

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act Prevention Services Briefing

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to brief the Children and Young Person's Scrutiny Committee Members on the work undertaken across Cardiff and Vale region to address the requirements set out in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 to plan and promote preventative services.
2. The report will also include information on *Dewis Cymru* which provides a central place where information about well-being can be accessed by members of the public and professionals across Wales.
3. The report outlines the work of the regional Social Services Planning and Promoting Preventative Services Task and Finish Group and provides a short summary of the development of Cardiff's Early Help Strategy.

Background information on the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act (The Act)

4. The Act 2014 radically transforms the way social services are delivered in Wales, ensuring they meet the needs of individuals, giving people a voice in how Social Services assess and deliver their care and support and ensuring services are sustainable for the future.
5. It focuses on earlier intervention, increasing preventative services in the community, helping people maintain their independence and enabling people to get the help they need before their situation becomes critical. This will help to reduce pressure on more costly statutory services.
6. Additionally the Act:
 - ensures easy access to information and advice is available to all
 - Introduces new eligibility criteria focused on individual need, replacing the current threshold system
 - Introduces portable assessments, so people who move from one part of Wales to another will receive the services they need in their new area without immediately having to undergo a new assessment

- Introduces new arrangements so that, if they want to, young people will be supported to stay with their foster carers until they reach 21 (or 25 if they are in education or training)
- Requires local authorities and health boards to come together in new statutory partnerships to drive integration, innovation and service change.

Dewis Cymru

7. Dewis is the place for information and advice regarding well-being in Wales and helps people find what they need to know for both themselves and the person they may care for. The resource originally developed across North Wales is now being adopted by the other regions across Wales and was launched in Cardiff & the Vale of Glamorgan in April 2016. To view Dewis please go to www.dewis.wales
8. Dewis Cymru promotes people's well-being by making it easier for them to find out about how to improve their well-being, and the sources of advice and support which can help them. It is also intended to support the successful delivery of the new requirements placed on local authorities, around Information, Advice and Assistance, as set out Part 2 of the Act.
9. Dewis has two parts. The first is a narrative content, to help people identify their own needs; the second part is the resource directory. The resource directory has all services on an equal footing; a resource can be a lunch club or a commissioned service. As part of the development they have developed the search facility with feedback to make improvements. The resource directory includes a range of resources; these may be Community services, Health services, Local Authority services, Third Sector services as well as commercial services. Our local site includes the Family Support Directory held on the Family Information Service (FIS) website and provides a link to FIS.
10. Each entry in the Resource Directory include a large amount of information answering the following key questions:
 - What is it?
 - Who is it for?
 - Is there a cost? If so how much?
 - How to contact?
 - Where the resource is? Geographical area covered (currently down to Ward level, maybe possible to go to Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) level)

Each resource will have to be reviewed at least twice a year, though this can be more frequently if providers decide. Reminder emails will be sent to providers when any resources that have been logged on Dewis are due to be reviewed.

The Act's requirements for the Provision of Preventative Services

11. Linked to local assessment, local authorities are also required to provide or arrange for the provision of preventative services in order to, for example:

- Help prevent or delay the development of people's needs which require care and support;
- Reduce the needs for care and support for those who have these needs;
- Promote the upbringing of children by their families, when it is consistent with the wellbeing of the child;
- Prevent people from suffering abuse or neglect;
- Enable people to live as independently as possible;
- Reduce the need for,
 - Care of supervision orders under the Children Act 1989
 - Criminal proceedings against children
 - Proceedings which may lead to children being placed into local authority care.

In order to do the above, the local authority must pay attention to existing services and which make the best use of resources available. The local authority has the duty to promote the third sector in the provisions of their areas of care.

12. The Act reinforces a partnership approach to prevention and a recognition that developing and delivering preventative services can only occur through the local authority working closely with key relevant partners. Indeed, the whole local authority, not just social services needs to have a stake, and in terms of assistance to improve well-being, people may well require input from a variety of different key sectors, community and local businesses.

13. The Act brings in new duties to promote not for profit organisations to provide Preventative services which include social enterprises, co-operatives, user-led services and the third sector. The NHS also has a key role to play in terms of preventing and managing health issues for adults and children in line with "prudent health care." The contribution to prevention made by other statutory services such as the police, the fire service and schools is also very important.

Planning and Promoting Preventative Services Task Group

14. A regional Planning and Promoting Preventatives Services Task and Finish Group has been operational since September 2015 to support the implementation of the Act. The group is co-chaired by Angela Bourge, Operational Manager for Strategy, Commissioning & Resources (Cardiff) and Suzann Clifton – Head of Service for Business & Innovation (Vale of Glamorgan). The group takes its membership from a range of statutory and voluntary sector organisations that are engaged in delivering or supporting the delivery of preventative services for adults and children across the region.
15. As part of the work of the task and Finish Group, a *Briefing Report on the Current Position in relation to Preventative Services across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan* was produced by Val Connors (Practice Solutions) who provided a resource to the group. The purpose of the report was to describe the current position with regard to preventative services across the region, as well as setting out the linkages to other relevant areas of the Act Implementation. It identified key actions to take forward the preventative agenda across the region. The full briefing is located at **Appendix A** of this report for information.
16. The briefing report clarified that “*Prevention*” is a term that is used increasingly frequently when describing health and social care services and policy. However, there is no definition or consensus as to what constitutes ‘preventive services’. It recognised that this lack of clarity is further compounded by the haziness around the boundary between health and social care and between social care and wider community services such as housing and transport.
17. The report recognised that at its simplest, taking a preventative approach means building a stronger community infrastructure in neighbourhoods/localities and providing accessible public services for vulnerable adults to reduce, delay or prevent them from becoming socially excluded and needing more intensive, costly support. Its primary focus is not personal care for those with substantial and complex needs and it is not a simple re-labelling of existing traditional low level services, e.g. laundry services, meals-on-wheels.
18. However, the report identified that from a narrow perspective, a preventive service may be one that aims to prevent or delay a specific condition or outcome. An example, it could be a service that aims to prevent admission to hospital because of a fall, where there is a well-defined outcome. A holistic or whole-systems approach to prevention carries within it both the idea of inclusion and engagement. It adds value to the social cohesion agenda, by delivering services and support that help to create and strengthen the ‘glue’ that binds communities together. People are enabled and supported to maintain and improve their own wellbeing, that of their families, neighbours

and local communities. Using a wider definition, the report recognised that prevention includes activity that enhances and extends quality of life.

19. The Planning and Promoting Preventative Services Task and Finish Group considered the findings of the briefing report and convened a workshop in April 2016 to consider two of its strategic recommendations and how these should be taken forward.

- The development of a joint prevention strategy with all key partners and stakeholders and,
- Consideration of the arrangements required to develop a joint commissioning approach which supports the shift in health and social care towards prevention and early intervention.

20. Members of the Task and Finish Group who attended the workshop identified that in order for these strategic recommendations to be progressed the following conditions needed to be promoted in order to achieve success:

- **Conditions for creating an effective Preventative Strategy**
 - Co-operation and collaboration between partner agencies at the most senior level as well as operational levels
 - A commitment to join up cross-cutting work-streams to achieved better synergy (e.g. tackling Poverty programmes / Future generations Act / Social services & Well-being Act)
 - Recognition of the role of the independent sector
 - Actively promote and support Social Enterprise
 - Recognition that prevention is everybody's business, recognising the different levels of prevention (e.g. primary, secondary & tertiary)
 - Commitment to Co-production
 - Recognition that there may need to agree an invest to save arrangement where money freed up from provision of services for people with complex needs is reinvested to strengthen preventative services
 - Think Family Approach
- **Conditions for creating joint commissioning that supports prevention & early intervention**
 - Robust governance arrangements need to be in place that promote an outcome focussed approach to commissioning.
 - Pooled budgets are not always necessary – we need to start the process with small, manageable steps that do not create further barriers for progressing the joint-commissioning agenda but act as enablers
 - An understanding that commissioning for early intervention is different to commissioning for complex needs and that it may not always end up with the procurement of services

- We need to develop a more co-operative approach that promotes co-production

21. The feedback from the workshop has been shared with the Regional Steering Group and at the time of writing this report, consideration is being given to how best to take this work forward. There are clearly some merits in bringing together current preventative work-streams that focus on either children & families or adults to provide an all-inclusive population approach. However, consideration is also being given to how we can continue to promote the preventative agenda at a local level where significant progress has already been made in some areas (for example, Cardiff's well established Early Help Strategy) whilst maximising the benefits of planning, promoting and commissioning preventative services on a regional basis where it is appropriate and practicable to do so.

Cardiff Children's Early Help Strategy

22. In Cardiff, the Children's Early Help Strategy is a positive example of how key organisations across the Partnership have come together to support families in caring for children which is clearly emphasised by the Act, with a focus on helping parents develop their own ability to identify and manage problems, keeping families together in a safe, supportive and stable environment. A copy of the Early Help Strategy is located at **Appendix B** for information.

23. The Act identifies specific areas for focus when considering preventative services for children and families. These are:

- The importance of cross agency work to prevent children from suffering from abuse or neglect
- The importance of preventing or delaying circumstances that might lead to a child or young person being looked after by a local authority
- The importance in youth justice to prevent offending or re-offending by children and young people
- It is clear that children and families present a wide range of areas for preventative activity and there is already considerable experience to be drawn from national programmes such as Flying Start and Families

24. The Early Intervention & Prevention Steering Group has developed the Early Help Strategy to promote and facilitate intervening early and as soon as possible to tackle problems emerging for children, young people and their families.

25. Engagement of partners in the Steering Group has been positive and work has been undertaken to develop a common language that describes preventative support as “Early Help” with a focus on support rather than assessment. It promotes the right conversations taking place at the right time, between the right people. The Strategy was successfully launched in September 2015 with all key partners who are represented on the Vulnerable Children and Families Programme Board physically signing up to it and wider partners pledging their commitment to adopting the early help approach.
26. The Early Help Strategy recognises that all organisations in the Cardiff partnership share in the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Working alongside other agencies is extremely effective for improving outcomes for children due to the cross cutting themes that organisations are able to come together over. It’s by coming together to share information and raise concerns that we can increase the likelihood of protecting children from harm and promoting their welfare so that fewer children suffer from significant harm.
27. In order to strengthen the approach to Early Help across the Partnership and to secure the timeliness of progress against the key tasks required for the successful implementation of the Early Help Strategy, Children’s Services reconfigured existing funding to create a dedicated post that is responsible for progressing actions set out in the Implementation Plan located in the Appendix of the Strategy Document (located at **Appendix B** of this report) - The Prevention & Partnerships - Improvement Project Manager leads on the development of Cardiff’s Early Help Strategy, promoting best practice in the delivery of Early Help Services across Cardiff and facilitating effective partnership working in the delivery of Early Help Provision.
28. The transfer of the administration of the Families First Grant to Children’s Services earlier this year has strengthened the links between Families First services and the Early Help Strategy and their interface with Children’s Services. This is viewed by Families First providers and Children’s Services as a very positive development that promotes stronger joint-working arrangements around step-up and step-down arrangements between preventative and statutory services.
29. The Strategy focuses on two strategic objectives and thereby achieving two strategic outcomes, namely:
- **Strategic Objective 1** - Ensure that children & young people receive help at the lowest level or intervention that is safe and effective in promoting good outcomes.

- **Strategic Objective 2** - Maximise the impact of Children's (Social) Services by strengthening the effectiveness of social work intervention and specialist / targeted family support.

30. Actions that address the requirements set out in the two key objectives above are detailed in the summary work plan located in Appendix G of the Strategy Document located at **Appendix 1**. It is expected that these actions will contribute to achieving the following strategic outcomes:

- **Strategic Outcome 1** - To reduce the number of children, young people and their families requiring support at the "remedial" end of the Cardiff continuum of support to families (See Appendix D in the Strategy Document located at Appendix 1 – Spectrum of Need and Services for details).
- **Strategic Outcome 2** - To narrow the gaps for children and young people, at risk of poor outcomes, in Cardiff and their peers.

31. It is anticipated that over the next three years the implementation of the Early Help Strategy and its early intervention approach will achieve a 5% reduction in Cardiff's Looked after Children Population resulting in a £1,274,000 saving for the Local Authority.

32. Savings of this order has been achieved by other Local Authorities that have brought together a suite of strategies combining the efforts of partners by focusing everyone who works with children and young people on a common goal of prevention. Local Authorities that have already adopted this approach have reduced the need to spend large sums on a few children with poor overall outcomes. Instead they spend lower cost effective sums on a wider population of children whilst securing better outcomes. This has resulted in fewer children's needs being met through the court arena, in the Looked After system or in the criminal justice system with more children being able to enjoy family life in their own homes.

33. Progress against the key actions outlined in the plan is monitored via the Early Intervention and Prevention Steering Group with regular updates to the Vulnerable Children and Families Programme Board.