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Primary and Community Care
Development and Innovation Hub
Developing Primary Care in Wales

CLUSTER WORKING IN WALES

Working in Wales: Policy & Strategic Context

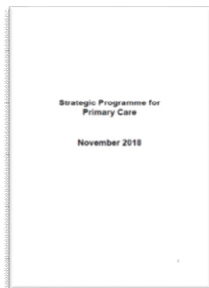
*Part of a set of 3 handbooks for new Cluster Leads
and other staff working in or with clusters*

October 2019

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Policy and strategy context in Wales

The following two pages provide a brief summary of the key policy and strategies, presented in date order, that have guided developments in primary care over recent years.



The [*Strategic Programme for Primary Care*](#) 2018 was developed following the publication of *A Healthier Wales*. It sets out the [*programme*](#) for primary care and the key work streams required to progress this work. The programme describes the continuation of previous work, recognising the need for increased pace and scale and details the new work needed to fully implement the [*Primary Care Model for Wales*](#).



[*A Healthier Wales*](#) published in response to the [*Parliamentary Review of Health and Social Care in Wales*](#). It sets out the long-term future vision of a whole system approach to health and social care through a model focussed on health, well-being, and preventing illness. The plan is based on the quadruple aim, improved population health and wellbeing; better quality and more accessible health and social care services; higher value health and social care; and a motivated and sustainable health and social care workforce.



[*Prosperity for All: the national strategy*](#) sets out how the commitments in [*Taking Wales Forward*](#) will be delivered by bringing together the efforts of the whole Welsh public sector.



[*Inquiry into Primary Care Clusters*](#) (2017) investigated and reported on the model of cluster working in delivering improved services to patients. The inquiry heard evidence from a wide range of health care organisations, professional groups and individual clinical staff. The inquiry concluded that further work is required in order to realise the ambitions for systematic change that meets local need. A suite of 18 recommendations was made.



[*Taking Wales Forward*](#) 2017 describes a 5-year programme for government outlining commitments to build a united, connected and sustainable Wales

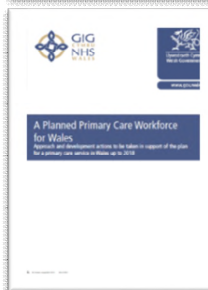
A: Policy and strategy context in Wales



The [Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act](#) came in force in April 2016. Made up of 11 sections, it provides a legal framework for social services law. The Act sets out duties on local authorities, health boards and Welsh Ministers, requiring them to promote the well-being of those who need care and support, or carers who need support within their work.



The [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act](#) 2015 is legislation that aims to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act also provides a key link to other legislation in Wales, including the *Public Health (Wales) Act*, *Equality Act*, *Planning (Wales) Act*, *Active Travel (Wales) Act*, *Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act* and *Housing (Wales) Act*.



[A Planned Primary Care Workforce for Wales](#) (2015) describes the actions needed to develop the primary care workforce in Wales, in order to progress the plan for Primary Care.



[Our Plan for a Primary Care Service in Wales](#) (2014) sets out a social model of health, promoting physical, mental and social well-being. It aims to draw in all relevant organisations, services and people to ensure the root causes of poor health are addressed. Five priority areas are identified to help organisations plan their approach to primary care: planning care locally, improving access and quality, equitable access, a skilled local workforce and strong leadership.



Launched in 2014, [Prudent Healthcare](#) is defined as healthcare which is conceived, managed and delivered in a cautious and wise way, characterised by forethought, vigilance and careful budgeting, which achieves tangible benefits and quality outcomes for patient. Prudent Principles include achieving health and wellbeing through co-production; care for those with the greatest health need first; do only what is needed and do no harm; reduce inappropriate variation using evidence-based practice.

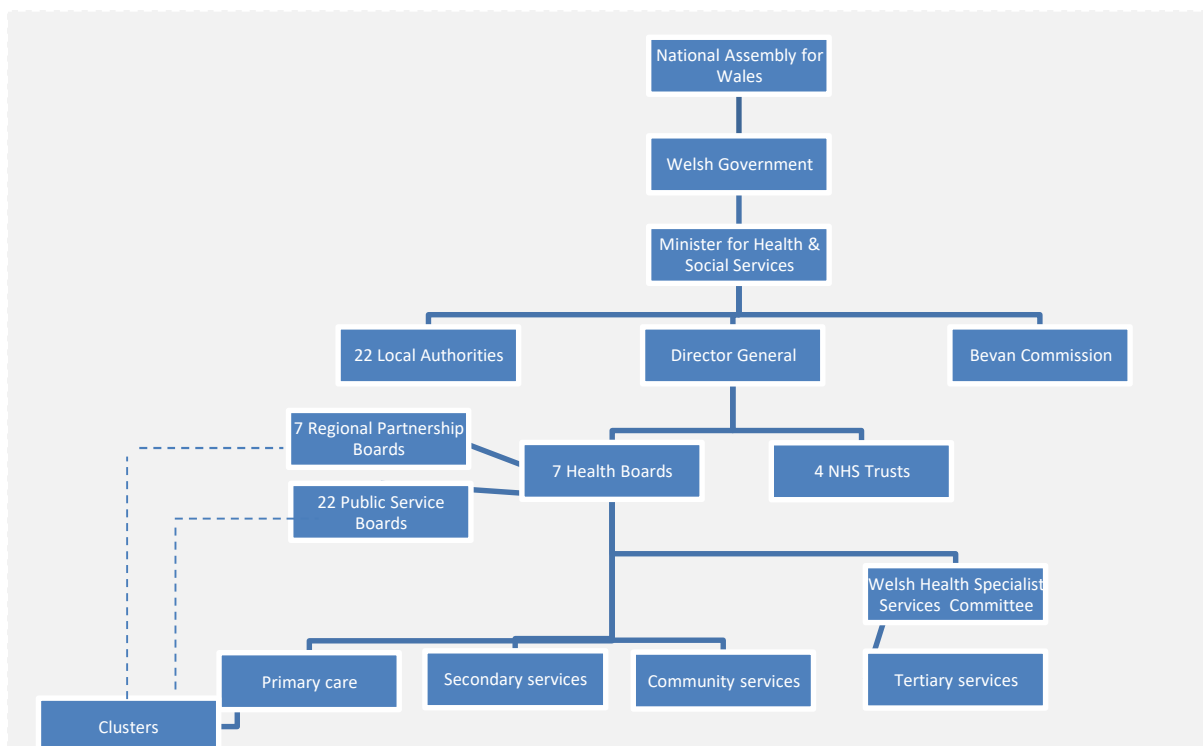
B: Governance of the health & care system

Working with the UK Government

Despite powers vested in the National Assembly for Wales and the Welsh Government, the UK Government maintains an influence over Welsh affairs and UK Parliament can still legislate in all areas relating to Wales. By agreement, it does not legislate on devolved matters without obtaining the consent of the National Assembly for Wales first. In relation to the health system examples of areas which are not devolved include; relations with the EU, regulation of doctors or dentists and the health, safety and medicines.

For further information about UK law and the health system click [here](#).

Figure illustrating how healthcare in Wales is structured



Information about the structure of healthcare in Wales can be found at:

- [NHS Wales: Structure](#)
- [BMA Cymru Wales: How healthcare in Wales is structured](#)

National Assembly for Wales



The National Assembly for Wales, consisting of 60 Assembly Members (AMs) and 40 Members of Parliament (MPs), is the elected body representing the interests of Wales.

The Assembly develops and scrutinises Welsh Government policy and performance, agrees Welsh taxes and has the right to pass laws (known as Assembly Acts) on devolved matters. In relation to the health system, excluding the areas overlaid reserved for UK law, the National Assembly for Wales can make laws for Wales for all matters relating to health and health services.

For further information about the National Assembly for Wales click [here](#).

Welsh Government



The Welsh Government is the devolved Government for Wales. It consists of the First Minister, Cabinet Secretaries, Welsh Ministers and the Counsel General, who are supported by civil servants working across devolved areas including health. It sets the national agenda for Wales and has a range of powers including the distribution of Wales's budget.

The Minister for Health and Social Services is responsible for the delivery of health services and is held to account by the National Assembly for Wales, and the Health and Social Care Committee. The National Advisory Board provides the Minister with advice on setting NHS priorities. The Department of Health and Social Services has responsibility for both health and social care. The department sets out the Minister's expectations of the NHS through frameworks and timelines. The Director General of the department is also the Chief Executive of the NHS in Wales.

For further information about the Welsh Government for Wales click [here](#).

Regional Partnership Boards

In April 2016, as a result of the [Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014](#), seven statutory Regional Partnership Boards (RPBs) were established. Each RPB reflects the health board geographical boundaries and provides leadership, planning and delivery of integrated health and social services. Membership must include elected representatives from the local authority, local health board, two third sector organisations, a representative of people with care and support needs and a representative of carers with additional co-opted members if appropriate. The expectation of engagement between RPBs and clusters is set out in [A Healthier Wales](#).

Individual RPB information can be found at:

- [Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Integrated Health and Social Care Partnership](#)
- [Cwm Taf Morgannwg](#) (Rhondda Cynon Taf & Merthyr)
- [Gwent](#)
- [North Wales Social Care and Well-being Improvement Collaborative](#)
- [Powys](#)
- [West Glamorgan](#) (Neath Port Talbot & Swansea)
- [West Wales Care Partnership](#) (Pembrokeshire, Carmarthen and Ceredigion)

For more information...

- [Key information on Regional Partnership Boards \(RPBs\) for clusters](#)
- [Map](#) of RPBs in relation to health board and local authority boundaries
- [Welsh Health Circular WHC \(2016\) 028](#)

Public Services Boards

Each of the 22 local authority areas in Wales has a Public Service Board (PSB). The purpose of the PSB is to assess the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in its area. In relation to the health system, each PSB develops a local well-being plan. This sets out the objectives, delivered through joint working across public services to maximize the PSB's contribution to the well-being goals set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The statutory members of a PSB are the local authority, the local health board, the fire and rescue authority and Natural Resources Wales. The following are also invited to participate: Welsh Ministers, Chief Constables, the Police and Crime Commissioner, certain probation services and at least one body representing relevant voluntary organisations. For further information about the PSBs and local well-being plans click [here](#).

NHS Wales

NHS Wales delivers services through seven health boards and four NHS Trusts in Wales.

Health Boards

Established in October 2009, the seven health boards in Wales have a statutory responsibility for the provision of health care services within their area. They are responsible for planning, funding and delivering health care services including primary care such as General Medical Services and services contracted through pharmacies, dentists, optometrists and community services.

Leadership and governance in each health board is provided by a Chairman, Chief Executive and supported by an Executive Board, which comprises of individuals from a range of backgrounds and areas of expertise. The Board provides corporate responsibility for all decisions and plays a key role in monitoring the performance of the organisation. A Senior Management Team supports the Board.

Information about each health board can be found at:

- [Aneurin Bevan University Health Board](#)
- [Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board](#)
- [Cardiff & Vale University Health Board](#)
- [Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board](#)
- [Hywel Dda University Health Board](#)
- [Powys Teaching Health Board](#)
- [Swansea Bay University Health Board](#)

Further information about key roles in your health board is covered in the **Who's who** section of the **Resources to help develop your cluster handbook**.

NHS Trusts

There are currently four NHS Trusts in Wales with a Wales wide focus:

- The [Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust](#)
- [Velindre NHS Trust](#)
- [Public Health Wales](#)
- [Health Education and Improvement Wales \(HEIW\)](#)

Each Trust's function(s) is detailed under **Health and care providers** section.

Local Authorities

Providing over 700 services across Wales, local authorities (councils) provide the local leadership and a range of services for their communities. Some are statutory or regulatory which means that they must provide, for example, social care, environmental health inspection, refuse collection and planning. Others are discretionary, which councils may choose to provide, such as the promotion of tourism, leisure and art centres. Many of the services provided by local authorities can affect or support both health and the wider determinants of health such as education, housing and social services.

For more information:

- Local Authorities and the services they provide [here](#).
- Individual Local Authorities click [here](#)

Inspection and regulation bodies

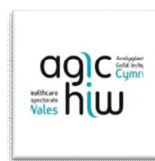
Healthcare is managed and regulated differently in England, Scotland and Wales.

Within Wales, various regulators have powers to secure improvement and/or justice. Some regulators may have patient/service user safety within their remit and powers to secure justice. Where regulators do not have these powers, the [Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#) may get involved, investigate or take action.

Within Wales there are two main regulators for health and social care:



[Care Inspectorate Wales \(CIW\)](#)



[Healthcare Inspectorate Wales \(HIW\)](#)

Medicines, medical devices, blood and blood products are regulated by the UK wide [Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency \(MHRA\)](#).



In addition to these three regulatory bodies, there are a number of professional regulatory bodies which aim to ensure that proper standards are maintained by health and social care professionals. The roles and links to the health and social care regulators, professional bodies and others can be found [here](#).





Health & care providers in Wales

Across Wales, care to support health and well-being is provided by a variety of providers. The main providers of care tend to be within the NHS family or from local authority social services. The third sector (charities, voluntary organisations and community agencies) play a vital role in supporting the health and well-being of our population and this role is expanding very quickly with increasing demand on all care providers.

This section covers some of the main functions of the health and care providers in Wales.

Primary care independent contractors

Primary care services are provided by a wide range of different staff. Some staff groups work as independent contractors, rather than being directly employed by health boards namely GPs, dentists, community pharmacists and optometrists.

	General Practice There are 419 General Practices in Wales providing a range of NHS services according to the General Medical Services (GMS) contract, which came into effect in April 2004.
	Dentists NHS services are provided by 441 Dental Practices in Wales. Services provided are outlined by dental regulations in Wales. A national programme Designed to Smile works with NHS Dental Practices in Wales to increase dental attendance in early childhood.
	Community pharmacists 716 community pharmacies are located across Wales, providing a range of NHS services in accordance with the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework , which came into effect in April 2005. In Wales, every eligible community pharmacy offers the NHS Choose Pharmacy Common Ailment Service , which can be accessed by any patient who lives in Wales or who is registered to a Welsh GP.
	Optometrists Based in the community, 352 optometrists, also known as ophthalmic opticians, provide NHS eye tests according to the General Ophthalmic Services (GOS) contract. In addition, the majority of optometrists also offer the Wales Eye Care Service , consisting of the Low Vision Service Wales and the Eye Health Examinations Wales scheme.

data correct Feb 2019

A summary of the independent provider contracts in Wales can be found [here](#).

Out of hours services



Out of Hours Services provide health care for urgent medical problems outside normal surgery hours, which are usually Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.30pm (excluding bank and public holidays).

The service is provided differently in different parts of Wales and may include GPs and/or teams of healthcare professionals. Out of Hours Services may be based in primary care centres, A&E departments, or Minor Injuries Units. Services can include healthcare professionals making home visits or ambulance services moving patients to places where they can be seen by a doctor or nurse, in order to reduce the need for home visits.

Further information is online: <https://urgentprimarycare.heiw.wales/>

111 Wales

111 is the new way to contact the NHS for people living in the Swansea Bay University Health Board, Powys Teaching Health Boards and Hywel Dda University Health Board areas. The service is also available to patients in the Bridgend Borough County Council area. People living outside these areas or for patients registered with a GP practice in another county, are not currently be able to use 111.

An amalgamation of NHS Direct Wales and the GP out-of-hours services, the service is free of charge from landlines and mobiles and is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for health information and advice and to access urgent primary care.

For more information:

- Frequently Asked Questions about 111 is available [here](#).
- Contact details of the [Out of Hours Services](#) for each health board area

Hospitals

Most people in Wales will have access to a hospital providing a range of services including outpatients, inpatients and day cases. There is also a network of community hospitals across Wales that provide a limited range of services. Specialised services such as cardiac surgery, cancer treatment, burns and plastics services are provided in specialist centres based in hospitals throughout Wales.

For further information about the health and care provided by hospitals in Wales, please access the [NHS Wales Directory of hospitals](#).

NHS Wales Trusts

There are currently 4 NHS Trusts in Wales, all with a national remit:

- [The Welsh Ambulance Services Trust \(WAST\)](#) provides high quality pre-hospital emergency care and treatment throughout Wales available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. It operates from ninety ambulance stations, three control centres, three regional offices and four vehicle workshops. WAST also hosts [NHS Direct Wales](#).
- [Velindre University NHS Trust](#) provides specialist cancer and blood services across South and Mid Wales through [Velindre Cancer Centre](#) and the [Welsh Blood Service](#). The Welsh Blood Service collects voluntary, non-remunerated blood donations from the public whilst Velindre Cancer Centre provides specialist cancer services to over 1.5 million people in South East Wales and beyond. Velindre University NHS Trust is also host to [NHS Wales Informatics Service](#) and [Shared Services Partnership](#).
- [Public Health Wales NHS Trust](#) provides professionally independent public health advice and services to protect and improve the health and wellbeing of the population of Wales.
- [Health Education and Improvement Wales \(HEIW\)](#) was established in October 2018 bringing together the Wales Deanery; NHS Wales's Workforce Education and Development Services (WEDS) and the Wales Centre for Pharmacy Professional Education (WCPPE). The Special Health Authority has a leading role in the education, training, development and shaping of the healthcare workforce in Wales, supporting high-quality care for the people of Wales.

Welsh Health Specialist Services

The [Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee \(WHSSC\)](#) was established to ensure that the population of Wales has fair and equitable access to the full range of specialised and tertiary services. Hosted by Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Local Health Board, WHSSC is responsible for the joint planning of these services on behalf of the seven Local Health Boards in Wales.

Local Authorities

Local authorities (councils) provide the local leadership and services necessary for their communities. The range of services are extensive and not only include the provision of social services and social care but also services which are known to have a longer term effect on health and it's wider determinants e.g. education, environment, economic development and housing. They provide a range of services either directly, by working in partnership with other organisations and/or by commissioning others to provide services on their behalf.

Councils also work with public service partners such as:

- Fire and Rescue Authorities
- Police and Crime Commissioners
- National Park Authorities
- National Resources Wales (NRW)

More information about local authority services and responsibilities can be found [here](#).

The Third Sector

The Third Sector makes a huge contribution to the health and well-being of people living in Wales and is described as community associations, self-help groups, voluntary organisations, charities, faith-based organisations, social enterprises, community businesses, housing associations, cooperatives and mutual organisations.

Displaying a range of institutional forms, including registered and unregistered charities, companies limited by guarantee (which may also be registered charities), Community Interest Companies, Industrial and Provident Societies and unincorporated associations, each organisation has its own aims, culture, values and way of doing things.

Third Sector organisations share some important common characteristics including: being independent, non-governmental bodies established voluntarily by citizens who choose to organise and are motivated by the desire to further social, cultural or environmental objectives, rather than making a profit.

NHS Direct Wales

NHS Direct Wales is a health advice and information service for patients available 24 hours every day. Residents of Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Bridgend, Carmarthenshire or Ystradgynlais can access NHS Direct Wales via 111.



NHS Direct Wales provides four distinct services:

- A 24-hour, 7 day a week telephone service providing advice for anyone feeling unwell who are unsure what to do. Providing health information on a wide range of conditions, treatments and local health services. Depending on the reason for calling, advice is given by a Nurse Adviser, Health Information Adviser or Dental Health Adviser. Calls are charged.
- an [online enquiry service](#)
- a web based [A-Z encyclopaedia](#)
- a web based search facility to locate local NHS services such as [dentists](#), [pharmacies](#) or [support groups](#)

Online health and well-being information services

- DEWIS CYMRU is an online directory of well-being services available in Wales. It provides information and advice about well-being and directs users to services that can help and support. Dewis provides information on a number of areas including where they live, feeling safe and secure, getting out and about and keeping in touch and links users to local people and services that can provide help and support.
- INFOENGINE is the directory of third sector services in Wales and was established by County Voluntary Councils and Wales Council for Voluntary Action in partnership.

Further information about the online directory of services available in Wales can be found at:

- [NHS Direct Wales](#)
- [Infoengine](#)
- [Dewis Cymru](#) ([download the app](#))

Community Health Councils

Community Health Councils (CHCs) are independent bodies who represent and act on behalf of the public and patients in Wales. There are eight CHCs in Wales and they provide a number of functions, namely:

- Listen to what individuals and the community have to say about health services with regard to quality, quantity, access to and appropriateness of the services provided. They act as the public voice, letting managers of health services in Wales know what people want and how things can be improved.
- Consult with the public directly on issues to make sure that they are properly reflecting public views to the health board, Trust or Welsh Government.
- Monitor primary care services. Routinely visiting the premises of GPs, pharmacists and opticians, as well as private hospitals and care homes.
- Help, advise and support people, free of charge, who wish to gain access to their medical records or make complaints about NHS services and similar matters.

Further information can be found at:

- [Community Health Councils, NHS Direct](#)
- Community Health Councils [Leaflet](#)

The **Cluster Working in Wales Handbooks** have been organised into three separate guides. They have been designed to be complementary and will be most effective if used collectively, sharing knowledge, ideas and advice to support effective cluster working. Signposting to information and resources is also included, in order to create the best conditions for cluster working and development.



To download the handbooks go to the [Resources](#) section of [Primary Care One](#).

We have taken all reasonable steps to identify the sources of information and ideas. If you feel that anything is wrong, would like to make comments or provide input to any revisions of the handbooks please contact us at PrimaryCare.One@wales.nhs.uk