

Alzheimer's Society

Response to the consultation on the general principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill

September 2014

Consultation Response

5 September 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

Alzheimer's Society welcomes the opportunity to comment on this consultation.

1. Alzheimer's Society is the UK's leading support and research charity for people with dementia, their families and carers. We provide information and support to people with any form of dementia and their carers through our publications, National Dementia Helpline, website, and more than 2,000 local services. We campaign for better quality of life for people with dementia and greater understanding of dementia. We also fund an innovative programme of medical and social research into the cause, cure and prevention of dementia and the care people receive.
2. The Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill aims to simplify and streamline strategic planning for public bodies in Wales and to ensure the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. There are major demographic changes facing our society and the ability to meet the increasing demand for care (both paid and un-paid) in a sustainable manner is going to be a considerable challenge.
3. Alzheimer's Society welcomes the principles of this Bill but has significant concerns about the impact this legislation may have on services for carers. This concern is shared with other members of the Wales Carers Alliance and we endorse the Alliance's submission to this consultation.
4. The Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill is the third piece of Welsh legislation to cover strategic planning for carers since 2010.
5. The Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010 was introduced by the Welsh Government, following a proposed legislative competence order by Plaid Cymru. The measure placed a duty on local authorities, local health boards and NHS trusts to prepare, publish and implement a strategy for carers, with local health boards as the lead agency. The detail of the strategies were provided for by regulations and included amongst other things; identification of carers, the provision of information, training of front-line staff, engagement with GPs and consultation with carers. The measure came into force in 2012.
6. In 2013 the Welsh Government published the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Bill which repealed the Carers Strategies Measure. Alzheimer's Society and the Wales Carers Alliance opposed the repeal of the Measure and the Welsh Government introduced an amendment

to the Bill in January 2014 to address these concerns. Section 14.3 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 maintains a duty on LHBs to report to Welsh Ministers on any sections of the local health and wellbeing strategies which relate to carers (via the Single Integrated Plans).

7. The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Bill tabled in July 2014 subsequently repeals section 14.3 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.
8. The only reference to carers in section 36 of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Bill relates to the population needs assessments under section 14 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and in no way replicates the detailed strategic planning for carers outlined in the Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010. Assessments undertaken by the Public Service Boards will have to include carers but the Bill does not specify the content of the local wellbeing plans under section 37. Similarly the Bill provides no detail on the content of the reports under section 44 and as there are no regulatory provisions under these sections of the Bill, Welsh Government will not be able to prescribe the content of the local wellbeing plans or reports under regulations either.
9. Alzheimer's Society shares the concern of the Wales Carers Alliance about the oversight of the legislative process which has incrementally diluted the legal status of strategic planning for carers in Wales. We are particularly concerned about the loss of the specific duty, as the lead agency for carers strategies, on LHBs and NHS Trusts and the detail of the local carers strategies, provided for by regulations under the Carers Measure.
10. Alzheimer's Society suggests that officials work closely with the Wales Carers Alliance in the development of this Bill in order to ensure that services for carers are not weakened by the Bill.

For more information, please contact:

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