

National Assembly for Wales / Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol Cymru
[Health and Social Care Committee](#) / [Y Pwyllgor
Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol](#)

[Regulation and Inspection of Social Care \(Wales\) Bill](#) / [Bil Rheoleiddio
ac Arolygu Gofal Cymdeithasol \(Cymru\)](#)

Evidence from The Fostering Network – RISC AI 07 / Tystiolaeth gan Y
Rhwydwaith Maethu – RISC AI 07

David Rees AM
Chair, Health and Social Services Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

29TH May 2015

Dear David,

Re: Scrutiny of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Bill

Thank you for your letter, dated 22nd May 2015, as the new Director for the Fostering Network in Wales, I am pleased to be able to respond to outline the views of the Fostering Network, in relation to the questions raised of future registration of Foster Carers within Social Care Wales.

The Fostering Network has undertaken considerable research into this important question, to ensure that as the leading voice of Foster Care in the UK, we are able to contribute constructively to legislative and policy development. The registration of Foster Carers is an ongoing consideration across the UK and we welcome the focus given to this issue, as part of the scrutiny of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Bill.

It is our view that there is a balance to be struck in ensuring excellence, whilst not introducing unnecessary regulatory burdens. As such we would be keen to understand the balance between the regulatory focus of Social Care Wales and the improvement responsibilities within this new body.

However, in providing a response to your question The Fostering Network would welcome foster carers being registered with a national body through a national register, as we see it as being advantageous to both foster carers and to local

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authorities. This would bring foster carers in line with residential staff, social workers, childminders, teachers and others.

Introducing such a national register in Wales at a time when there is likely reorganisation of local government may also be very timely and helpful to Foster Carers and the likely new local authorities. A national registration scheme would also create a mechanism which would facilitate the movement of foster carers between fostering services and it would provide a mechanism for foster carers to seek a review of a decision to deregister them.

Foster carers are currently approved by their individual fostering agency and registered with that agency. National registration after approval (via The Skills to Foster as the minimum training requirement) would enhance the status and standing of foster carers and could be a key part of a strategy to transform foster care and the outcomes of children in foster care. National registration after approval with regular updates would offer a safety net and if further training and development was mandatory it would help to build a competent and skilled workforce. A national register should also ensure that information about a foster carer who is or has previously fostered is always passed on to any new fostering service as well as providing the mechanism to improve the portability of approval.

The Fostering Network believes that Foster Carers should be supported to provide excellent care and support for the vulnerable children who come into their care. In doing so the consideration of registering Foster Carers with Social Care Wales is an extremely complex matter, as highlighted by the Children's Commissioner in her evidence to Committee last week. As such registration and the requirements for continuing professional development would need considerable further discussion to determine what would be effective, whilst not being overly burdensome. We would therefore welcome a commitment to a full impact assessment or research being undertaken on this matter prior to any legislation being tabled and would be keen to support this work.

We would welcome further discussions with you as scrutiny progresses and should you require any further information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards



Dr Emily Warren
Director, The Fostering Network

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