



Gofal Cymdeithasol **Cymru**
Social Care **Wales**



Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Sponsored by
Welsh Government

Annual equality report

2020 to 2021



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We welcome comments about this annual report.

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Other formats:

This document is also available in Welsh. Copies of this document are available in other formats, if required.

Introduction

This annual equality report sets out the progress Social Care Wales has made in delivering its six equality objectives during 2020 to 2021.

We are required by the specific equality duties (for Wales) to report annually on how we have met the general public sector equality duty (the general duty) as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

In 2018, we published our first [Strategic equality plan](#) setting out how we, through our role and functions, will promote and advance the equality of opportunity for the communities we serve.

They are:

- people who use care and support, their families and carers
- the workforce who provide care and support
- our staff.

Our *Strategic equality plan* gave us an opportunity to clarify our commitment to equality and recognise our leadership role in the sector, as well as our responsibility to influence others to promote equality.

Although this report aims to provide a record of our work during the year, we are also about to publish a new strategic equality plan – *Becoming an anti-discrimination Wales promoting equality, valuing diversity in social care* – which takes into account the socio-economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Who we are

We are the lead organisation in Wales for social care workforce regulation, service improvement, research and data, and workforce development.

Our role in early years is on a smaller scale. We are a strategic partner for the Welsh Government, supporting the ongoing development, support and professionalisation of the childcare, play and early years workforce.

What do we do?

We:

- **develop the workforce** so they have the knowledge and skills to protect, empower and support those who need help and care
- **work with others to improve services** for areas agreed as a national priority
- **provide information** for the public, the workforce and other organisations
- **share practice** with the workforce so they can provide the best response to meet support needs
- **set priorities for research** to get evidence of what works well
- **set standards** for the care and support workforce, making them accountable for their work.

We support and promote innovation, and share knowledge, practice and experiences across social care in Wales. We work with partners to make sure we can work together to improve outcomes for people and families who use care and support, as well as those who provide it. We will act as a leader, champion and voice for social care and early years, offering constructive challenge and support to professionals and providers.

Our work is underpinned by the principle that adults and children who use care and support, as well as their families and carers, work together to create support that works for them. The approach is values driven and built on the principle that those who use a service are best placed to help design it. We will do this directly in our work where appropriate, but we will also make sure we follow this approach in all our advice about evidence to the sector.

Relevant equality information

The Equality and Human Rights Commission's (the commission) non-statutory guidance about equality reporting states that:

"The annual equality report must specifically set out:

- **the steps the authority has taken to identify and collect relevant information**
- **a statement on the effectiveness of the authority's arrangements for identifying and collecting relevant information."**¹

We have effective arrangements in place for identifying and collecting relevant equality information about our staff and partners. We identify and collect this data from:

- the equality monitoring of our staff
- the Register of Social Care Workers (the Register)
- the National Social Care Data Set for Wales
- the provision of national training programmes.

Our aim is not to collect and access equality data, but to embed equality evidence in our work. Collecting and using relevant information is a crucial part of meeting the general and specific equality duties. We want to make sure we have the best evidence possible to allow us to set meaningful objectives and carry out fully informed impact assessments.

Equality objectives

Our six equality objectives were informed by people who use care and support, their families and carers. The purpose of setting equality objectives is to help public bodies better perform the general duty.

As a listed public body, which is subject to the general duty, we must, in the exercise of our functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Equality objectives help focus attention on the priority equality issues in an organisation, so the organisation can make improvements in policy making, service provision and employment, including the allocation of resources².



2. [Objectives and the Equality Duty: A Guide for Public Authorities](#), Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2014

Achieving our equality objectives

To make sure we are an effective and transparent organisation, we regularly report on our performance and seek feedback. This annual report reflects the steps, actions and initiatives we have taken to achieve our six equality objectives.

Objective 1 – Raise awareness of the *Code of Professional Practice for Social Care (the Code)* among people using care and support, their families and carers

Why is this one of our objectives?

- We want to make sure that people who use care and support, their families and carers know about the Code. The standards are there to help make sure people have the support they need to live their life in the way that reflects their needs.
- We have collected evidence that suggests there is little or no knowledge of the Code among people from a Black and Asian minority ethnic background. Because of this, we are committed to using a range of tools and resources to raise awareness of the Code among the diverse people who use care and support in Wales.

What have we done to further this objective?

- We've carried out two specific pieces of work to further this objective. We have:
 - put all the resources that promote the Code and what people who use care and support, their families and carers can expect from their care worker in [one place on our website](#)
 - identified opportunities for raising awareness about the Code among children and young people.
- Gathering all the materials we have about the Code for the public in one place on our website ensures that people who use care and support, their families and carers can find the information quickly and easily. We've also added a link on the page to our safeguarding information – what to do if you think someone is being abused or if someone is abusing you.
- Identifying opportunities for raising awareness of the Code among children and young people is vital if we are to help them understand their rights when they receive support from social care workers. While the Covid-19 pandemic delayed this piece of work, we have been making progress since January 2021 on raising awareness about the Code across social care for children and young people.
- To help us do this, we held 'getting to know you' meetings with agency partners. As a result of the discussions, we formed a stakeholder focus group with agencies that advocate for and support children and young people, particularly within the care sector and hard to reach groups. The agencies included the Children's Commissioner for Wales, Tros Gynol Plant Cymru, Voices from Care and Children in Wales.
- We've developed and shared a set of questions with members of the stakeholder focus group, which ask the children and young people they work with what they know about social care worker registration and how their care workers meet the standards of behaviour set out in the Code.

Objective 2 – Research and share good practice that supports improved outcomes for people who use care and support

Why is this one of our objectives?

We want improved outcomes for children and adults who use care and support, their families and carers. We want to understand and share good practice that responds to the care and support needs of the diverse communities of Wales.

What have we done to further this objective?

- In April 2020, we [launched a joint project with Health and Care Research Wales to identify research priorities relating to the care and support of older people](#). We wanted to find out ‘How can we best provide sustainable care and support to help older people live happier and more fulfilling lives?’
- We took extra steps to engage with older people who tend to be under-represented in the development and production of research. We particularly focused on people who are likely to have different experiences of social care, including black and minority ethnic and LGBTQi communities, disabled people and older people who are in prison or homeless.
- In total, 168 older people who receive care and support, and carers, informed the research and the subsequent [10 research priorities about care and support for older people](#).
- The 10 priorities have been shared with researchers and funders to identify potential research questions and funding. Some funding has already been made available.
- We’re now planning our next joint project with Health and Care Research Wales, which will focus on strengths-based and preventative approaches for children and families. We will pay particular attention to making sure we include children and families from diverse and marginalised communities
- We have been a partner in the [Get There Together project](#)³. This flagship Welsh project aims to help people with dementia recover from the detrimental impact the pandemic has had on their health, daily routines and interaction with the community.
- The project has produced [video resources](#) to help people with dementia feel confident going out in the community to local amenities, such as libraries, GP surgeries, supermarkets and local shops. The resources that have been developed so far are available on the Dewis website, and they’ve received national media attention. The project is also part of the Bevan Commission’s Exemplar programme.

3. The Get There Together project is aligned with the *Dementia Action Plan for Wales* (Welsh Government, 2018).

Objective 3 – Support the sector to achieve a diverse and representative workforce

Why is this one of our objectives?

We want a social care workforce that is more representative of the communities it serves, particularly where there is evidence of underrepresentation. We want to work with partners to identify and address the barriers that may prevent people who share one or more of the protected characteristics from joining the social care workforce.

People who use care and support have told us that a diverse workforce brings a range of ideas, experiences and skills that has a positive effect on the way care is provided. They also told us it is vital to promote social care as a valued profession and to make a range of entry routes available for people to join the sector. We are committed to supporting the sustainability of the workforce by developing and implementing a workforce strategy and producing resources to support employers and the workforce.

What have we done to further this objective?

- The WeCare Wales programme continues to promote diversity in the workforce by providing diverse examples of care workers in films and images that have been shared online and on social media.
- It is essential that this national programme is inclusive and accessible for all, and we try to highlight diverse groups of people where possible.
- In autumn 2020, we ran a TV campaign about home care that reflected the diverse workforce and highlighted what it's like to work in care during the pandemic.
- Looking to the future, we are working with the DWP and Job Centre Plus to run sessions for the black and minority ethnic communities to help raise awareness about the careers available in care and resources such as the [WeCare Wales Jobs Portal](#).

Objective 4 – To make sure equality, human rights, dignity and respect continue to underpin social care training

Why is this one of our objectives?

Social care in Wales is changing. More people with protected characteristics need care and support, and are rightly demanding care and support that meets their needs. So it's essential that equality is at the heart of the workforce's training.

We want to make sure the workforce is supported and provides social care in-line with the law, and that its practice reflects the principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

What have we done to further this objective?

- We are running workshops for learning providers about preparing for leadership and management of health and social care. These are continuing in this financial year. The first module focused significantly on rights-based approaches, equality, diversity, human rights and strengths-based assessments. The workshops were attended by 50 learning providers who are providing the leadership and management of health and social care qualification.
- Our ['Introduction to social care' programme](#) is for people who are interested in working in adult social care. The training provides an introduction to:
 - person-centred practice
 - rights-based approaches
 - equality and diversity
 - the Code
 - the principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act.
- We provide [collaborative communications skills training](#), in partnership with ASC Ltd, to help the workforce with providing outcomes-focused, strengths-based care and support. The programme also looks at the implications for organisations and the practicalities of embedding this way of working in organisations.
- We are also working with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, the Gwent heads of adult services and NHS Delivery unit on a project based on balancing rights and responsibilities. This project brings together two existing, successful programmes (Collaborative Communications and Care Aims) to try to align the approach to patient discharge across health and social care. The programme supports more effective hospital discharge by making best use of expertise and resources. It also makes sure decisions are shared and that the person is at the heart of the discussion.

Objective 5 – Recruit and retain a representative workforce with the skills and knowledge to support and promote equality of opportunity

Why is this one of our objectives?

Our workforce (in Social Care Wales) is our most valuable resource. We are committed to advancing equality and diversity, and eliminating all forms of discrimination, victimisation and harassment in the workplace.

A more diverse workforce that better reflects the communities we serve remains at the heart of our efforts to create an inclusive and learning workplace. We want our staff to be aware of their responsibilities for advancing equality of opportunity and developing good relationships. We will achieve this through training and development.

What have we done to further this objective?

- Thirty-eight and a half per cent of recruitment applicants returned the equalities monitoring form that's included in our application pack.
- This is what that information tells us about the diversity profile of our applicants:
 - 64 per cent of applicants identified as female, 34 per cent as male and two per cent as non-binary
 - 41 per cent of applications were from people aged 25 to 29 and 13.5 per cent from people aged 50 to 54
 - 12 per cent of applications were from people with disabilities
 - 93 per cent of applicants were heterosexual, six per cent were LGBT+
 - 86.5 per cent of applicants described themselves as White Welsh, White British or White English.
- We will use this information to plan additional actions we can take to remove any actual or perceived barriers faced by groups who are currently under-represented in our workforce, as part of our plan for 2021 to 2022. This will include signing up to the [disability confident scheme](#).
- We have developed additional guidance for recruiting managers to help eliminate any potential for bias during the interview process. We have also introduced 'blind shortlisting' and have strengthened the requirements for our recruiting panels to make sure there's a gender balance.
- All new starters must complete an equality, diversity and inclusion e-learning module as part of their induction.
- We set up an equality, diversity and inclusion steering group, made up of staff from across the organisation. The group will:
 - be kept updated about our equality and diversity work and provide advice about progress and the way forward
 - generate and consider ideas for work to improve equality and diversity
 - take forward actions to improve and promote equality and diversity.

Objective 6 – To expand and improve the ways we communicate and engage with the public and the workforce

Why is this one of our objectives?

It is important for us, as a public leadership organisation, to increase and improve our engagement with people who share one or more of the protected characteristics if we are to realise our vision.

We play a crucial part in bringing people together to improve the quality of care and support across Wales, and it is important we do so in a manner that reflects our value of encouraging and enabling everyone to work together. Connecting with diverse communities in a meaningful way enriches our shared knowledge and enables us to achieve our aims by working with people.

What we have done to further this objective?

- We have built on the work that was done last year to make sure our website and other online platforms comply with the EU directive for web accessibility. We have continued to use a specialist company, Siteimprove, to regularly monitor our website and our online registration portal, SCWonline, to make sure they comply with the directive. This helps us pinpoint any accessibility issues so they can be fixed quickly.
- Much of our focus has been on providing training for our staff, particularly those who are involved in producing content for users of our website and other online platforms. This has included training on how to write simply and clearly in our tone of voice, so that the way we write and the language we use are not barriers to people understanding our information.
- The training has also included making our staff more aware of what makes content more accessible and how to provide users of our online platforms with what is useful to them and in ways they prefer. This all helps remove any potential barriers to our content being widely available, understandable and accessible to those who are interested in it.

Equal pay

We carry out an equal pay review each year to find out if there are any actual or potential inequalities relating to pay within the organisation – and if there are any actions, we act to address them.

In particular, we check we are not directly or indirectly discriminating against any employee or group of employees through our pay systems.

The audit covers the nine protected characteristics as identified by the Equalities Act 2010:

- sex
- age
- disability
- race
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy or maternity
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership.

Our audit found no evidence of pay discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristics. Any differences are as a result of length of service or TUPE transfers protecting previous salaries.

We must not become complacent and will continue to monitor and report annually. We will also make sure there is clear justification for any case where we have not appointed to the minimum grade point.

Although we have no statutory duty to report on our gender pay gap, we still report on this as part of our equal pay review.

Our gender pay gap is currently 16.64 per cent (median), which is below the UK average.

The current gap can likely be explained by an over-representation of women both across the organisation and in the lower paid grades, as 91 per cent of those in the lower quartile are women.

Having said that, we will not become complacent and will continue to scrutinise our pay decisions to make sure they are fair and equitable across genders.

Welsh language commitment

We recognise our responsibilities under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and our leadership role in supporting the Welsh Government's *More than just words* strategic framework for Welsh language services in health, social services and social care.

Our Welsh Language Scheme (Welsh Language Act 1993) and the Welsh language standards set out how we need to treat the English and Welsh languages on an equality basis. While the Welsh language is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, our approach and values ensure our work and policy decisions champion the importance of the Welsh language for people who use care and support, and their families and carers.



Equality information from our staff

We collect equality and diversity information about our staff. We do this by encouraging staff to update their diversity profile before the annual equality pay audit.

Main messages about our staff profile:

- The proportion of staff who have chosen to answer some or all the questions has increased (between +5 per cent and +18 per cent across the different characteristics).
- We continue to have a higher proportion of female employees than men.
- The age profile of our workforce is quite evenly spread, and no age group is unrepresented.
- The percentage of disabled employees has increased by almost three per cent, which is comparable to a three per cent increase in our recruitment profile.
- We will continue to encourage staff to declare their equality information, not only by explaining how and why we use the information, but also by creating a safe and reassuring environment where they feel confident to do so.

Table 1: Staff diversity profile

Organisation diversity profile

	April 2020 124 staff	June 2021 134 staff	Welsh average ⁴
Gender			
Male	25.6%	25.38%	49.3%
Female	74.4%	74.62%	50.7%
Age			
18-21	0.8%	1.49%	4.9%
22-29	18.5%	17.16%	10.5%
30-39	39.5%	32.08%	12.1%
40-49	24.1%	20.14%	11.5%
50-59	15.3%	25.37%	13.9%
60+	1.6%	2.98%	27.3%
Religion			
Prefer not to answer / not declared	42.7%	36.5%	
Atheist	7.25%	7.46%	
Agnostic	3.2%	4.47%	
Catholic	0.8%	0.74%	
Christian	25%	21.64%	47.9%
Muslim	1.6%	1.49%	1.8%
None	19.35%	27.31%	47.3%

4. Source: Gender / age / race / religion / disability – StatsWales. Sexual orientation / married – ONS. Direct comparison has been made when our data sets match with the StatsWales and ONS categories

	April 2020 124 staff	June 2021 134 staff	Welsh average ⁴
Sexual orientation			
Bisexual	-	0.74%	0.8%
Homosexual	1.6%	2.23%	1.5%
Heterosexual	56.45%	59.7%	95.5%
Prefer not to answer/ not declared	41.9%	37.3%	1.4%
Disability			
Yes	4.03%	6.71%	21.8%
No	42.7%	58.2%	77.3%
Prefer not to answer/ not declared	53.2%	35.07%	0.8%
Race			
Prefer not to answer/ not declared	45.96%	36.56%	
White	45.96%	42.53%	95.9%
White – Welsh	4.8%	16.41%	
Black African	1.6%	1.49%	0.4%
White and Black African	1.6%	1.49%	0.1%
Black Caribbean	-	0.74%	0.2%
East African, Asian/ Goan	-	0.74%	
Married/ Civil Partnership			
Prefer not to answer/ not declared	44.35%	38.80%	
Yes	33%	31.34%	48%
No	22.58%	29.85%	34%
Is your gender identity the same as at birth?			
Prefer not to answer/ not declared	45.16%	37.31%	
Yes	54.83%	62.68%	
No	0%	0%	

Diversity profile of the people on our Register

We monitor the protected characteristics of all those on our Register. We also gather information about the Welsh language skills of the people who are registered with us. We publish data profiles each year, which are based on the information provided by applicants registering and renewing their registration with us. You can find more information about this on [our website](#).

National Social Care Data Set for Wales

The National Social Care Data Set gathers social care data in one place to provide a view of how the social care sector is performing in Wales. We recently added a National Social Care Data Catalogue to our [Data Portal](#).

The [National Social Care Data Catalogue](#) helps those working in the social care sector find the data they need and it currently holds information about 44 datasets. To learn more about the available datasets and to access the data, you can search the catalogue or view the datasets by topic. You can also explore the catalogue using an interactive, visualisation tool.

We would welcome any feedback you have about the catalogue. Get in touch and let us know what you think by emailing data@socialcare.wales.



Equality data from the national training programmes

We have a role in improving the quality and management of social work and social care, and early years learning, development, qualifications and training.

This role helps us make sure the social care workforce has the right knowledge, skills, understanding and approach to provide good quality care and support in the social care and early years sectors.

When considering what to include in this report, we decided to provide equality information about the social work students on the approved social work qualifying programmes in Wales.

Table 2: Equality monitoring of social work students

Category	2017-18 cohort	2018-19 cohort	2019-20 cohort	2020-21 cohort
Average age	32 years	31 years	32 years	32 years
Intake	252	262	273	242
Gender				
Female	88.4%	86.0%	84.8%	84.7%
Male	11.60%	14%	15.2%	15.3%
Ethnicity				
BAME	6.4%	6.4%	5.5%	8.3%
White	93.6%	93.6%	94.5%	91.7%
Disability	3.8%	3.4%	4.5%	5.9%
Sexual orientation				
Heterosexual	94.0%	93.4%	95.6%	94.0%
Homosexual/ Bisexual	6.0%	6.6%	4.4%	6.0%
Welsh language ability				
Some/fluent	52.1%	52.1%	55.1%	61.3%
None	47.9%	47.9%	44.9%	38.7%