

MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, 4 February 2004

Time: 9.00am to 12.20pm

Venue: Committee Room 2, National Assembly for Wales

Attendance: **Members of Health & Social Services Committee**

David Melding (Chair)	South Wales Central
Jocelyn Davies	South Wales East
John Griffiths	Newport East
Jane Hutt (Minister)	Vale of Glamorgan
Ann Jones	Vale of Clwyd
Val Lloyd	Swansea East
Jonathan Morgan	South Wales Central
Gwenda Thomas	Neath
Rhodri Glyn Thomas	Carmarthen East & Dinefwr
Kirsty Williams	Brecon and Radnorshire

In Attendance

Rhian Huws Williams	Chief Executive, Care Council for Wales
Mario Kreft	Council Member, Care Council for Wales

Carol Nørdröm	Council Member, Care Council for Wales
Mutale Nyoni	Chair, Care Council for Wales
Judith Paget	Welsh NHS Confederation (<i>and Chief Executive, Caerphilly Local Health Board</i>)
Mike Ponton	Director, Welsh NHS Confederation
Andy Williams	Vice Chair, Welsh NHS Confederation (<i>and Chief Executive, Powys Local Health Board</i>)

Officials In Attendance

Chris Burdett	Children & Families Division
Dr Huw Jenkins	Director of Healthcare Services for Children and Young People
Ann Lloyd	Director, NHS in Wales
Dr David Salter	Senior Medical Officer
Helen Thomas	Director, Social Policy Department
Graham Williams	Chief Inspector, Social Services Inspectorate for Wales

Secretariat:

Jane Westlake	Committee Clerk
Claire Morris	Deputy Committee Clerk

Item 1: Apologies and Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

1.1 There were no apologies.

1.2 There were no declarations of interest.

Item 2: Welsh Assembly Government's Response to "Every Child Matters" (9.05 – 10.00am)

Paper: HSS(2)-02-04(p.1)

2.1 The Minister introduced the report, which set out the Assembly Government's achievements over the last three years and the direction for the future. It confirmed the Assembly's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as the basis for policy making on matters affecting children and young people, and set out the Assembly Government's seven core aims that underpinned services for children and young people.

2.2 Gwenda Thomas outlined the terms of reference and membership of the safeguarding vulnerable children review, which she would be leading. A copy is attached at Annex A.

2.3 In response to comments and questions from Members on her report, the Minister made the following points:

- Representation had been to the Minister for Children in the UK Government for the removal of the defence of reasonable chastisement in respect of physical punishment of children, to be included in the Children's Bill.
- A pilot scheme had been launched in three local authority areas to provide information to support parents of children under 10. If this proved successful it would be rolled out to the rest of Wales.
- The Nutrition Strategy focused primarily on children and families in disadvantaged communities and set out an action plan that particularly targeted children.
- As part of the Breast Feeding Strategy, a full-time breast feeding co-ordinator had been appointed to take this work forward on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government. There had been increased levels of breast feeding in Wales.
- The Child Poverty Task Group was on schedule to report in March.
- The joint flexibilities funding would provide more opportunities for the voluntary sector to become engaged in supporting parents, and the extra funding for Children First would provide a route for that.
- Of the £31m funding allocated for Children First, £660,000 would be ring fenced for children with special needs and disabilities.
- Plans for funding through Children First had to be approved by the Assembly, which provided an opportunity to monitor the outcomes and effectiveness of the funding.
- The Children's Bill would place the same statutory requirement on health bodies as local authorities to identify a lead executive and non-executive director / member for children and young people.
- There would be a new duty on local authorities to promote the education of looked after children.
- The Welsh Assembly Government guidance on bullying in schools 'Respecting Others' was launched in September 2003, and gave practical advice on how an anti-bullying culture could be developed. The Minister was working with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning to look at other ways of supporting children in school.
- Work was ongoing with other cabinet members and the Welsh Language Board to find ways of ensuring children and young people could use the Welsh language in all aspects of everyday life.
- The Minister would make a statement on child protection procedures in the light of recent

acquittals at the same time as the Minister for Children made a statement in Westminster.

- Discussions were taking place with Westminster on how private fostering would be addressed in the Children's Bill.
- An advisory group consisting of child and adolescent mental health professionals were reviewing the guidance provided to Local Health Boards to improve the commissioning and provision of child and adolescent mental health services.
- Youth work being developed through Extending Entitlement placed great emphasis on outreach work. The Homeless Strategy and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Strategy should also ensure that no young people were excluded.

2.4 'Rights to Action' contained many issues that crossed over into the responsibilities of other Assembly Committees. It was therefore recommended that other Committees be encouraged to consider the document.

Item 3: Review of the Interface between Health and Social Care Services (10.00 – 10.55am)

Paper: HSS(2)-02-04(p.2)

3.1 The Chair welcomed Mike Ponton, Judith Paget and Andy Williams, representing the Welsh NHS Confederation.

3.2 Mike Ponton introduced their evidence. Members of the Confederation welcomed the review and recognised the importance of the interface in planning as well as delivery. The health and wellbeing agenda extended beyond the health and social care interface to wider issues such as housing, economic development and transport. Members of the Confederation were committed to developing strong relationships between health and social care and believed partnerships would be critical to success. Joint performance management arrangements between both sectors would be important and members were supportive of the balanced scorecard approach. Information Technology was also very important, and the quality, availability and relevance of information depended on the systems that supported it.

3.3 In response to comments and questions from Members, the NHS Confederation representatives made the following points:

- There was strong partnership working between the LHB, trust and local authority in Caerphilly and they had been focussing on what could be done collectively to support early discharge from hospital and to provide better support in the community. The number of delayed discharges had reduced significantly and they were expecting to meet the target set in the Service and Financial Framework (SaFF). This required not only resources but also commitment and people to be open-minded to new ways of working.
- The provision of a five-year SaFF was welcomed because it enabled the NHS to plan more effectively.
- Big cultural changes were needed to facilitate interface working between the NHS and local

government.

- It was not felt that introducing fines or charges for local authorities would be a helpful way forward in reducing delayed transfers of care. Clear targets and effective performance management should be put in place across the NHS and local government so both sectors were working to the same objectives.
- LHBs were still relatively new organisations and needed freedom to develop relationships with their partners and a strategy to meet local needs within a national policy framework, without over-regulation by the Assembly.
- Trusts and LHBs took their responsibility for child protection very seriously, and were committed to overcoming barriers such as financial and professional boundaries, information sharing and data protection issues.
- Clear advice and guidance had been provided by the Assembly Government to LHBs on the production of action plans in response to the Wanless report.
- It was helpful to have representatives from many partners as members of LHBs, but that was not a substitute for fully engaging with those sectors.
- Greater understanding of the patient journey was needed to establish the types of support required at each stage. Evidence suggested there was not a high number of inappropriate hospital admissions in Wales.
- There were many examples of LHBs and local authorities working together to manage chronic conditions in primary care, thereby reducing admissions to hospital.
- There were many fora for sharing information locally, regionally and nationally, from centrally funded programmes like Innovations in Care, which promoted best practice, to managerial and professional conferences and meetings. There were specific initiatives for delayed transfers of care that provided an opportunity to compare and share best practice.

3.4 The Minister said that the Committee might like to receive a presentation on the balanced scorecard currently being introduced into the NHS in Wales and how it might relate to social care performance assessment. She also agreed to circulate the guide to good practice compiled by the Innovations in Care branch for their annual conference.

3.5 The Chair asked the Welsh NHS Confederation to provide the Committee with examples of good practice, any evidence available on aligning IT strategies between health and social care, and a copy of a protocol on information sharing in respect of children's services developed by Gwent Health Authority which had been adopted by Caerphilly LHB.

Action

- The Welsh NHS Confederation to provide examples of good practice, any evidence available on aligning IT strategies between health and social care, and a copy of a protocol on information sharing in respect of children's services developed by Gwent Health Authority which had been adopted by Caerphilly LHB.
- Committee to receive presentation on the Welsh NHS balanced scorecard.
- Copies of the guide to good practice compiled by the Innovations in Care branch for their annual conference to be circulated to Members.

Item 4: Care Council for Wales (11.10 – 12.10pm) **Paper: HSS(2)-02-04(p.5)**

4.1 The Chair welcomed Mutale Nyoni, Rhian Huws Williams, Carol Nørdröm and Mario Kreft.

4.2 Mutale Nyoni introduced the Annual Report, which highlighted the key achievements in 2002-03. She said that the Council was still evolving and in 2003-04 would be working to consolidate the workforce agenda, in particular registration of social workers and social care workers, as well as issues around recruitment and retention and the implications of the Wanless report. She said that the Council was confident that they could deliver their objectives and targets.

4.3 In response to questions and comments, members of the Council made the following points:

- The Council did not have responsibility for regulating domiciliary care settings. Their function was to train and develop staff within those settings to carry out their role.
- The profile of domiciliary care needed to be raised and the importance of caring for people in their own homes recognised.
- Over the next twelve months, the Council would be supporting the sector in sharing good practice.
- Regulation and registration would enhance the standing of the sector.
- The Skills Foresight Plan showed an increase in home care provision and in supporting people to live independently.
- Greater emphasis was being put on promoting access to NVQs for lone workers.
- Social Care Regional Partnerships were working together across all social care sectors. They had all tackled recruitment and retention issues but in different ways to suit their local needs.
- Social care had been identified as one of Education and Learning Wales' (ELWa) key objectives for 2004-05 and they would be looking at how education and training actually meets the needs of the sector. ELWa had also identified an individual to work with each Regional Partnership.
- The Skills Foresight Plan needed to be strengthened but it was difficult to obtain information from parts of the sector, particularly the voluntary sector and small to medium enterprises (SME).
- Service users were involved in developing training courses for care workers and the quality and

relevance of training was improving. The new social work degree would involve service users in the planning and delivery of the course.

- Training courses often took place at times that were not suitable for social care workers. ELWa was working with smaller care organisations to overcome this.
- Individual learning accounts were open to anyone. They were not offered to the independent sector in any structured way but might provide a means for targeting funding.
- It was the responsibility of the employer to ensure terms and conditions of employment were appropriate.
- Working in social care provided many rewards, other than financial, and the Council would be promoting those wider rewards.
- Service user members of the Council played a full role and were helped to participate. All Council members received induction training to help them carry out their role and attended regular refresher courses.
- Approximately 500 social worker, out of a workforce of 3000, had been registered in Wales since June 2003. The Council had been working with the sector to promote registration.
- The Care Council was the only regulatory body in Wales that had attempted to set up a devolved model of registration in partnership with the rest of the UK to ensure common standards. Exclusions were notified to responsible regulatory bodies in the other parts of the UK.

4.4 The Minister said that from October 2004, funding would be provided for Welsh undergraduates studying for a social work qualification in Wales or England.

Item 5: Smoking in Public Places (Wales) Bill (12.10 – 12.20pm)

5.1 The Smoking in Public Places (Wales) Bill, proposed by Baroness Finlay, had received its second reading in the House of Lords on 16 January. The Bill would give powers to the Assembly to introduce a ban on smoking in public places.

5.2 Members expressed concern that the UK Government had not taken up the Assembly's resolution of 22 January 2003 and introduced a Bill. The Committee unanimously endorsed the principles of the Bill. The Chair would write to Baroness Finlay informing her of the Committee's endorsement.

5.3 The Minister said that she had also arranged for the matter to be discussed by the Assembly Cabinet.

Action

- Chair to write to Baroness Finlay informing her of the Committee's endorsement of the principle of the Bill.

Item 6: Forward Work Programme (12.20 - 12.25pm)

Papers: HSS(2)-02-04(p.3)

6.1 The Committee's forward work programme for January to April 2004 was agreed. It was noted that the possibility of holding an evidence session on the Committee's review of the interface between health and social care in North Wales was being investigated.

Item 7: Minutes (12.25pm)

Papers: HSS(2)-08-03(min)

7.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2004 were agreed.

Annex A

I have been appointed to lead a review of the progress that has been made in safeguarding vulnerable children in Wales. This review will look at current policies and practices, to:

- consider whether they are sufficiently clear and robust to deliver safe and effective services in authorities and agencies;
- identify strengths and areas for improvement;
- consider the effectiveness of organisational and cross-boundary arrangements in safeguarding children, including the effectiveness of existing arrangements for the recording and sharing of information, taking into the account the findings of inquiries into the Soham case;
- consider the risks and opportunities posed by the Internet and new technology in safeguarding children; and
- recommend to the Welsh Assembly Government the actions needed to strengthen policies and practice for safeguarding children.

Other members of the team include:

- Joe Howsam, Director of Social Services for Caerphilly;
- Christine Walby, former Director of Social Services for Staffordshire and Chair of Children in Wales;
- Carys Graham, Paediatrician;
- Ruth Hanke, Barrister and specialist in childcare law;
- Ray Ciborowski, Director in Wales, Barnardos;
- Sally Holland, University College of Wales, Cardiff;
- Andrew Edwards, Acting Assistant Chief Constable of Dyfed Powys;
- Mike de Val, Director of Education, Torfaen County Borough Council; and,
- Meirion Hughes, Chair of Denbighshire Local Health Board.
- A member of the team from Local Government who brings a corporate governance and modernisation perspective to the Review, to be nominated through the WLGA

In collecting evidence the team will talk to providers of services, the Children's Commissioner and to children and young people. We will present our report in a year's time.