



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

Improvement Framework



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Other formats:

This document is also available in Welsh. Copies of this document are available in large print or other formats, if required.

What is the Social Care Wales Improvement Framework?

The *Social Care Wales Improvement Framework* sets out how we will achieve our aim of leading and supporting improvement in social care in Wales.

Improvement is everyone's business, and requires us and our partners to work differently. Our work in partnership is essential to help support the ambitions of:

- the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016
- the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Why a framework?

Ultimately, we want to support improved outcomes for children and adults who rely on care and support, their families and carers in Wales. Service improvement involves any method that brings about a benefit. Ambitions in Wales to improve the care and support people receive are high¹ – through this framework, we want to set out how we will work with others to support service improvement.



¹. For example, see *Prosperity for All* and *A Healthier Wales*

Principles that underpin our improvement framework

In our strategic plan, we identified a number of ways in which we would approach our work, and these all apply in our work to support and lead service improvement. We've summarised some examples here:

How we will work...	What this means for our service improvement role...
Thinks long-term	We will focus on supporting long-term positive and sustainable change, not just short-term gains. Through our conversations about improvement and our work identifying potential issues and trends, we will seek to help others recognise opportunities for improvement and act upon them.
Integrates and collaborates	We will work with others to produce and develop plans and approaches, as well as share information, to help the sector take ownership of service improvement and ensure we make the most of the potential to improve services in Wales. We will work with local, regional and national improvement leads and organisations.
Outcomes- and impact-focused	We will focus on how the quality of services can be improved for people using care and support. We will look for creative approaches to long-standing challenges, policy ambitions, and national and regional strategic priorities to help put national policy into practice. Supporting skills development within the workforce is essential to achieving this. We will seek to highlight and not avoid tricky issues, and have a flexible and dynamic approach to respond to the needs of the sector.
Uses research, evidence and data	We will use and inform research, evidence and data to understand, define and measure the areas we are seeking to improve. We will make sure that where we are working in partnership, we are clear where we are adding value and the specific nature of our role. We will support the sector and our partners to collect, use and understand the data, intelligence and research available to them.
Evaluates and benchmarks	We will continually evaluate our approach to understand where we are and where we are not making a positive contribution.
Transparent and accountable	We will be clear where we are seeking to support change and how this work is progressing in our performance reporting.
Informs and connects to share and learn	To encourage shared learning, we will work with the sector to guide them towards services and partners that show evidence of good practice and innovation. We will look to continually connect with, and learn from, others to inform our own approaches and priorities, and we will be open about sharing learning with others.
Responsive and reflective	We will be flexible and dynamic in our approach to respond to the needs of the sector, and national and regional strategic priorities. If an approach doesn't work, we will need to stop what we are doing, learn from the work carried out and change it. We recognise the need to be flexible and agile, and not direct how improvement takes place. Instead, we will make use of a range of tools and techniques that are appropriate to the improvement area. We recognise that very small changes can make a significant difference. Improvement is a continuous process of growth to be better than we are in the moment.

Our contribution to social care service improvement in Wales

To improve outcomes for children and adults who rely on care and support, their families and carers, our work will concentrate on three areas where we can add value. These are:

- improving knowledge and understanding to inform evidence-based approaches
- encouraging and sharing learning from good and innovative practice
- supporting the development of the workforce.

While the responsibility for achieving improvement and change rests with those providing and leading services, a true improvement approach is one that requires everyone involved to make changes. Our role will seek to emphasise and highlight new experiences from the perspectives of people who use care and support, and those providing

services. This in turn should impact on beliefs and values to bring about a change in actions and behaviours. It is this that will ultimately create a positive and lasting change for children and adults using care and support in Wales.

Research tells us that improvement should be carried out by those closest to the frontline so that any changes are appropriate and sustainable, and improve the outcomes for children and adults who rely on care and support, their families and carers.

All our improvement work will be carried out in partnership. In some areas, we may take a national lead to support service improvement on a particular challenge. In others we will take a supporting, influencing or collaborative role. All are equally important, and we will identify the role we are taking in the scoping of our work.

Here are some examples of how we could approach our improvement areas:

Area of service improvement	Some examples of what this could mean in practice
Improving knowledge and understanding to inform evidence-based approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing and informing data, research and intelligence • Exploring new ideas and practice to improve our knowledge and understanding of issues • Influencing research carried out in Wales
Encouraging and sharing learning from good and innovative practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the sector to share and learn from practice • Supporting and promoting learning and improvement networks • Hosting the Accolades • Providing information via online platforms • Workshops and manager forums to help share practice on issues faced by the sector
Supporting the development of the workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiatives to improve the knowledge and skills of the workforce • Leadership and management development programmes • Initiatives to support changes in practice and behaviour • Providing funding to support the development of the workforce • Regulating the workforce to support improvement

Our improvement priorities 2017 to 2022

Our national improvement priorities are:

- children who are looked after
- dementia
- Care and Support at Home.

We also have a cross-cutting theme to support outcomes-focused practice.

We summarise our commitments in more detail in our annual business plans. You can find out more about our work at: socialcare.wales/about/strategic-and-corporate-plan



Identifying future priorities

Our service improvement priorities are aligned to our strategic plan's five-year cycle, which sets out our long-term programmes and what they mean for the sector. In developing our strategic plan, we will consider our service improvement priorities by identifying potential issues and trends by drawing upon a range of data, evidence and intelligence. For example:

- data from population needs assessment
- Care Inspectorate Wales's annual returns and thematic reviews
- our own data and regulatory information
- Welsh Government's performance framework reports, including the experiences of people using care and support
- regional and national plans, including area action plans
- essential Welsh Government policy
- market stability reports
- intelligence from the directors of social services' reports

- learning from engagement and feedback from a range of organisations
- evidence and information about good practice, and where practice needs to improve
- research.

We wish to be responsive to emerging needs, and as such, there may be shorter-term issues or priorities we will look to support where there is evidence of need from the sector. Once any priorities have been identified, this framework will help define how we will work with our partners to respond to them.

Interested in knowing more?

If you want to know more about our improvement framework or our service improvement priorities, please visit: socialcare.wales/service-improvement