



Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill Consultation

The Community Health Council Board established under regulation 23 of the 2004 Regulations continued in existence from 1st April 2010. The CHC Board has the functions of:

- a) Advising Councils with respect to the performance of their functions;
- b) Assisting Councils in the performance of their functions;
- c) Representing the collective views and interest of Councils to the Welsh Ministers;
- d) Monitoring the performance of Councils with a view to developing and ensuring consistency of standards by all Councils;
- e) Monitoring the conduct of members appointed under regulation 3 with a view to ensuring appropriate standards of conduct;
- f) Monitoring the conduct and performance of officers employed under regulation 23 with a view to ensuring appropriate standards of conduct; and
- g) Operating a complaints procedure in accordance with regulation 33.

Introduction

The Director on behalf of the Board of Community Health Councils welcomes the broad aims and objectives of the Bill; in particular, the emphasis on improving well-being and prevention. CHCs would support efforts to promote greater client independence, giving them a stronger voice, greater power and control over their own care and support. As CHCs, we are keenly aware of the importance of the voice of the patient or client, the potentially transformative role that voice can have in improving and developing services and its value in assessing and monitoring the quality of services;

Further:

- We would also welcome the emphasis on greater consistency in processes, delivery and quality, as well as the recognition of the key role access to effective and good quality information plays in supporting people;
- There is a clear recognition of the significant challenges that Social Care and Health face in delivering services that are fit for purpose –

both now and in the future – and meet increasing and complex demands. At the same time, the stress should be maintained on seeking to maximise and maintain client independence and control wherever possible and appropriate. One of the key cornerstones of this must be effective collaboration and – where possible – integration of assessment and delivery, and it is important that the Bill enables such a framework;

- As a key part of this, we welcome the importance the Bill attaches to a robust shared local needs assessment;
- We believe there are real advantages in attempting to bring together children, adults and carers within a single legislative framework, driven by the need for consistency, quality and person-centred delivery. At the same time, there is a need to ensure that the distinctive needs of each of these client groups can be met;
- We acknowledge the importance the Bill attaches to the role of carers, and its recognition of their distinctive needs;
- The Explanatory Memorandum to the Bill sets out that there is still significant work to be done in a number of important areas e.g. in developing the National Eligibility Framework and the framework for adult safeguarding. It is important that these areas of work are delivered in line with agreed timescales
- The Bill is right to stress the importance of measuring and monitoring outcomes, and we look forward to seeing the outcomes framework. We trust these will be developed in partnership with stakeholders, including clients, carers and professionals. We would be pleased to participate in this work;
- Part 10 of the legislation (Complaints and Representation) refers to the role of independent Advocacy in supporting complaints about certain health bodies. As you will be aware, Community Health Councils in Wales already provide a well-established and highly-regarded independent advocacy services which assist those who wish to make complaints about NHS services. Indeed, the recent review of CHCs undertaken on behalf of the Health Minister recognised the work and value of the service, although there is clear recognition that the service is experiencing growing and significant demands. The Board of CHCs would be keen to be involved in any discussion about the proposal to amend Section 187 of the NHS (Wales) Act 2006 to extend the duty to provide advocacy support to cover complaints to the Ombudsman about independent palliative care services.

Carol Lamyman-Davies,
Director, Board of CHCs Wales.

