



Report of the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Community Health Services

Adult Services Scrutiny Performance Panel – 2nd June 2021

Actions from WAO report ‘Front door to Adult Social Care’ – Recommendation: Impact of Preventative Services. Adult Services Progress Update (March 2020 – May 2021)

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To present progress update on actions taken by Adult Services to address recommendations from WAO report
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary and context of WAO Report and the recommendations presented • An update on Swansea performance against original action plan presented to panel March 2020. • Overview of further improvement actions planned and in progress
Councillors are being asked to	For information
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor Clive Lloyd: Cabinet Member Adult Social Care & Community Health Services
Lead Officer(s)	Amy Hawkins, Interim Head of Adult Services Helen St John, Interim Head of Integrated Services Lucy Friday, Principal Officer - Transformation
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1. Background

In September 2019 the Welsh Audit Office published a report “The ‘front door’ to adult social care”. The report followed a national review of the role of local authorities in considering adults’ well-being at the first point of contact and the subsequent assessment of need.

The main question for the study was: **“Are local authority first point of contact assessment and processes better meeting the needs of service users and carers in line with the commitments of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act?”** Their review sought to look at whether the changes introduced by all local authorities were addressing the new requirements of Act by looking into the following:

- “What Matters to you” assessments and whether they are comprehensive
- Ease of access to wellbeing services and care and support
- Where there has been a shift towards prevention in social care and non-social care services; and
- Impact of assessments on people’s wellbeing,
- **Across all areas there was a particular focus on carers**

Link to main WAO report: <https://www.audit.wales/publication/front-door-adult-social-care>

1.1 Conclusions and Recommendations

As reported to panel in March 2020, the WAO concluded that overall, across Wales, councils are preventing social care demand, however, information, advice and assistance are not consistently effective.

The report elaborated on this conclusion with 4 key areas of focus as summarised below:

- **Effective Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA)** is key to the successful implementation of the Act – providing people with information and advice, in a timely manner, that can help them to help themselves, prevent the escalation of need and reduce unnecessary recourse to managed care routes. WAO concluded that there was evidence of a more person centred approach, however, **there was still work to be done to promote access to the ‘front door’ to ensure all those who may benefit from IAA receive it.**
- Although Local Authorities increased their offer of preventative services there was a **wide variation in what is available across Wales. Understanding gaps in provision alongside improved co-ordination between organisations to maximise effectiveness** was noted as an area for improvement

- There was evidence of good systems to identify when individuals may require an assessment or more intensive support and help, however, they concluded that **carers were not getting the equal treatment envisaged by the Act and the provision of advocacy remained challenging.**
- Finally, **no local authorities had the balance on spend, assessments and IAA right at the time of the report.** Whilst social care assessments were showing a reduction, spend on adult social care was increasing and access to IAA was not meeting the rates equivalent to the fall in assessments.

In order to best address the general issues identified in their conclusions the following recommendations were made by WAO for local authorities across Wales:

a. Recommendation 1 - Improving Access to the Front Door

- Review current approaches, consider your audience, and ensure that good-quality information is made available in a timely manner to avoid needs deteriorating and people presenting for assistance in 'crisis';
- Work in partnership with public and third sector partners to help ensure people accessing via partner referrals, or other avenues are given the best information to help them;
- Ensure that advocacy services are commissioned and proactively offered to those who need them at first point of contact; and
- To lead on the co-ordination and editing of local information published via Dewis Cymru.

b. Recommendation 2 - Investing in prevention and understanding impact

- Map the availability of preventative services in area to better understand current levels of provision and identify gaps and duplication;
- Involve third sector partners in co-producing preventative solutions to meet people's needs and ensure people have equitable access to these services;
- Work with third sector partners to tailor and commission new services where gaps are identified; and
- Work with partners to improve data to evaluate the impact of preventative services on individuals and the population generally

2. Swansea Position and Progress against Recommendations (2020-21)

As outlined in the report presented to panel in March 2020 many of the issues raised as part of this national study had been addressed or were in development as part of the Adult Services Transformation programme alongside the Regional West Glamorgan Transformation programme.

As with the previous report, our focus for the following update will be to report on work completed and in development around the recommendations both in general terms and from the standpoint of carers.

In March 2020 we presented 9 specific actions for development* in Adult Services in line with the recommendations of the WAO report. These original actions have all been completed or progressed. In addition, further work to improve has continued over the last 12 months with many developments and changes in approach a result of our response and learning from the Covid pandemic.

***Panel report presented March 2020** ([Public Pack](#))[Agenda Document for Scrutiny Performance Panel – Adult Services, 17/03/2020 16:00 \(swansea.gov.uk\)](#)

2.1 Recommendation 1 : Improving access to the front door

Public information – our approach, partnership working and supporting systems

The 2020 COVID pandemic highlighted a greater importance on staying safe at home, the promotion of independent living, supporting people to stay local and utilising their own resources has been essential to maximising wellbeing and safety against the risk of viral contamination.

Collaborative Communication training of strength based outcomes has provided the workforce with a skilled approach to positive discussions with citizens at this difficult time. The COVID 19 restrictions and service delivery guidelines has diverted traditionally approached care solutions into smarter conversations to promote wellbeing at a distance.

The Common Access Point (CAP) in Adult Services has continued to be at the forefront of this approach – the team have been bolstered with additional resource during the pandemic and through close connections with third sector colleagues, Neighbourhood Development Officers alongside the Local Area Co-ordination Team have been able to expand and improve processes of referral to community based resources.

In addition to CAP, access to information on and referral routes to community based resources has been successfully extended to Swansea's Hospital discharge pathway.

Swansea Council for Voluntary Service (SCVS) working alongside Swansea Integrated teams have established a direct referral route for a range of services ranging from food delivery to befriending and financial advice support often volunteer led and community specific.

These referrals can be made at any point during a person or carers stay in hospital and following their discharge home. Therapists, nurses, Social

Workers and community care teams are all able to refer to these resources or signpost individuals to access the information themselves.

The changing nature and altered availability of community based resources during the pandemic has meant that more than ever the information shared with people and carers regarding alternative sources of support and referral routes has needed to be kept up to date. Public information available to all has been available online via Swansea's public website which also links to SCVS website with individual contacts and resources detailed for each ward within Swansea. This information was scaled up considerably to manage the demand during Covid and to reflect the range of community led support.

Dewis Cymru also provides an online library of community assets with contact information and organisational information maintained by the organisations as and when changes to provision occur. To ensure we are maximising this information the system is linked to **Infoengine**, also utilised by many third sector organisations to share information across both databases. There are currently 578 different organisations and groups listed across these platforms.

Independent Professional Advocacy Services were successfully commissioned by Swansea via Mental Health Matters Wales in 2019. The service is accessible to all eligible clients including unpaid carers. This service ensures an Independent Professional Advocacy Service is available to those entering into or already engaged with Social Services. This service is available when a person/carer can only overcome the barrier(s) to participate fully in the assessment, care & support planning, review & safeguarding processes with assistance from an appropriate individual, but there is no appropriate individual available.

Since commissioning the service in 2019, 28 parent carers have received advocacy support between October 2019 and September 2020.

Carer Specific Improvement Updates: In addition to the above there was an acknowledgment that there was a need to improve our front door arrangements for carers.

The improvements listed above have been extended to all enquiries received at both the front door and community teams in respect of carer's information. Alongside this improvement work, a West Glamorgan Regional Carers Strategy has been developed with carers, regional partners across both Swansea and Neath Port Talbot Local Authorities, Swansea Bay University Health Board and Swansea and Neath Port Talbot Councils for Voluntary Services/Third Sector over the last 12 months.

The West Glamorgan Regional Carers Strategy and the supporting Quick Reference Guide document can be found under **Appendix 1**. These

documents have been developed by the Regional Carers Partnership Board.

The Regional Carers Strategy defines a five-year strategy for carers in West Glamorgan and establishes a clear, concise vision statement and mission statement which will guide local plans and actions over the next five years.

The regional strategy will be endorsed by all partners through their own processes and for Swansea will go through Cabinet in June 2021

The agreed vision we are all working to is that;

Carers are identified, recognised and supported to care. They have a life alongside caring and have a feeling of well-being throughout their caring journey.

The regional work has informed a Swansea Implementation Action Plan, which will be led by Adult Services on behalf of the whole Council and is currently in development.

The priorities in the Swansea Carers Implementation Action plan are;

- Identifying and recognising carers – all carers deserve to be recognised and supported to continue to care.
- Supporting life alongside caring – all carers must have reasonable breaks from their caring role to enable them to maintain their capacity to care and have a life beyond caring.
- Providing information, advice and assistance – it is important that all carers receive the right information and advice when needed.
- Supporting carers in education and the workplace – employers and educational / training setting should be supported to adapt their policies and practices enabling carers to work and learn alongside their caring role.
- Development of the National Charter for Carers.

The associated actions included within this plan is to improve Carer Awareness, information, training for staff and ultimately a measured increase in the number of Carers Assessments completed.

Information available to staff, partners and public around Carers guidance originally intended for completion in 20/21 utilising Intermediate Care Funding was unfortunately suspended due to Covid, however, the project will be revisited as part of the planned work for 21/22 locally. This will include mapping all current routes to IAA for carers and an update to existing Carer information online working closely with carers to develop meaningful content and appropriate approaches.

There has however already begun a targeted approach to promote 'carers conversations' across the whole Adult Services workforce.

Carers Awareness training facilitated by Carers Wales to all staff groups has commenced. Phase 1 of this training has been completed in May 21 with Phase 2 aimed at Social Work Practitioners specifically to increase confidence in completing carers wellbeing needs assessments due to commence in July 21.

In addition to the above the local action plan also aims to re-establish Carers Champion roles across the Adult Services workforce to support and continue the work of the local action plan and priorities.

2.2 Recommendation 2 : Investing in Prevention and understanding impact

The Adult Services Service model continues to focus upon wellbeing and building resilient communities through a commitment to early intervention, prevention and enablement.

We have an established Local Area Coordination (LAC) team which has been expanded further in the last 12 months to a total of 22 members of staff. The Local Area Coordinators endorse our preventative approach which recognises and cultivates the many strengths in communities and individuals. People are supported both before and at our front door with the offer of early help which can delay or prevent the need for statutory services.

The team have continued to work closely with third sector colleagues and as mentioned in response to recommendation 1 the joint working across LAC and Neighbourhood Development officers (SCVS) as well as access to the wider resources across the Third Sector have increased during the pandemic period. This has been supported by both the Regional Rapid Discharge model and the Transformation programme – Our Neighbourhood Approach (ONA). Funding available through both programmes from Welsh Government has enabled the expansion of resources and further development of the model.

For 21/22 the focus for the ONA programme will shift heavily on understanding the impact of these interventions so that we are able to best inform our exit strategy.

To assist in this work an evaluation of the work of Local Area Coordination is being carried out during 2021, building on the initial evaluation from 2016 to critically examine the evidence-base of characteristics, activities and outcomes of Area Coordination in Swansea and measure its effectiveness.

SCVS and NPT CVS have also used funding available to invest in Charity Log an online system designed for volunteer management which also

lends itself to capturing both qualitative and quantitative outcomes within the ONA programme.

Carer Specific Improvement Updates: As previously referenced the Swansea Carers Action plan has interpreted the regional strategy to Swansea specific improvements. Elements of information and of provision / specific support for carers have already progressed as mentioned but the group recognises the longer term strategic work required to understand future commissioning opportunities.

Utilising the information gleaned from the community based work of LAC and ONA programmes outcome measures will also help to inform this work.

The approach of the Swansea Carers strategy will be co-production to develop future models for service delivery and commissioning plans – building on links already established via regional work streams with the Regional Carers Forum as well as local groups such as Swansea Parent Carer Forum, Swansea Carers centre and YMCA young carers group, representatives will work together with the third sector and integrated teams to progress the regional strategy for Swansea.

3. Conclusions

Work around all areas highlighted to panel in March 2020 have progressed significantly or been completed. Above and beyond the actions presented further development of preventative services and access to our own 'front door' have been expanded in response to the Covid pandemic. This has presented further opportunities for change and improvement particularly in respect of our carer's information, access and support.

These opportunities will be taken forward by the Swansea carer's action plan and regional carer's strategy.

The ongoing work of regional programmes and local projects under the Adult Services Transformation programme will ensure delivery against the Swansea action plan for Carers.

This progress will be monitored under the governance structure of both the Regional work streams and Adult Services transformation programme for 21/22.

Regional Carers Strategy Quick Reference Guide

Our Mission

We will work together to improve the wellbeing of carers in West Glamorgan by listening, being supportive and delivering changes through the Regional Partnership that meet the rights and needs of carers.

Our Vision

Unpaid Carers are identified, recognised and supported to care. They have a life alongside caring and have a feeling of well-being, throughout their caring journey.

Our Values

-  Carers are treated with kindness, dignity and respect.
-  Working with carers will be built on a foundation of honesty and integrity to foster trusting relationships.
-  Carers are empowered to speak up for themselves and the person they care for if/when needed.
-  Carers are respected as experts by experience and specialists in the wellbeing of the person they care for.
-  Carers are equal partners in discussions about their needs.
-  Carers are supported to achieve equity to enable them to make informed decisions and enhance their well-being.
-  Carers' rights are upheld by making consistent, reliable, fair and just decisions.
-  Carers and organisations/services learn together through experience, empathy and partnership.

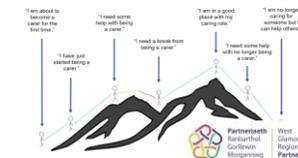
How we understand caring situations

Caring scenarios are based on...						
Your age group <i>What stage of life?</i>	Child	Young Person	Adult	Older Adult		
Your relationship <i>Who are you caring for?</i>	Parent / Grandparent	Sibling	Child / Grandchild	Spouse / partner	Unrelated (e.g. neighbour)	
Your situation <i>What is your life like?</i>	Caring for multiple individuals	Working	Unemployed / retired	In education	Living separately to cared-for individual	Living with a disability or illness

The Social Services and

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How we understand the caring journey



The caring journey can be difficult and

Our themes

Theme	Carers View	What does this mean?	Outcomes	Regional Objectives
Balancing priorities	<i>Carers value having a break from caring</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better range and quality of services to meet carers' needs for a break e.g. respite More flexibility and choice More support to enable carers to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carers have flexible and responsive respite opportunities. Carers have support with developing contingency plans. Carers have access to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map existing respite provision and innovation opportunities to agree regional approach/principles to respite

Theme	Carers View	What does this mean?	Outcomes	Regional Objectives
		<p>access social and leisure opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More opportunities to ‘take a break’ • Support to enable carers to access work, education or volunteering 	<p>wellbeing workshops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers have workplace and educational support 	<p>and short breaks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key areas where representation is needed on Carers Partnership Board e.g. education. • Establish processes for connecting the Carers Liaison Forum to governance structures e.g. representatives on CPB and RPB. • Support the introduction of contingency planning tools and support for completion. • Prioritise and promote initiatives that support carer wellbeing.
<p>Supporting each other</p>	<p><i>Carers value support from other carers</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More networking and interaction • More peer support and community-based or local services • Better channels for engagement • Raised awareness of carers’ issues/stories • Enabling digital inclusion for carers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers have opportunities to meet each other • Carer led groups are commonplace 	<p>Establish a Carers Liaison Forum and grow membership of individuals and carer groups. Establish carer groups for staff in all statutory partner organisations and encourage employers across the region to do the same.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map carers support groups and networks across the region.

Theme	Carers View	What does this mean?	Outcomes	Regional Objectives
Information and advice	<i>Carers value the right information and advice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance is easy to access and understand (clear & concise) • Different organisations “on the same page” • Guidance is signposted/easily accessible • A single point of contact for information on what help is available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers are informed of their rights. • Carers have dedicated and tailored information and advice portals/places across all statutory providers. • Carers have information and advice about contingency planning • Carers are informed about Assessments and how they can be of benefit. • Easy read options and minority languages are catered for. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop regional information and advice initiatives e.g. rights, carers assessments, direct payments, etc. • All regional carers document to be available in Welsh, Easy read and other minority languages common in West Glamorgan communities. • Establish a “one stop shop” of digital information sources.
Identified and recognised	<i>Carers value being recognised for being a carer</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionals (e.g. Doctors, pharmacists, front line staff) are more aware of carers and their rights • New carers understand what it means to be a carer • Promotion of statutory services for carers to all parties • Carers are encouraged to self-identify as a carer. • Carers are valued as expert partners in care and included in conversations and decision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers are recognised even if they don't self-identify • Carers are actively identified by organisations and staff supporting them. • There is shared responsibility across and within organisations for identifying carers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain regional data set on the demography of carers in West Glamorgan • Identify key points of contact where carers can be identified and establish regional approach for signposting to information, advice and support. • Support the introduction of Carer Aware training schemes.

Theme	Carers View	What does this mean?	Outcomes	Regional Objectives
Dignity and Respect	<i>Carers value being treated appropriately for being a carer</i>	<p>making.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviours from staff include empathy • Attitudes from staff include respect • Actions include meaningful listening • Aligned with United Nations Conventions and Principles • Partnerships means consistency in how carers are treated across professions and the region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers are recognised as experts by experience • Awareness of Carers is commonplace • Standard approaches across department's e.g. schools, IAA services, hospital discharge. • There are consistent approaches across and within organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a carers' charter for organisations to sign up to across the region. • Develop and promote rights awareness information. • Develop a library of carers' stories that support engagement and promotion of carers services and support.
Support services	<i>Carers value help in understanding their rights and</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely access to Carers Needs Assessment / Carers Support Plan • Responsive Housing support (e.g. adaption of homes) • Consistent and timely Education support (e.g. for young carers struggling at school or adult learners) • Timely and accessible Transport support (e.g. carers who live in a different location to the cared-for person) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New developments and changes are co-produced with carers. • Carers services are funded sustainably • Carers are actively offered direct payments • Carers positive and negative experiences are used to inform service improvement • Carers have responsive and flexible access to mental health and well-being services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission Carers Services in line with themes and priorities. • Refresh carers services mapping and identify potential gaps or opportunities. • Define and implement a regional approach to direct payments for carers. • Promote the Carer Liaison Forum as an established group for partners to involve in their co-production opportunities. • Develop a regional approach to

Theme	Carers View	What does this mean?	Outcomes	Regional Objectives
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learning from common challenges faced by carers in accessing and using services.