

HSCWB39

---

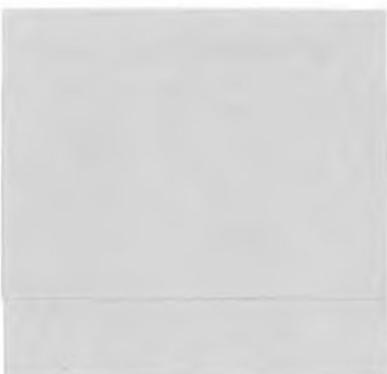
Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

Y Pwyllgor Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol | Health and Social Care Committee

Bil Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol (Cymru) | Health and Social Care (Wales) Bill

Ymateb gan Unigolyn | Evidence from An Individual

---



3rd July 2024

Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee  
Welsh Government  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

CC: Albert Heaney CBE  
Chief Social Care Officer for Wales  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ

Dear Members of the Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee,

I hope this letter finds you well. I recently watched the evidence session between Disability Wales, Carers Wales, and Learning Disability Wales regarding the ongoing discussion on continuing healthcare and its delivery through direct payments. While I welcome the move to open up continuing healthcare to direct payments as a method of delivery for social care and healthcare needs, I was alarmed to see that some witnesses appeared to be promoting their own agendas rather than focusing on the broader benefits and implications of the legislation.

As an individual who has long campaigned for continuing healthcare to be delivered through direct payments, I want to emphasize the importance of incorporating real-life experiences and successful implementations in your deliberations. Through the support of the Director for the Vale of Glamorgan Social Services, I currently benefit from a jointly funded package that allows me to employ my husband as my personal assistant. This type of evidence is crucial for scrutinizing and shaping effective legislation.

I have extensive experience in social care, having served as a board member for Social Care Wales for the past ten years in a non-executive capacity. During my tenure, I was involved in guiding the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act through the Welsh Parliament and contributed to the development of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016. For many years, I have advocated for direct payments to be more widely used and formally integrated into social care services.

I strongly believe that Social Care Wales could play a pivotal role in supporting local authorities and social work degree programs by educating social workers about direct payments and their potential applications. This would not only enhance the flexibility and personalization of care but also empower service users to have greater control over their care arrangements.

In addition, I urge the Minister to use their portfolio to sponsor Social Care Wales in undertaking work around educating the workforce on direct payments. It is also crucial to involve Health Education and Improvement Wales in this conversation to ensure true collaboration. As I mentioned earlier, without genuine collaboration, there will be certain stakeholders who may resist these changes for various reasons.

We must also recognize that this legislation is part of the broader goal to make social care free at the point of delivery. Recently, substantial work has been done through the Disability Rights Task Force and other related initiatives. Feedback from these efforts has highlighted that the current legislation often fails disabled people regarding health and social care. Practitioners frequently do not engage in meaningful conversations about what truly matters to individuals, resulting in services being prescribed rather than co-developed with the citizens they serve.

Moreover, it is imperative to bring in the rights of disabled people as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). The Welsh Government has professed its commitment to the UNCRPD for many years, but this commitment has not been fully integrated into disability legislation in Wales. During the evidence session, former First Minister Mark Drakeford mentioned that restating the current Welsh Government position would suffice. However, anyone involved in policy knows that while position documents can outline intentions, embedding these commitments in the actual legislation ensures they are taken seriously. I urge the Welsh Parliament to be brave and incorporate these rights into the legislation.

While I realize that I may be too late to provide formal evidence for the current scrutiny process, I am keen to share my firsthand account of how this legislation can positively impact lives. I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to speak with the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee and the Chief Social Care Officer to provide insights from my lived experience and professional knowledge of health and social care.

Thank you for considering my request. I look forward to contributing to this important legislative process and helping to ensure that the needs of those with complex health and social care requirements are effectively met.

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]