

Date; 20th June 2001

Venue: Committee Room 3

Title: Recruitment and Retention of the Social Care Workforce

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide Committee with the opportunity to consider the main themes and recommendations of the Task and Finish Group on workforce issues in social care and to comment on those main themes and recommendations.

Summary/Recommendation

2. The Committee is invited to receive a presentation from the Task and Finish Group on workforce issues outlining the main themes and recommendations arising from their work.

Background

3. Social care is one of the most important service areas in Wales and an essential part of the continuum of care. A diverse and complex range of services help to enable some of the most vulnerable people in our society to live as independently and safely as possible. In the last decade these services have developed to be more responsive to the needs of users and carers and to be more flexible in their delivery. The quality and responsiveness of the services that are provided are directly linked to the quality and sufficiency of the workforce and the changing pattern and complexity of service provision has resulted in major changes in the workforce. Therefore the workforce is central to the Assembly's objectives of high quality social care services able to respond effectively to people's needs

4. There are currently over 70,000 staff in the sector and there has been a 16% increase in the size of the workforce over the past 5 years with a predicted growth of 2%-3% every year until 2006. This means that an estimated 2,000 new staff will be needed each year until that date.

5. For some time now concerns have been expressed regarding difficulties in recruiting and retaining social care staff across Wales. Whilst being highlighted in respect of social workers in services for children and families these concerns relate to all client groups and across the social care workforce and are being experienced by public, private and voluntary sector employers. The problems are complex and multi dimensional and they cannot be resolved simply or quickly. They can be localised, for example as a result of a new employer from another sector attracting employees who may otherwise have been potential social care workers or more widespread as in the current expressions of concern regarding

social workers in children's services. Problems can sometimes occur over a short timescale or be more entrenched. Also particular authorities may experience localised difficulties at certain times because of particular circumstances or concerns that may apply to them.

6. Additionally there has been a marked reduction in the numbers applying for social work qualifying training in recent years across the U.K and, while the reduction has not been as marked in Wales, it is nevertheless significant. The reasons for this need to be examined and the trend halted if levels of service provision are to be maintained.

7. It is essential to develop a long term sustainable strategy to deal with these difficult and complex matters. This will need to include a number of inter related elements aimed at tackling the difficulties currently experienced and at enabling comprehensive workforce planning based on matching human resource requirements to service developments.

8. The Assembly can make an important contribution to tackling these issues by promoting good employment and training practice in the social care sector and by facilitating the development of collaborative approaches between local authorities and between authorities and other key interests, including private and voluntary employers and training providers and regulators.

9. I announced to you at your meeting on 18th January this year that I was setting up a specialist Task and Finish Group, chaired by the Chief Inspector of Social Services for Wales, to look at these issues and to report to me with recommendations to establish a strategic framework to tackle these issues. I emphasised that these complex and sometimes entrenched difficulties could not be solved quickly and would require long term strategies which would require considerable ongoing support from the Assembly and its partners.

Terms of Reference and membership of the Group

10. The Terms of Reference for the group's work focussed on five specific areas:

- Engage in a partnership with the sector to understand the size and nature of the problem.
- Develop a strategy for improving the profile, image and understanding of the sector amongst the wider public.
- Examine the feasibility of the creation of national/local partnerships for recruitment and career development in social care, which may include the development of a funding scheme for trainees.
- Work with employers across the sector to enable them to develop good recruitment and retention policies focussing on the overview report "People Need People".
- Develop proposals for taking forward the reform of social work training within the context of the responses to the consultation on the Quality Strategy to include a review of current funding arrangements.

11. In order to progress this work it was important that the membership of the group reflected the

relevant interests in the field with specific reference to the 5 key areas of work and ensured that those engaged in the work had access to networks in their specific field of interest. It is already clear that these networks will be essential in progressing the long term work programmes that the group has begun to identify. Details of membership of the group is attached at **Annex 1**.

Progress of the group's work

12. I received an outline of the Group's work and recommendations at Easter prior to meeting with them on May 23rd to receive their detailed recommendations. This was a very positive meeting and I indicated to the group that I welcomed their recommendations and acknowledged the progress they had been able to make in a very short time scale.

13. I now welcome the opportunity to present the main themes and recommendations of the group to Committee. That presentation will be made by the Chief Inspector of Social Services for Wales, Graham Williams, as chair of the group, prior to your questions and discussion. I am also pleased that a number of members of the group will be able to attend the meeting to take part in that discussion.

14. The Terms of Reference for the group indicated that they would engage in a partnership with the sector to understand the size and nature of the workforce issues that were being identified. In order to set the context for the presentation and discussion I attach as **Annex 2** to this report a brief overview of the workforce information drawn together by the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work/ Training Organisation for the Personal Social Services (CCETSW/TOPSS) and which the group has made use of to inform its discussions and the nature of the recommendations made.

15. In addition Committee will be aware that the group wrote an open letter to the sector, which was widely distributed through various networks, inviting comments and views. The group received a wide range of responses to the letter which helped to inform the development of their recommendations. These will be available in the Members library. A copy of the letter is at **Annex 3**

Compliance

16. The group was set up under powers at sections 40 and 85 of the Government of Wales Act in conjunction with the Assembly's Health and Social Services functions. Those powers have been delegated to the Assembly Minister for Health and Social Services. There are no issues of regularity or propriety.

Financial implications

17. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. I have already announced that £500,000 has been made available to implement recommendations of the group in this financial year and funding for any long term recommendations would need to be assessed as part of the Assembly's Budget and Corporate Planning Round 2001/02.

Action

18. The committee is asked to:

- receive the presentation
- indicate their support for the direction taken in the recommendations that the group have made to me.

Jane Hutt

Minister for Health and Social Services

Annex 1

Membership of the Task and Finish Group

Directors of local authority social services in Wales, representing employer and commissioner interests in the sector in Wales.	Meirion Hughes (Director of Personal Services Denbighshire) Tony Garthwaite (Director of Personal Services Bridgend)
Voluntary sector employers	Graham Illingworth - Director NCH Cymru Jane Pagler - Director Opportunity Housing Trust
Private sector employers	Mario Kreft - Care Forum Wales Yvonne Apsitis – UKHCC

Central Council for the Education and Training in Social Work(CCETSW)	Rhian Huws Williams - Head of CCETSW/ TOPSS Cymru
Training Organisation for the Personal Social Services Cymru.(TOPSS)	Rob Pickford - Chair TOPSS Cymru
Diploma in Social Work (DipSW) Programmes in Wales/Higher Education	Brian Isaac - DipSW Forum Wales/University of Wales Institute Cardiff(UWIC)
Syniad	Bethan Evans
Trade Unions	Dominic Macaskill
Public relations perspective	Provided by an input from Gail Foley and the involvement of Anne Jones from the Assembly

Annex 2

Social Care Workforce Information

A Summary

"Our most important asset is the team of dedicated staff who work hard to provide good quality care – often in testing circumstances", (Social Services White Paper for Wales ‘Building for the Future’, 1999).

KEY PRINCIPLES

- The social care sector in Wales is should be viewed as one sector which includes statutory, private and voluntary provision.
- The Workforce should be viewed as one workforce.
- Quality services are dependent on a sufficient sustainable supply of quality staff

- Workforce challenges apply to the WHOLE sector.
- The sector will need to get better at predicting workforce and skills needs at national and local level to provide a sustainable service and also compete with other employers for resources.
- From October 2001 the Care Council for Wales will have the lead responsibility for the registration and the regulation of the workforce and the workforce development agenda.

General Information about the workforce

- The sector is large and diverse and must respond to rapidly changing service demands
- **There are over 70,000 people employed across the sector, which is 5% of the total workforce in Wales and at least 53% of the workforce is in the private sector.**
- There are over 7000 diverse care settings
- There has been a 16% increase in the size of the sector's workforce over the past 5 years and this growth will continue at 2-3% every year until 2006. This means that the sector will need to recruit at least 2000 new staff every year until that date.
- The overall labour supply in Wales is predicted to grow at 0.5% during that same period and 8 out of 10 of the people who will be working in 2010 are already in employment. However employment patterns in social care may mean only 3 out of 10 people currently working in the sector will still be working in 2010.

Profile of the workforce

- The workforce in the sector is still primarily female – nearly 82% compared to 45% of the Welsh workforce as a whole although there has been a 7% growth in male workers. This could be because there are nearly three times the number of men unemployed as women. It is unclear whether this shift will remain constant for the future.
- In recent years the workforce has become younger with the numbers employed aged under 25 doubling in number between 1994/95 and 1998/99 from 4,000 to 8,000. There has been a significant decrease in the 35 - 49 age group who have traditionally been the mainstay of the social care workforce.
- However, most of the available supply of workers to meet the sector's needs continue to be amongst the older age groups. It would seem that the younger staff are concentrated within residential services and within posts where turnover is highest across the sector.

- There is qualitative evidence to suggest that, particularly within the private sector, those who gain NVQ qualifications use that as an entry route to a career in nursing.

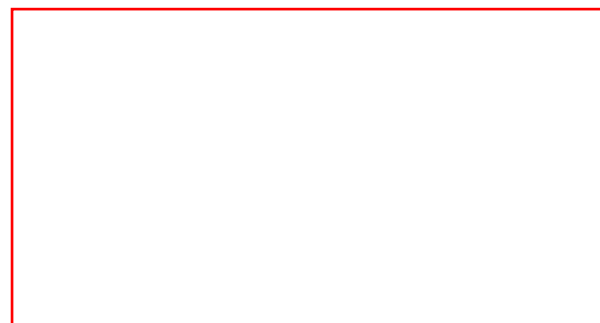
Retention and Recruitment Patterns

- In 1998 the overall vacancy rate for all jobs within **statutory** social services in Wales was 3.5% and turnover was 6.7%
- There was considerable variation between service areas, for example, an 8% turnover of full time Fieldwork Team Leaders and a 20% turnover of full time Children's Residential Care Officers.
- The key messages from the ADSS and CCETSW/TOPSS Cymru Recruitment Project indicated that there had been significant change by 1999 and included the following findings:
 - roughly 380 qualified social workers were recruited by Authorities in 1999;
 - many local authorities did not have in place systems to enable them to accurately estimate the future need for qualified social workers. Reasons given were: new statutory duties can suddenly affect demand; cutbacks or budget increases are made annually; turnover varies and sickness can suddenly create need for locums.
 - future demand for newly qualified social workers was estimated to be about between 105 and 125 each year;
 - over half the authorities reported a shortage of social workers, new and experienced and Child Care in particular suffered a shortage – 60% of those recruited went to work in child and family settings and about half of all those recruited in 1999 were newly qualified social workers.
 - These figures indicate a higher turnover of social workers in 1999 than the previous year particularly within children and families.
 - Analysis of information regarding applications to Diploma in Social Work Programmes (DipSW) indicates that between 1997 and 1999, there has been an overall reduction of 24% in the number of applications made to DipSW Programmes in Wales.
 - However, maintenance of the level of output of newly qualified workers at just under 270 annually has been achieved by the:
 1. expansion of the Open Learning Route (OU);
 2. development of Part-time Routes (UWIC & NEWI);
 3. development of an AP(E)L Route (UWIC);
 4. development of a Distance Learning Route (Bangor).

The development and expansion of these routes has led, in 1999/2000, to a 12% increase in the number of registrations to DipSW Programmes in Wales.

- Within private residential homes the staff turnover is reported as at least 22%.
- There were a number of reasons for recruitment and retention difficulties across the social care sector identified including a lack of career progression, low pay and status and competition from other sectors.
- Retention of social care staff was reported to improve in posts where a greater level of experience and skill was required and where systematic induction, probation, training and appraisal systems were in place.

Annex 3



To ; see mailing list attached

Parc Cathays / Cathays Park

Caerdydd / Cardiff CF10 3NQ

Eich cyf / Your Ref

Ein cyf / Our Ref

12 March 2001

Dear colleague.

Task And Finish Group On Workforce Issues In Social Care

In response to the concerns being expressed about recruitment and retention issues in the social care workforce and falling numbers of applications for social work training within what is a continually expanding sector, Ms Jane Hutt, the Minister for Health and Social Services has set up a Task and Finish Group on Workforce Issues. The Group which I chair brings together a range of interests in the sector including the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS), the private sector, the voluntary sector, The Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work/Training Organisation for the Personal Social Services (CCETSW/TOPSS Cymru), Syniad, education interests and Unions.

Members of the group have access to networks in their specific fields of interest and I want to ensure that those networks are informed of our work now so that we can involve the wider sector in the longer term programme of work, which will follow.

The Task and Finish Group will be specifically addressing the following five key areas;

1. Engaging in a partnership with the sector to understand the size and nature of the problem.
2. Developing a strategy for improving the profile, image and understanding of the sector amongst the wider public.
3. Developing proposals for taking forward the reform of social work training within the context of the responses to the consultation on the Quality Strategy to include a review of current funding arrangements.
4. Examining the feasibility of the creation of national/local partnerships for recruitment and career development in social care which may include the development of a funding scheme for trainees.
5. Working with employers across the sector to enable them to develop good recruitment and retention policies focussing on the Joint Review overview report People Need People

Whilst the Group will be responding to the Minister by Easter 2001 with recommendations for a strategic framework for action, implementation of the framework will require considerable on going commitment from the Assembly and the sector.

The timescale for the first part of our work is extremely short but I view this as very much a starting point to be built on as implementation of the strategic framework progresses over time. As you will appreciate the work of the group is both important in itself and will be utilised and developed by the new Care Council for Wales which comes into being in October this year.

We are interested to hear your views in relation to the five issues that we are tackling. By informing you of our work at this stage we hope you will become involved by letting us have your comments, observations and ideas for improvement so that we have well grounded solutions and a secure base on which to build future work .

If you are able to respond quickly to this letter that would be very helpful but we will be interested in hearing your views in any case.

You may contact the group by writing to Margaret Provis at the National Assembly for Wales at the above address or by emailing SSIW@wales.GSI.gov.uk.

You may also find a copy of this letter, and future documents within the Social Care pages of the National Assembly website www.wales.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,

GRAHAM WILLIAMS

CHIEF SOCIAL SERVICES INSPECTOR

DISTRIBUTION LIST

Directors of Social Services in Wales

Chief Executives LAs

Directors of Finance

Chief Housing Officers

General Managers of Health Authorities

General Managers of NHS Trusts

Directors of County Intermediary Bodies

Head, CCETSW/TOPSS Cymru

ACCAC

Age Concern Cymru

Barnardo's

BASE Wales

British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering

Care Forum Wales

Carers National Association

Catholic Children and Family Care Association

Centre for Social Policy Research and Development

Children in Wales

Children's Society

City & Guilds *Affinity*, Wales

Correspondents, DipSW and O.U. programmes

County Voluntary Councils in Wales

Crossroads Wales

Department of Health - Anne Mercer

Disability Wales

Joint Reviews

MIND (Wales)

Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin

National Assembly for Wales H & SS Committee

National Foster Care Association

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

NCH Action for Children

Post-Qualifying Consortium for Wales

Save the Children Fund

SCOVO

Solace

SSI, DHSSPS, Northern Ireland – Eleanor Simpson

SWSI, The Scottish Executive - Ian Robertson

Syniad

Task and Finish Group

Training Managers

United Kingdom Home Care Association

Wales Council for the Blind

Wales Council for the Deaf

Wales Council for Voluntary Action

Wales Pre-School Playgroups Association

Welsh Local Government Association