

## **Cafodd yr ymateb hwn ei gyflwyno i ymgynghoriad y [Pwyllgor Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol](#) ar [Flaenoriaethau'r Chweched Senedd](#)**

**This response was submitted to the [Health and Social Care Committee](#) consultation on [Sixth Senedd Priorities](#)**

### **HSC PSS 26**

**Ymateb gan: | Response from: Cartrefi Cymunedol Cymru | Community Housing Cymru**

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## **Blaenoriaethau cychwynnol a nodwyd gan y Pwyllgor Initial priorities identified by the Committee**

Mae'r Pwyllgor wedi nodi nifer o flaenoriaethau posibl ar gyfer ei waith yn ystod y Chweched Senedd, gan gynnwys: iechyd y cyhoedd a gwaith ataliol; y gweithlu iechyd a gofal cymdeithasol, gan gynnwys diwylliant sefydliadol a lles staff; mynediad at wasanaethau iechyd meddwl; arloesi ar sail tystiolaeth ym maes iechyd a gofal cymdeithasol; cymorth a gwasanaethau i ofalwyr di-dâl; mynediad at wasanaethau adsefydlu i'r rhai sydd wedi cael COVID ac i eraill; a mynediad at wasanaethau ar gyfer cyflyrau cronig tymor hir, gan gynnwys cyflyrau cyhyrsgerbydol.

The Committee has identified several potential priorities for work during the Sixth Senedd, including: public health and prevention; the health and social care workforce, including organisational culture and staff wellbeing; access to mental health services; evidence-based innovation in health and social care; support and services for unpaid carers; access to COVID and non-COVID rehabilitation services; and access to services for long-term chronic conditions, including musculoskeletal conditions.

### **C1. Pa rai o'r materion uchod ydych chi'n credu y dylai'r Pwyllgor roi blaenoriaeth iddynt, a pham?**

**Q1. Which of the issues listed above do you think should be a priority, and why?**

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#### About Us

Community Housing Cymru (CHC) is the representative body for housing associations and community mutuals in Wales, which are all not-for-profit organisations. Our mission is to enable Welsh housing associations to be brilliant.



Our members provide around 165,000 homes and related housing services across Wales for around 10% of the population. In 2019 our members spent £1.3bn directly in the Welsh economy with 85p in every pound spent remaining in Wales.

Our 20-year vision is a Wales where good housing is a basic right for all. We have a simple ask: Put 'home' at the centre of your plans to support the people of Wales to live healthy, prosperous and connected lives. Housing associations stand ready to invest, partner and deliver with you.

### Workforce

The delivery of social care services through its skilled workforce continues to be undervalued, particularly in comparison to partners in health. Due to the focus of social care funding being driven by cost, local authorities do not have the ability to ensure providers can appropriately remunerate the social care workforce for the vital, life-saving and enhancing work they do for some of the most vulnerable people in Wales.

We will not be able to deliver the much-needed reorientation of care and support towards value, rather than cost, unless the care and support workforce is appropriately recognised and remunerated for their skilled work. All care workers in Wales should be paid at least the Real Living Wage, and have progression opportunities and pay differentials based on qualifications, skills and responsibilities.

Care must become an attractive place to work to deliver the personal outcomes and social value the people of Wales deserve. Again, to make any significant gains on this issue, action is required from both Westminster and the Welsh Government to invest. Significant investment from Westminster, translating to consequential funding via the Barnett formula, will be required to remunerate the care and support workforce in line with the value they deliver.

### Innovation

In their Programme for the 6th Senedd, the Welsh Government committed to support innovative housing development to meet care needs. We are keen to see the delivery of this commitment, with innovation to develop new models of providing care closer to home as well as to enhance seamless integration between services.

## **Blaenoriaethau allweddol ar gyfer y Chweched Senedd**

### **Key priorities for the Sixth Senedd**

**C2. Yn eich barn chi, pa flaenoriaethau allweddol eraill y dylai'r Pwyllgor eu hystyried yn ystod y Chweched Senedd mewn perthynas â:**

- a) gwasanaethau iechyd;**
- b) gofal cymdeithasol a gofalwyr;**
- c) adfer yn dilyn COVID?**

**Q2. In your view, what other key priorities should the Committee consider during the Sixth Senedd in relation to:**

- a) health services;**
  - b) social care and carers;**
  - c) COVID recovery?**
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### **Gwasanaethau iechyd**

#### **Health services**

The conditions that support us to live healthy and fulfilled lives are broad: our access to money and resources; our level of education and skills; the availability of good work; the quality and security of our housing and our surroundings. These are not the responsibility of just one agency, and we must shift our focus and investment from crisis to long-term prevention.

We know that resources are under pressure and that statutory services are stretched and responding to crises. Better join-up with community partners, such as housing associations, could provide support at a much earlier stage, preventing an escalation to crisis point, keeping people in their homes and communities for as long as possible.

Redesigning the system so that it supports partnership working has the potential to be transformative alongside focused and collaborative action on the issues that impact our ability to live well.

### **Gofal Cymdeithasol a gofalwyr**

#### **Social care and carers**

##### Social care reform & funding

Adequate, sustainable funding that meets the true cost of delivering high-quality care is a precondition for positive change. The current system does not provide sufficient funding for commissioners to pay fees that would allow providers to pay the level of wages that reflect the value and outcomes of the work that care staff are delivering to citizens. The social care and

support system requires urgent reform and investment so that it is driven by value, rather than cost, and has the resources needed to deliver improved outcomes for citizen users, the workforce and social value to communities.

We must rebalance spend away from crisis to long-term prevention over the next Senedd term, supported by the necessary transition funds for the long-term shift to a preventative approach. Investment should be targeted at infrastructure and services that offer sustainable solutions to the underlying causes of health inequalities, such as community-based support, quality homes, and access to education and skills at all ages.

## Unrhyw faterion eraill

### Any other issues

#### C3. A oes unrhyw faterion eraill yr hoffech dynnu sylw'r Pwyllgor atynt?

#### Q3. Are there any other issues you wish to draw to the Committee's attention?

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##### Health inequalities

We would welcome an inquiry across all Senedd Committees on tackling wider health inequalities in Wales. This will enable all Committees to consider what action each Welsh Government department is doing to tackle the root causes of health inequalities.

In just the past year, many reports have called for system-wide action on health inequalities including the Welsh Health Equity Status Report initiative, [Placing health equity at the heart of the COVID-19 sustainable response and recovery](#) (Public Health Wales and Welsh Government), [Mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on health inequalities](#) (British Medical Association), [The Marmot Review 10 Years On](#) (Institute of Health Equity and the Health Foundation) and the most recent [Unequal pandemic, fairer recovery](#) (the Health Foundation). Every one of these reaffirms the need for coherent, coordinated activity across all delivery partners and in COVID-19 recovery, there is an opportunity to create a healthier, more resilient society, by addressing the root causes of poor health and invest in people and their communities – their jobs, housing, education and communities.

The NHS alone simply doesn't have the levers to make the changes we know are vital to creating the conditions necessary for good health and wellbeing. For example, investment in good quality homes improves outcomes for people and offers genuine choice for residents and service users, as well as saving public money. Poor housing can seriously damage people's physical and mental health and affect their future well-being and prosperity. Investing in improvements to people's housing can prevent the adverse health consequences of poor housing and cost to the NHS and other agencies.

If the most severe hazards were removed from housing in Wales, there would be benefits to the NHS of some £95m a year in saved treatment costs. The full cost to society of leaving people living in poor housing in Wales is estimated to be around £1 billion per annum.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to quality and condition, the affordability and security of housing are key for ensuring health. Housing costs are a major factor in determining not only the degree of control over where they live and the quality of the home that they can afford, but also the amount of money that they have available to support their health and wellbeing after paying housing costs.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [The full cost of poor housing in Wales - PHW, BRE & Welsh Government, 2019](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Better housing is crucial for our health and the COVID-19 recovery - Health Foundation, 2020](#)

As well as providing high-quality affordable homes, housing associations bridge the gap between sectors and respond holistically to their communities. They do this by providing support to people to maintain their independence and personal well-being for as long as possible, either in their own homes, through accessible, supported housing that promotes independence or through the provision of registered care such as supported living, domiciliary care and care homes.

As a member of the Welsh NHS Confederation's Health and Wellbeing Alliance, we echo the calls in the April 2021 paper, [Making the difference: Tackling health inequalities in Wales](#).

We believe that there needs to be a cross-governmental, whole-sector response to physical and mental health inequalities if we are to create an economic, social, natural and home environment that supports positive well-being throughout the life-course for all people in Wales and reduces inequalities for the next generation. This will require:

- Welsh Government leadership, including a strategy, delivery plan, annual reporting and data collection
- Investment to rebalance spend from crisis to prevention
- Partnerships, with a clearer landscape that allows space for third sector partners and the citizen & community voice,

We would like to see the Committee explore the various mechanisms and frameworks that currently exist to address health inequalities, and how they interact with each other. For example, the Health in All Policies approach, the Socio-economic duty and the Well-being of Future Generations Act all serve to ensure that public bodies consider how their decisions will affect the wider wellbeing of all people in Wales.

### Partnerships & integration

We need to improve systems, partnerships and processes to make it easier to work together on the issues that determine our chances of living well. We would like to see the Committee examine how to bridge the implementation gap between high-level strategy and delivery so that partners and public services can better work together to deliver services and share information to improve the wider determinants of health. The partnerships landscape is becoming increasingly crowded and complex, and does not always reflect the role that long term non-statutory partners, such as housing associations, can make to the delivery of shared aims.

Housing associations occupy a unique position as independent community anchor organisations and providers across the continuum of care and support, from community-based care to registered settings. They are well placed to identify both the barriers to overcome and the means to deliver value-driven care and support for the people and communities of Wales.