

## **UKHCA response: Social Care Wales – Direct Care Workforce Plan Survey**

### **Who are we?**

We are a member-led professional association, with over 2,100 homecare provider members across the UK, including in Wales. Our members encompass the diversity of providers in the market: from small to large; predominantly state-funded to predominantly private-pay funded; generalist to specialist; and from start-ups to mature businesses. Our purpose is to enable a strong, sustainable, innovative and person-led homecare sector to flourish, representing and supporting members so that people can live well and independently at home.

### **1. Which one of the following best describes your sector?**

- Statutory
- **Private**
- Voluntary
- Other e.g. direct payment etc. please specify

Our members are independent sector providers (including both private and not-for-profit) who provide care to people who fund their own care and to people whose care is funded by local authorities and health boards.

### **2. Which of the following best describes where you work?**

- Residential care – adults (including with or without nursing care)
- Residential care – children
- **Domiciliary care provider – adults**
- **Domiciliary care provider – children**
- Day services for children
- Day services for adults
- Supported living service
- Shared Lives Schemes
- Foster Carer
- Adopter
- The NHS or other health organisation
- Prefer not to say
- **Other**

We are a professional association for homecare providers. This is often for adults but can include care for children. It can include live-in as well as visiting care services at home. Some of our members are also involved in supported living and extra-care arrangements.

**3. Which of the following best describes your role within your organisation?**

- Care worker
- Senior care worker
- Foster carer
- Adopter
- Adult placement carers
- Personal assistant
- Planner
- Deputy / Assistant manager
- Manager
- Prefer not to say
- **Other**

Part of the UKHCA policy team.

## **Workforce Plan**

The direct care workforce plan builds on our work with the sector in adapting our approach to regulation, focus on the well-being of the workforce, developing skills and knowledge and providing strategic and practical support for the direct care workforce over the next three years.

The workforce plan is intended to help address the challenges (nationally, regionally and locally) in attracting and retaining the right staff who have the right values, skills and experience to provide high-quality, person-centred care now, and in the future to every community in Wales.

We want to draw on the experience and knowledge of colleagues working in the direct care workforce across Wales to help us further develop the workforce plan and ensure it meets the needs of the sector moving forward. To help you to contribute we have included a draft version of the workforce plan (which has been specially designed for the purposes of this questionnaire).

## **Design**

**4. The workforce plan is intended to be visually engaging. Please rate how engaging you feel the draft version is.**

- Very engaging
- **Engaging**
- Not engaging
- Not engaging at all

**Please give any further comments**

The clear headings and use of graphics are to be welcomed, but the pages still feel quite 'busy' and it may need a review from an accessibility perspective (for example, some people with visual impairments may find reading text over pictures difficult).

**5. It is our intention for the structure of the workforce plan to be easy to follow. Please rate how easy you think the draft version is to follow.**

- Very easy
- **Easy**
- Not easy
- Not easy at all

**Please give any further comments:**

For the most part easy. Would it be more transparent to call the 'we statements' 'actions' and the 'I' statements 'outcomes'?

## **Content**

The content of the workforce plan is built around seven workforce themes and begins with a brief statement on the overall ambition of the theme. The statement of ambition is followed by a set of 'We' statements that describe the actions Social Care Wales and our partners will be undertaking over the next three years in support of the ambition for each of the themes.

Each theme concludes with a set of simple expression, from an individual perspective called an 'I' statement and service as a checklist in measuring the impact of the 'We' Statements in the delivery of the ambition of each theme of the workforce plan.

The following questions will ask for your views on the 'We' and 'I' statements for each theme of the workforce plan.

### **Theme 1: An engaged, motivated and healthy workforce.**

*Ambition: Social care workers feel valued and supported wherever they work.*

**Please read the following 'We' statements and, for each one, answer whether you think they are useful actions or not for demonstrating that social care workers feel valued and supported.**

We will launch our employee wellbeing framework for your organisation to use to consistently manage and monitor all aspects of employee wellbeing at work

Very useful / **useful** / not useful / not useful at all

We will launch our staff governance framework confirming the expectations of both employees and employers of each other on how Wales' diverse workforce is fairly treated at work.

Very useful / **useful** / not useful / not useful at all

We will continue to facilitate peer support groups for domiciliary care managers and care home managers to support resilience and wellbeing for managers in the workforce.	Very useful / useful / not useful / not useful at all
We will offer our new Digital Care Worker cards during the year to recognise the key role Social Care Workers have in supporting individuals in every community in Wales.	Very useful / useful / not useful / not useful at all
We will continue to manage the employee assistance programme scheme, which offers well-being support to the 55,000 direct care staff including personal assistants.	Very useful / useful / not useful / not useful at all
We will undertake the first all sector engagement survey which will help us in identifying appropriate and proportionate responses to continue to support the professional identity of Social Care Workers their wellbeing and sense of value.	Very useful / useful / not useful / not useful at all

**Please give any further comments including any other suggestions to actions, themes, priorities that need to be considered as part of this plan:**

- **Wellbeing framework and governance framework** – while we fully support a commitment to the wellbeing of the workforce and good governance, we are concerned that if undertaken in the wrong way this might place additional pressures on Registered Managers to complete paperwork without addressing the underlying issues that are impacting organisations' abilities to support the wellbeing of their staff. Alternatively, implementing the frameworks may require ongoing investment, in a year when provider's finances are under pressure. We are hopeful that the frameworks might also contain some funded tools. In particular, we would like to see greater access to Occupational Health services to support workers, particularly for small to medium size organisations (a point discussed recently in the [UK Government's response to 'Health is everyone's business'](#)).
- **Peer support groups** – we believe that these are helpful and should be continued.
- **Digital Care Worker cards** – while supporting the principle of this idea, we are not sure whether, under the current arrangements, careworkers are managing to realise the benefits of these in practice. This might be due to the recognition of the card in the community or the fact that its only digital. As your website suggests "There is no fee when you apply for the cashback card, but you will need to top-it-up with £5. After you've had the cashback card for a year, and each year after that, £2.99 will be deducted from the balance you have on your card." We have heard concerns that these costs are off-putting.

- **Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)** – many small to medium businesses may not have easy access to an EAP and we are pleased to see one being offered by SCW. Further communications might be needed to raise awareness and clarify what kind of support this Programme can offer for those who are, as yet, unaware of it.
- **Engagement survey** – it will be vital to understand the motivations, attitudes and difficulties of the current workforce. It is important that employers have good access to the findings (understanding that this might be aggregated to a level to preserve anonymity) in order that they can inform their own policies and actions in response. This information will also be helpful to support recruitment and retention. Our main concern is the degree of 'survey fatigue' the sector is currently facing due to demands for data increasing. It is important that this work is not duplicated if other organisations are thinking of asking similar questions.

Careworker wellbeing is significantly affected by commissioning practices. We would like to see Social Care Wales work with the Welsh Government to increase understanding in any forthcoming National Commissioning Framework that commissioning fees should be high enough to cover the real living wage (or higher), full pay on sick leave, travel time, mileage, training time, annual leave, pension contributions, waiting time etc. as well as business costs such as IT systems and office support (see [the costing work of the National Commissioning Board](#)). Sufficient staffing levels are needed to ensure that the stress of providing cover for isolating or unwell colleagues is reduced, and this will also have a financial cost. A move away from time and task commissioning – which can make careworkers feel under significant time pressure - is also needed.

We question whether the 'Ambition' for this theme can be achieved without financial investment and changes in commissioning practice. We are pleased that the Welsh Government's White Paper earlier this year indicated that there was a desire to address these issues. We urge the Welsh Government to ensure that change is accompanied by the funding that is required. Social Care Wales' work could be more explicit in its link to the wider Welsh Government work.

More public facing work could be done to raise awareness of the sector, the valuable work the sector does, and to ensure that carework is valued and recognised.

**Please read the 'I' statements and, for each one, answer whether you think they are a useful description in reflecting what you would want to experience to help feel valued and supported?**

I feel happy, healthy and safe at work.

Very useful / **useful** /  
not useful / not  
useful at all

I am treated fairly and am seen as an individual.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all
As a manager I am able to access support in developing my own, and the teams' resilience and wellbeing.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all
I am made to feel welcome in my new role and I am clear as to what is expected of me.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all
I am appreciated and valued for my contribution.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all

**Do you have any suggestions for rewording any of these statements or suggestions for additional statements to include?**

While of course, we would like these outcomes for staff, it's not entirely clear how the actions in the 'we' statements will bring us closer to the 'I' statements. Would it be helpful to have some analysis of what the current barriers are to the 'I' statements being a reality and how the 'we' statements will address these, but also highlight what might need to be addressed by others (for example, Welsh Government)? If there are 'I' statements here that are not addressed by any of the actions in the 'we' statements, why is that and how will they be used going forward?

It is important to recognise the experience and skills of existing staff members and that staff feel that they have opportunities to progress or (in the case of more casual workers) to shape their work to meet their needs, not only that they are made to feel welcome when they are new to the role (career pathways are discussed in Theme 2, but may also be relevant here). You could have, for example, "I feel that my job gives me the opportunities I need to further my life goals".

There is work underway in Wales on equality and inclusion in the care workforce, not least the recent Race Equality Action Plan. This doesn't appear in the 'We' statements but could be relevant in achieving the second 'I' statement.

**Theme 2: Attraction and recruitment:**

*Ambition: By 2030, social care will be well established as a strong and recognisable brand and the sector of choice for our current and future workforce.*

**Please read the following 'We' statements and, for each one, answer whether you think they are useful actions or not for achieving a strong and recognisable social care brand and improving the image of care as a profession of choice:**

We will continue to develop the 'We Care' Wales website with good news stories, refining our media plan promoting the work the direct care workforce carry out to transform lives and correcting negative perceptions associated with the job.

Very useful / **useful** /  
not useful / not useful  
at all

We will develop an 'introduction to social care' as an entry point pathway into the sector.

Very useful / **useful** /  
not useful / not useful  
at all

We will provide additional support and guidance to our Attraction Recruitment and Retention programme on flexibility of access points including an enhanced jobs portal and career pathways, welcoming all and encouraging people to consider working in social care even at later stages in their lives.

Very useful / **useful** /  
not useful / not useful  
at all

We will continue to financially support the social care career connector posts in the 7 regions across Wales. We will work with key stakeholders such as Department of Work and Pensions and Careers Wales to strengthen links between job seekers and careers in social care & launch schools-based resources to promote careers in social care.

Very useful / **useful** /  
not useful / not useful  
at all

We will develop a fair and equitable (bilingual) range of value-based recruitment (VBR) learning interventions on how to embed VBR into practice, with access to attraction, recruitment and interview tools that have proved to be successful in Wales.

Very useful / **useful** /  
not useful / not useful  
at all

We will be championing apprenticeships as a route into the sector and continue to identify We-Care ambassadors from within the sector to support our work on attraction and recruitment.

Very useful / **useful** /  
not useful / not useful  
at all

**Please give any further comments:**

- There are significant recruitment and retention challenges in homecare at the moment across the UK and including in Wales (see [our blog](#)).
- There are concerns amongst homecare providers in Wales that they are at a recruitment disadvantage compared to some in-house local authority

teams, who are funded to a level that allows for better pay and terms and conditions than rates paid by public sector commissioners, currently.

- Within this context it is additionally important that any recruitment resources within Social Care Wales influence are well adapted to, and accessible for, independent sector care providers, who make up the majority of provision in Wales.
- It has been suggested by others that a separate 'Theme' on retention is developed. We would support this suggestion. This needs to include work on the development of credible career pathways.
- [We have supported calls by careworkers](#) for the Social Care Wales registration fee to be waived for this year. While we support the long term aim of registering social care workers, currently, domiciliary careworkers are the only social care staff required to be registered. This puts staff at a financial disadvantage (and perhaps, as importantly, a 'felt' disadvantage) if they work in homecare compared to working in the NHS as a healthcare assistant, or in other parts of the social care sector as a personal assistant, or care home staff member (though we recognise registration of care home staff is the next step).

**Please read the 'I' statements and, for each one, answer whether you think they are a useful description to achieving a career in direct care?**

I have support to help me understand and work towards a career in direct care.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all
I have a positive attitude and a commitment to care for others. I want to increase my understanding about what job I could do in social care.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all
I have access to advice and guidance to help me make informed decisions about my career.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all
I work with people who represent the diversity and values of my local community and who help keep our most vulnerable adults and children safe and well.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all

**Do you have any suggestions for rewording any of these statements?**

- While we support the registration and professionalisation of the workforce, not all careworkers want 'a career in direct care'. Some staff enjoy caring and are looking for more casual, short-term, flexible employment opportunities to fit around their retirement plans, care responsibilities or studies. They may be put off by suggestions that they want a 'career' in social care. We cannot afford to do without such staff, who may be talented care-givers. While we fully support providing career pathways

and making career guidance available to careworkers, the first three of these 'I' statements are at risk of not taking into account those workers who are highly committed, competent, but not long-term employees.

- It is vital that this is linked to Welsh Government/Social Care Fair Work Forum work to link career pathways with appropriate pay and reward.

### **Theme 3: Seamless workforce models:**

*Ambition: By 2030, multi- professional and multi-agency workforce models will be the norm*

**Please read the following 'We' statements and, for each one, answer whether you think they are useful actions or not in achieving this approach to multi-professional working:**

We will produce a suite of tools & resources to support the direct care workforce and partner agencies showcase the different ways seamless working can be configured and delivered. This will include best practice on services moving from hospitals to communities, and from communities to homes via health and social approaches to working collaboratively together.

Very useful / **useful** /  
not useful / not useful  
at all

In collaboration with our partners we will develop resources on working together in the provision of care and support services or upholding safeguarding duties. The resources will highlight successful strategies and approaches across Wales, including practical advice designed to help to adapt to new ways of working.

Very useful / **useful** /  
not useful / not useful  
at all

We will collaborate with our mental health partner agencies to develop a multi professional mental health workforce plan with a focus on developing practice in: Support at the point of Contact, Referral and Admission Management, Telehealth and Digital Solutions and Welsh language skills.

Very useful / **useful** /  
not useful / not useful  
at all

We will take forward the learning from the impact evaluation of our Care and Support at Home partnership to inform options on further collaboration, with a focus on community resilience.

Very useful / **useful** /  
not useful / not useful  
at all

**Please give any further comments:**

- We do sometimes experience community nursing teams not necessarily understanding the role of homecare workers and seeking to delegate tasks to staff inappropriately, without discussing this with their managers

or the commissioners of care. This can be problematic if staff are not trained to undertake the tasks, and if this is not funded as part of the agreed care plan. We also sometimes see a reluctance by registered professionals to sign off the competency of a careworker who has been trained in a specific healthcare task. Could Social Care Wales work with Health Education and Improvement Wales to ensure that healthcare professionals working the community understand how social care operates, how it is funded and what training and sign-off is needed for delegated healthcare tasks?

- Can Social Care Wales support providers with more tools, training or best practice advice on cross-provider working (for example mutual aid arrangements for staffing)?
- Does the mental health work include older adult mental health and dementia?
- Support for people with learning disabilities and autism may also require further work in terms of multi-agency working.
- Arguably multi-professional and multi-agency care is already the norm. While undoubtedly multi-professional, multi-agency work is required, service users may often feel that there are too many different people supporting them. This might not be resolved by promoting joined up working; and difficulties may be due to organisational policy and funding issues, and not just staff willingness. In some cases it may be possible to have staff who are trained to undertake a wider range of roles in order to reduce the number of different people service users need to interact with – providing they are competently trained, this should not reduce service quality. Can the ambition for this section reflect that suggestion? We would support homecare staff undertaking a wider range of roles with specialisms or hybrid health/social care roles, if training and funding are appropriate to their duties. People using care services frequently highlight the importance of continuity of care and developing relationships with care staff, which is harder if too many professionals are involved.
- It is important that best practice guides acknowledge the real barriers that people might be facing in implementing integrated and joined-up working. While behavioural change may sometimes be needed and it is important to celebrate successes, there is a risk that guidance that makes it appear that good practice can be achieved through personal effort when there are some systemic barriers/issues. If the barriers are not acknowledged, this could leave people feeling patronised.

**Please read the 'I' statements and, for each one, answer whether you think they are a useful description in reflecting what you would want to experience when working in a multi-professional service model?**

I understand the level of responsibility and the kind of decision making required of me when working with other professionals.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all
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I understand the level of accountability and autonomy required of me in my role as part of a multi-agency team or when working in partnership with other professionals.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all
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I understand the role I can play in ensuring that people with mental health problems and mental illness get the support they need.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all
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I respect and understand the distinct contribution of each professional who may work alongside me.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all
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**Do you have any suggestions for rewording any of these statements?**

- Suggest something like: "I can rely on healthcare professionals and other partners to understand my role and how social care organisations operate."

## **Theme 4: Building a digital ready workforce**

*Ambition: By 2030, the digital and technological capabilities of the workforce will be well developed and in widespread use to optimise the way we work, to help us deliver the best possible care for people*

**Please read the following 'We' statements and, for each one, answer whether you think they are useful actions or not for achieving the digital ambition of this theme?**

We will continue to work with our colleagues in the Social Care Fair Work Forum, Digital Communities Wales and other agencies to ensure that we fully understand the impact on upskilling digital skills and produce a clear development plan with innovative ways of developing learning resources to address your learning needs.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all
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We will increase our capacity to further develop the digital skills of the direct care workforce as a national priority within the Social Care Workforce Development grant via a range of digital learning modules and resources.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all
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We will launch a digital learning platform and test out opportunities for 'Once for Wales' training including safeguarding, All Wales Induction Framework, outcomes focussed practice and resources to support the workforce who provide care for people with dementia.

Very useful /  
**useful** / not useful  
/ not useful at all

We will work with our partners to develop digital training and learning to support the All-Wales Infection Prevention and Control training, learning and development framework.

Very useful /  
**useful** / not useful  
/ not useful at all

We will support the development of a new national role for the direct care workforce called 'Care Technologist'. The role can be replicated both regionally and locally, and will focus on optimising and personalising the way in which technology supports care interactions at home for people receiving care whilst also supporting the development of the care team's digital skills.

Very useful /  
**useful** / not useful  
/ not useful at all

**Please give any further comments:**

- It is not clear from the context whether the All Wales Infection and Prevention Control training is really about being 'digital ready' or is about Infection Prevention and Control? Is this the right theme for it to sit under?
- It is difficult to comment on the other points without understanding more detail. Some digital skills are transferable, some depend on staff being able to interact with the specific platforms that their organisation uses.
- Many care providers still operate in a way that relies on paper-based records for some or all of their administration. What is the Welsh Government doing to support providers to transfer to digital systems, and how can Social Care Wales support this? In particular, are there infrastructure systems that are not in place for the mobile homecare workforce to be able to access the internet wherever they work? Is guidance (and funding?) available on what digital systems to purchase and how future-proof these might be in terms of the requirements of regulators and inter-operability with healthcare systems?
- Can Social Care Wales and Care Inspectorate Wales support providers to have confidence that they will not be penalised by regulators for using digital systems?
- In some cases staff working with digital systems will need to understand data protection and security as much as they need to understand how to use the systems and hardware. Is Social Care Wales effectively supporting people to understand data issues? Do staff understand who will see data that they enter (in terms of regulators, health professionals, family members etc. where relevant)?

**Please read the 'I' statements and, for each one, answer whether you think they represent what you would want your working life to be like in the application of digital technology:**

I feel that my day to day working life is made better by user friendly technology, that saves time, and also makes a positive impact on the people who I support.

Very useful / **useful** / not useful / not useful at all

I am confident, competent, and capable of making the most of digital technology in my role and use its potential to improve the quality and efficiency of person-centred care.

Very useful / **useful** / not useful / not useful at all

I am keen to develop both personally and professionally in seeking out innovative ways to support my learning & development digitally.

Very useful / **useful** / not useful / not useful at all

I can manage and monitor my professional development using digital tools and technologies.

Very useful / **useful** / not useful / not useful at all

**Do you have any suggestions for rewording any of these statements?**

- Suggest adding that 'I understand how technology can help the people I support' and 'I understand how the data I input is used and how this impacts the data protection and security needs of the people I support'.
- Third point – largely support this 'I' statement, but again, for casual/short-term staff who are already sufficiently competent in using digital tools, this statement may not fit well.

## **Theme 5: Excellent education and learning:**

*Ambition: By 2030, the investment in education and learning for health and social care professionals will deliver the skills and capabilities needed to meet the needs of the people in Wales.*

**Please read the following 'We' statements and, for each one, answer whether you think they are useful actions or not for the education and learning ambitions:**

We will review the Social Care Workforce Development grant funding, including the regional facilitation grant, in line with the findings and recommendations of the workforce strategy, intelligence from the impact of Covid-19 and lessons learnt. This will provide a sustainable structure and longevity for the grant so that the future design and delivery meets the needs of the sector.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all
We will invest in compensatory learning and development opportunities for new starters, newly qualified graduates, and learners to help overcome and bridge the gap that the disruption to learning as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic may have caused.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all
We will continue to support the delivery of a social care managers induction framework and contribute to the development of a set of induction standards for volunteers.	Very useful / useful / not useful / <b>not useful</b> at all
We will continue to monitor the take up and delivery of the new Level 2 and 3 qualifications and support the implementation and monitoring of the Level 4 and 5 qualifications and the revised Level 4 and 5 apprenticeship frameworks.	Very useful / useful / not useful / <b>not useful</b> at all
We will continue to promote good practice across the sector including through the National Accolades Awards.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all
We will review our approach and process for registered people to show their continuing professional development (CPD) so that it enables registered people to easily access and record CPD for their role, and to engage with their ongoing CPD in a positive way.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all

**Please give any further comments:**

- **Workforce Development Grant** – we recommend that more of the Workforce Development Grant funding is made directly available to care providers rather than being primarily managed by local authorities. This is achieved in England, through the [Workforce Development Fund](#). The majority of social care provision in Wales is delivered by the independent sector and for this funding to effectively meet the needs of the independent sector workforce, it would be beneficial for providers to have greater direct access to it. We are concerned that historically, some local authorities may not have used or distributed the funding equitably and may have had their own needs in mind.

- **Review of the Induction Framework and qualifications** – we believe it may be necessary to review the induction framework and qualifications rather than to monitor and maintain/support these. The sector is urgently in need of additional staff. We fully support ensuring that staff have the fundamental skills and understanding that they need. The framework and qualifications may not have achieved the right balance between vocational and book-based learning approaches; there are also concerns that people who are highly qualified via experience, or qualifications that are older or from other geographic areas who may be deterred by the rigorous approach to qualifications being taken by the current registration process. This is at the level of registered managers as well as careworkers. Qualifications must be proportionate and appropriate. We have heard concerns about the amount of time that it is taking to complete all of the documentation currently required for the qualifications.
- **CPD and additional qualifications need to be rewarded.** We need a career pathway that allows staff to progress as they become more experienced. This needs to be matched by funding so that pay can match progression. It is unlikely that other sectors would ask staff to undertake this level of training and CPD without some prospect of financial reward and career progression. This may not be within the direct control of Social Care Wales, but Social Care Wales can work with the Welsh Government, Social Care Fair Work Forum and others on this point.
- **Support for part-time and casual care workers** – in the past the care workforce has attracted some staff who work on a casual part-time basis around studying, other careers, retirement plans or care responsibilities. Some of these staff members are highly motivated and have acquired skills through experience. However, they may not want 'a career' in care work, and may not have the time or desire to undertake substantial qualifications. With current workforce shortages, we cannot ignore the value that these careworkers contribute. How can they be supported rather than deterred by the registration process? In addition, some part-time staff may wish to develop a career in social care but may find the training and CPD requirements difficult to manage whilst working part-time (as may their employers). What can Social Care Wales do to support these staff?

**Please read the 'I' statements and, for each one, answer whether you think they are a useful description in reflecting what you would want to achieve in education and learning in your role?**

I am able to earn a salary whilst receiving training, gaining qualifications and learning job- specific skills.

Very useful / useful /  
not useful / not useful  
at all

I work for an organisation that encourages me and helps me build my confidence, motivation, and skills to better myself. I have right mix of on and off the job learning that works best for me and my employer.

Very useful / **useful** /  
not useful / not useful  
at all

I am supported to settle into my role and have access to advice and information to understand what is expected of me so that I can quickly become efficient and effective.

Very useful / **useful** /  
not useful / not useful  
at all

I have access to quality training that is flexible in how I access it, compliments the way I learn best and improves my skills, knowledge, and confidence.

**Very useful** / useful /  
not useful / not useful  
at all

### **Do you have any suggestions for rewording any of these statements?**

- We would suggest that the first point is incorrect as many social care workers are not, technically, in salaried positions. Perhaps this should read 'I am able to earn a wage...'.
- Some staff who are working in a more casual role (perhaps bank staff or staff who are semi-retired) may have an acceptable level of competence but may not desire to 'better themselves' as suggested in the second 'I' statement. How can we include and support them in the workforce, whilst also supporting people who do want to develop a long-term career in social care.
- It is important that staff are able to see a link between qualification and progression in terms of pay and reward. Is Social Care Wales able to work with the Welsh Government and Social Care Fair Work Forum on this? Could this also be an 'I' statement?

## **Theme 6: Leadership and succession:**

*Ambition: By 2030, All leaders in the health and social care system will demonstrate collective and compassionate leadership.*

**Please read the following 'We' statements and, for each one, answer whether you think they are useful actions or not in achieving demonstrated, collective and compassionate leadership:**

We will develop a single point of access webpage hosting a suite of resources, access to masterclasses and webinars to support collective and compassionate leadership based

Very useful / **useful** / not useful  
/ not useful at all

on the 'Leadership Principles' for Health and Social Care in Wales.

We will continue to produce learning and engagement content and opportunities to support leaders post Covid-19 and we will continue to support peer networks for registered managers in social care in private, voluntary, and public services to enhance wellbeing and help protect resilience.

Very useful /  
**useful** / not useful  
/ not useful at all

We will use the 'Leadership Principles for Health and Social Care in Wales' to design a leadership qualities framework that describe the attributes required for outstanding leadership expected of existing and aspiring leaders, both now and in the future.

Very useful /  
**useful** / not useful  
/ not useful at all

The framework will form the basis for the evaluation, and commissioning of our leadership programmes and resources (for social care professional heads of service and statutory directors).

Very useful /  
**useful** / not useful  
/ not useful at all

We will develop a leadership development programme for aspiring black, Asian and minority ethnic colleagues who work in the social work profession that bridges the gap between where applicants are and where they need to be, to progress into more senior roles.

Very useful /  
**useful** / not useful  
/ not useful at all

Participants will be empowered to develop their leadership skills and abilities representing the population they serve to ensure the best care is being delivered in their community.

Very useful /  
**useful** / not useful  
/ not useful at all

We will work with Care Inspectorate Wales and Improvement Cymru to scope work needed **for care homes** and managers in the immediate and longer-term future as part supporting the recovery of the sector.

Very useful /  
useful / **not useful**  
/ not useful at all

**Please give us any further comments:**

- Why is the final item about care homes only? The treatment of homecare throughout the pandemic (and before) has sometimes left those working in homecare services feeling that they are under-valued and an after-thought. The homecare sector will also need support with the ongoing challenges faced by the pandemic and with recovery. It should be noted that some of the challenges being faced by the sector are symptomatic of chronic under-funding and are not only to do with COVID-19. We would

ask Social Care Wales to recognise homecare in all documents and communications.

- We support the Compassionate Leadership Principles that have been developed. The aim of action should be to enable Leaders to embody these Principles. Any further framework or documentation must be designed to respond to the needs of organisations in realising the principles and must not be an aim in its own right. How will organisations use this framework?
- Is there more that Social Care Wales could do to support Registered Individuals? How about commissioners?
- None of the 'We' statements fully recognise the leadership shown by front-line staff.
- Registered Managers have faced increasing challenges in the pandemic, including in relation to staff absence and insurance, for example. However, one of the most significant strains on Registered Managers in the care sector during the pandemic has been staying up to speed with changing guidance and implementing it. Could Social Care Wales work with Registered Managers and the Welsh Government to outline what good practice looks like when changing social care policy in Wales in order to ensure that future changes are as manageable as possible for RMs? We need leadership in the independent and public sector to link effectively.
- Who are the leaders in the world of the direct employment of personal assistants, and how can Social Care Wales engage with them?

**Please read the 'I' statements and, for each one, answer whether you think they are a useful description in reflecting what you would want to be achieved for successfully demonstrated, collective and compassionate leadership.**

I have a trusting, respectful and valued relationship with my manager who is thoughtful kind, and approachable.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all
I can access meaningful leadership development opportunities that make a significant difference in enabling me to support colleagues and teams <b>in the post recovery of the Covid-19, pandemic.</b>	Very useful / useful / <b>not useful</b> / not useful at all
As a leader I have access to a range of leadership and management programmes that support me to create and sustain the conditions to empower others in improving the quality-of-service delivery.	Very useful / <b>useful</b> / not useful / not useful at all
I work for an organisation that develops more inclusive leaders at all levels in the social care sector.	Very useful / useful / <b>not useful</b> / not useful at all

### Do you have any suggestions for rewording any of these statements?

- The final 'I' statement may not be appropriate to small and medium size enterprises.
- Regarding the second 'I' statement, the Welsh Government is currently taking action to 'rebalance' the social care sector, to assist it to cope with the ongoing pandemic, and to help it to recover from the pandemic. The need to support teams does need to be relevant to the current context, but is not only to do with recovery from COVID-19. Indeed, we are likely to be working alongside COVID-19 risks for some time so one might question whether 'recovery' is a word that accurately captures the process of adapting to a 'new normal'.

### Theme 7: Workforce Supply and shape:

*Ambition: By 2030, we will have a sustainable workforce in sufficient numbers to meet the health and social care needs of our population.*

**Please read the following 'We' statements and, for each one, answer whether you think they are useful actions or not for achieving a sustainable workforce:**

We will commission a programme of work to support our carers strategy and we will work with the Third Sector Support Wales, the WCVA group and others to develop the potential of volunteering to support social care in Wales through programmes such as Help-force.

Very useful / **useful**  
/ not useful / not  
useful at all

We will revise our approach to workforce planning and include embedding Welsh language population and community profiles as part of how we assess the required current and future workforce attitude, awareness and skills towards the Welsh language and understanding of its impact on the people we support.

Very useful / useful  
/ not useful / not  
useful at all

We will undertake an analysis of the jobs portal & supplementary data to help us evidence our workforce supply and demand in identifying what skills, abilities, type and numbers of roles we need over the next five years in the direct care workforce.

**Very useful** / useful  
/ not useful / not  
useful at all

We will publish a data strategy road map setting out milestones and actions to improve how social care data is collected and used to benefit people needing care and support in Wales.

Very useful / **useful**  
/ not useful / not  
useful at all

**Please give us any further comments:**

- **Volunteering** – it is absolutely right to support unpaid carers and volunteers in our communities, and we support work to do so. However, it is important that this does not go so far as using volunteers to save costs when a paid, trained workforce is what is really required to reliably meet people's needs and support unpaid carers to an appropriate standard.
- **A plan based on evidence, not just data** – it is vital that we understand the supply and demand in the workforce. This should be combined with an understanding of what motivates staff (which potentially could be investigated if a staff survey is undertaken, as in Theme 1); why staff are leaving; and an analysis of how existing policies and upcoming policies are impacting and could impact the sector. Conditions in the labour market have changed rapidly this year due to COVID-19, Brexit and other factors. These changes, and the potential for further changes must be taken into account. The analysis of this data must also translate into action to address identified issues. We need a plan about how to secure the staffing we need and not just an outline of what is needed (though this might form part of the plan). The current 'We' statements focus on data. Could they also commit to action? In a context where workforce shortages are approaching critical levels, action is needed.
- **Data strategy** – it is vital that this takes into account providers perspectives in terms of their needs for access to data, as well as the costs that might come to them from collecting the data. There is a tendency to focus on the use of data for public sector strategy and commissioners, without considering how this might be important for the independent sector in terms of business planning, development and innovation. The focus on data collection may involve discussions with local authority staff, who are then asked to make data requests of providers. Some providers will have access to data about people who fund their own care, that may not be fully understood or considered by local authorities. Any data requests from providers come at a cost and need to be streamlined and lead to visible results. Providers can feel frustrated to have lengthy data requests made of them if they do not ever see the final data or how this has informed policy decisions.
- **Welsh Language** policy goals need to be practically and financially supported to ensure that they are achievable for independent sector care providers in terms of recruitment/retention or training.

**Please read the 'I' statements and, for each one, answer whether you think they are a useful description in reflecting what you would want to happen for a sustainable workforce:**

I respect and value the crucial role of carers, voluntary and community organisations as long-term partners in supporting the health and wellbeing of children, families and adults in my local community.

Very useful / **useful** / not useful / not useful at all

I work with colleagues who have the required skills, knowledge, values, and behaviours so that we are best placed to Identify and deliver increasingly higher standards of care and support.

Very useful / **useful** / not useful / not useful at all

I am listened to about understanding the complexity and value of direct care and the skills required in providing culturally relevant support to people in my local community.

**Very useful** / useful / not useful / not useful at all

I work in a setting that is welcoming to Welsh speakers and appreciate that I have a part to play in contributing to providing Welsh language services as part of delivering person centred care.

Very useful / **useful** / not useful / not useful at all

### **Do you have any suggestions for rewording any of these statements?**

- One of the major impacts of workforce supply on careworkers is that they are asked to cover for colleagues, sometimes at short notice which can affect working hours and patterns. If sufficient staffing levels are maintained, it would be possible to minimise this. This is not reflected in the 'I' statements at the moment. Could this include, for example: "As a manager, I am confident that I can recruit staff with the skills and values that I need without limiting my service". Or from a team member's perspective "I feel my team is the right size for our workload and vacancies are filled quickly."
- Would the second statement read better if it was 'innovate' rather than 'identify'?

### **Do you have any additional comments or suggestions to add that we have not already covered?**

We welcome the drafting of a Workforce Plan and would like to see parity of treatment for the social care workforce compared with the NHS workforce.

There is only so much that Social Care Wales can do and it is absolutely vital that other work being undertaken by the Welsh Government, Social Care Fair Work Forum and others is progressed in order to address the real barriers to the recruitment, retention and wellbeing of the workforce.

- **Workforce Strategy** – Action 31 in [A Healthier Wales: Workforce Strategy](#) included developing workforce plans for some specific professional groups, including domiciliary care specifically. It is not clear from this survey whether there is no longer an intention to develop a workforce plan specifically for domiciliary care. This raises a question about whether domiciliary care is being given less focus than was intended, at a time when the sector is facing significant (and sometimes critical) workforce pressures.
- **Unregulated workforce** – most of this workforce plan does not apply to unregulated parts of the sector, such as personal assistants. They are an important part of the social care picture, and arguably should be held to the same registration and training standards as other careworkers.
- **Workforce shortages** – Social Care Wales could work with the Welsh Government to investigate and address critical workforce shortages that are emerging and explore the possibility of policy interventions such as workforce capacity funding.
- **Recognition** – we welcome the Welsh Government’s bonus payments for health and social care workers during the coronavirus pandemic. However, there is a need for ongoing recognition of the contribution of careworkers to society. Should this be a theme in itself?

**We may want to recontact you so we can ask you further questions on this topic. Would you be willing to provide your contact details so we can contact you within the next 2 months for this purpose?**

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