing to do the right things in the right way, making change where necessary. We welcome your ongoing feedback and partnership in supporting the progression of work.

Our strategic plan has been developed by our Board and will be used by them to scrutinise delivery, holding officers to account. We will share our progress with you, via our website and engagement activities.



## Our vision

We want every person who needs support to live the life that matters to them

## Our purpose

Building confidence in the workforce and leading and supporting improvement in social care



# Our aims

Our strategy has been developed in the context of Social Care Wales being part of the wider Welsh public service. Our work aims to support the priorities for the well-being of future generations for the sector, the public and Welsh Government.

Our three strategic aims below define what we do:



## These aims will result in:

Improved well-being outcomes for children and adults who rely on care and support, their families and carers.

A high-quality, sufficient and skilled workforce.

People having confidence in the social care workforce, including the early years workforce, and the effectiveness of Social Care Wales.





Our strategic plan has been developed using an outcomes-based approach. This will help us clearly show the benefits of regulation, standards and workforce development in improving the social care and early years workforce. It will also allow us to highlight how our service improvement activities contribute to

safeguarding and improving the well-being of people and their communities.

We will be developing clear performance measures in the coming months to make sure we are working in line with our priorities. Our Board will be held to account by Welsh Ministers through our remit

and transparent governance arrangements.

In the following pages, we set out our outcomes for each of the three strategic aims and where we will focus our energy and commitment to work with you over the next five years to realise our vision.

# Leading and supporting improvement

We want improved outcomes for children and adults who rely on care and support, their families and carers

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## What will be different?

Service improvement is a new responsibility for Social Care Wales. The areas we focus on will be influenced by what people tell us is important to them. To help inform our work we will work with and use the experiences of the workforce, employers, people who rely on care and support, their families and carers.

We will use information from data, research and evaluation, inspection and policy to support our work. We want to build upon existing work in Wales and learn from national and international approaches to share best practice. We will support people to confidently test and adopt new models of providing services using evidence-based practice and robust research.

We will also support providers with exploring and understanding the models, practice and

workforce skills needed to provide more effective engagement with children and families, so preventive action can be taken to reduce the risks to well-being.

Effective care and support at home makes a difference to people's lives. It can improve and sustain their independence and well-being. When it works well, it's reliable, consistent, flexible and innovative. We have already made significant steps in care and support at home by working in partnership with a variety of stakeholders to develop a strategic plan. The five-year plan considers a range of evidence including reviews, reports and research. It gives a strong voice to people who need care and support, carers who need support, and the workforce.

People can feel confident that our approach to deciding our priorities is based on a balance

of information from the sector, research, workforce issues and public demand. One of our main priorities is to be able to provide an accurate picture of the social care sector. We will develop and host a national data set for social care, which can be used to inform planning to meet future needs.

Wales's legislation places an emphasis on high-quality and sustainable social care provision that puts people's well-being at the centre of their care, and promotes prevention and early intervention. Excellent social care research can support the evidence base for practitioners to do this, as well as inform decision and policy makers.

By working with the workforce, people who use care and support, and their carers, we will develop a better understanding of what research needs to be done and how it can have a positive impact where it matters.



## We will

**Drive the national service improvement priorities by working with partners to:**

- **deliver the *Care and support at home in Wales* strategic plan**
- **develop and implement improvement programmes for dementia care and children who are looked after.**

**Establish effective approaches to service improvement and work with you to decide future priorities.**

**Deliver a national research and development strategy that supports policy and practice.**

**Use data and evidence to improve services by delivering a national social care data set.**

# Developing the workforce

We want Wales to have a sufficient, high-quality and skilled social care and early years workforce

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## What will be different?

We will attract more of the right people into the social care, early years and childcare sectors by using evidence of good practice to set standards for the workforce. This will make sure we have a workforce that is skilled enough to meet the challenges of the next decade and beyond.

To meet current and future demands, high-quality training will equip and support the workforce so they have the right knowledge, skills, understanding and approach to provide good quality care and support in the social care and early years sectors. We will also provide clear career pathways and promote working in the social care and early years sectors as professions of choice to support the sustainability and viability of the workforce.

We will respond to intelligence from the sector that identifies areas for development or innovation. Our products will support the professional development of the social care, early years and childcare workforce.

There will be a variety of training and qualification options to support access for managers and front line staff to the right training. We will continue to prioritise new learning resources, through targeted and specific training.

We want to make sure the workforce is supported and provides social care in line with the law and their practice reflects the principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014:

- **voice and control** – putting people and their needs at the centre of their care and support, and giving them a voice in and control over the outcomes that help them achieve well-being
- **prevention and early intervention** – increasing preventative services within the community to minimise the escalation of critical need
- **well-being** – supporting people to achieve their own well-being and measuring the success of care and support
- **co-production** – encouraging people to become more involved in the design and provision of services.

We will also take a leadership role, alongside Welsh Government, in supporting the development and implementation of the long-term workforce plan for childcare, play and early years.



## **We will**

**Support the sustainability of the workforce by:**

- **developing and implementing a recruitment, retention and careers framework**
- **producing resources to support employers and the workforce.**

**Improve the quality and management of social work and social care training by:**

- **influencing, investing and developing national training and development programmes.**

**Support the workforce to improve practice in line with social care legislation and evidence by:**

- **identifying and sharing practice and supporting innovation**
- **developing workforce plans to meet future needs.**

# Providing public confidence

We want people to have confidence in the social care sector and in the effectiveness of Social Care Wales

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## What will be different?

### Public confidence in the workforce

We want to help the sector attract and retain quality staff and we want to achieve higher standards of care provision for those in receipt of care and support services in Wales. We also want to improve the prospects of care workers who are looking for opportunities for professional development.

Keeping a Register of Social Care Workers (the Register) is part of this process. It provides those on the Register with professional recognition and access to training and development resources. It provides public assurance to those in receipt of care and support services; they can be sure that a registered worker is suitably qualified and has agreed to meet the professional standards we have set for the sector.

They can also be sure that we will address any concerns about a person's fitness to practise in a fair and transparent way and, if necessary, require them to undertake further training or prevent them from working in the care sector.

We currently have around 11,200 registered persons, but from 2018 the register will be open to new groups of workers and we estimate there could be another 50,000 applications for registration.

Domiciliary care workers will be able to register with us from 2018 and it will be mandatory for them to register from 2020. Adult care home workers will be able to register from 2020 and they will have to register from 2022. This will mean that most of the social care workforce will be regulated – a statement of the professionalism expected of the care sector in the years to come.

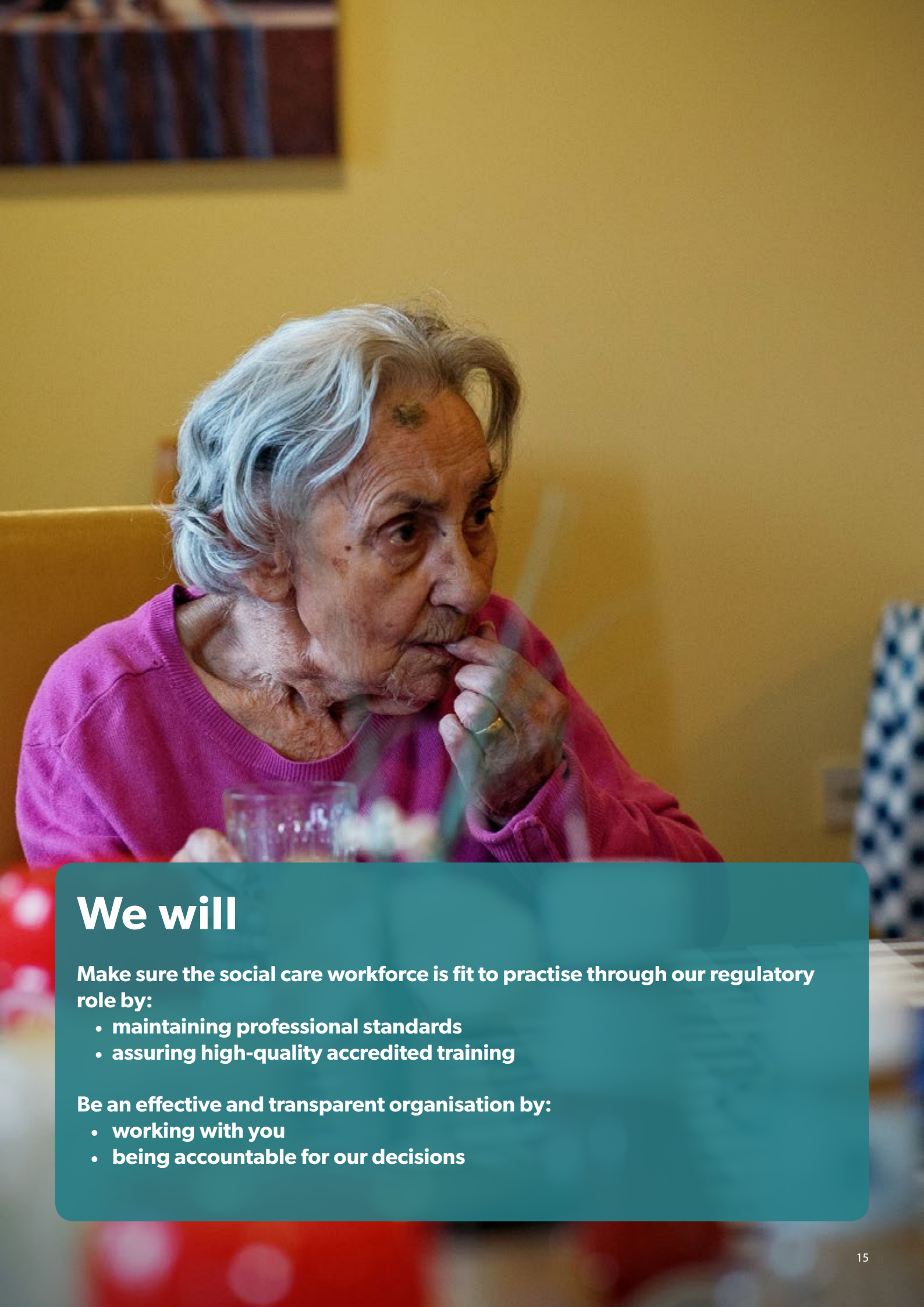
Where we are told about poor practice we will aim to work with people so they can improve. If this is not possible, they can be removed from the Register. This provides public assurance that the registered workers have shown they have the right knowledge, behaviours and skills.

### Public confidence in Social Care Wales

Involving people is central to our governance with our Board mostly comprising of members of the public, users of services and carers. Our current Board shows the strength of having lay people alongside professionals discussing and making decisions about important issues of policy and practice.

Our Board scrutinises us to make sure we are improving standards in the social care sector providing the highest quality services to vulnerable people in society who depend on social care. We hold public Board meetings to make sure our governance is open and transparent.

Over the next five years we will work with the sector and partners to progress the social care, early years and childcare priorities. We will make sure the views, experiences and expertise of people who use services and their carers are valued and can be evidenced in our work. We will actively engage with stakeholders and ensure there are tangible results from this and that our business plans reflect these views.



## **We will**

**Make sure the social care workforce is fit to practise through our regulatory role by:**

- **maintaining professional standards**
- **assuring high-quality accredited training**

**Be an effective and transparent organisation by:**

- **working with you**
- **being accountable for our decisions**

# How we will work

We recognise and value diversity and will work in line with our duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010. To make sure we do this well, we will be consulting on our strategic equalities plan.

If we are to achieve our vision, clear, good-quality information about professional standards, research and service models must be easily accessible to the workforce, stakeholders and the public. In a rapidly changing environment we will use our leadership role to help make this happen.

Digital channels provide opportunities to share information and training

programmes more widely, efficiently and effectively. We will be expanding and improving the ways in which we communicate and engage with the public and the workforce. We will embrace a 'digital first' approach to continually evolve and improve our reach. Where digital channels are not appropriate, we will use a range of methods to communicate.

We will champion the importance of language need for people who use care and support, and their families and carers. We have a leadership role in supporting the Welsh Government's 'More than just words – strategic framework

for Welsh language services in health, social services and social care'.

As a public service employer, we will make sure we are a bilingual organisation that complies with Welsh language standards and actively offers Welsh language services to people. We will provide an environment that promotes Welsh language use, and nurtures staff to learn Welsh and improve their bilingual skills, so that Welsh is used every day.

It is important that, as a public leadership organisation, we demonstrate our values in the way we work with people to realise our vision.

## Our values

### Respect everyone

We see people as individuals and treat everyone with dignity and respect

### Professional approach

We act responsibly and in the right way, holding each other to account

### Always learning

We believe in improving ourselves and supporting others to be the best that they can be

### Involve people

We encourage and enable everyone to work together



**We have been listening to your feedback about your expectations for Social Care Wales. This is what we have heard from you about how we will be working as a leadership organisation:**

**Thinks  
long term**

**Uses  
research,  
evidence  
and data**

**Intergrates  
and  
collaborates**

**Informs and  
connects to  
share and learn**

**Evaluates  
and  
benchmarks**

**Responsive  
and  
reflective**

**Outcome  
and impact  
focused**

**Transparent  
and  
accountable**



## Contact details

Our ambition is to encourage regular dialogue with all those with an interest in social care and early years, and we welcome feedback on our plans and activities.

Please use the following contact details:

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