

# National Provider Forum Key Priorities 2017-18 Briefing Paper

## 1 Introduction

This briefing paper has been produced by the National Provider Forum for Wales, a representative alliance of all major independent providers of health and social care across Wales. Its purpose is to provide a collective voice of health and social care sector providers that impacts on the provision of quality services to citizens. It has four main areas of activity:

- Leadership and influence.
- Raise awareness and profile.
- Promote best practice and quality.
- Learning from experience.

The Forum was established in 2015. Members meet quarterly. The Forum is focussing its energies on the following 3 key areas in 2017-2018:

- The cost of care and funding for services.
- Sustaining a valued workforce.
- Strategic engagement and innovation.

The following sections describe each of the priorities, their rationale and goals.

## 2 The cost of care and funding for services

The Forum is clear, from feedback from members and service users, that the current level of funding for care is not sustainable. If it remains as it is it will result in further difficulties in recruiting care staff, and more closures or poor quality care instances.

We believe that much can be done to promote further improvements in service quality, practice and care, and a fairer price for care is needed to encourage further much-needed investment in the sector. We are committed to a programme of activity aimed at securing a fairer price for care through:

- A campaign aimed at putting the key facts before the public and politicians in the upcoming local government elections.
- Publishing or publicising more evidence about fair costing in the sector to help commissioners understand better how costings work in the sector.
- Preparing guidance to help providers from across the sector, particularly smaller and medium -size organisations, to put forward an informed and robust business case when dealing with local authority and health commissioners.

- Reviewing together the evidence-base on the most effective and cost-effective models of care, to inform the development of new services and resources. We think that this could most powerfully come from a joint approach with the National Commissioning Board for Wales.

### **3 Sustaining a Valued Workforce**

This is the second key area of stress facing the sector. There are difficulties facing providers across residential, nursing, domiciliary and day care services in recruiting the right staff in the right place, and a strategic national approach is needed to ensure that the immediate challenges in some areas – such as nursing in residential care, domiciliary care workers and care home management for example – are addressed. New requirements under the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 are going to put additional pressure on employers.

We want to work constructively with colleagues in each of the 7 Regional Workforce Boards across Wales, and in particular with the new Social Care Wales Board, to ensure that the challenges facing the independent sector are addressed. We plan to:

- Engage pro-actively with our national and regional partners to ensure their plans and activities address the key workforce challenges facing the sector.
- Contributing to any reviews or studies of workforce challenges across the sector.
- Lobbying to ensure that future workforce development resources target key areas of concern facing independent sector organisations.

### **4 Strategic Engagement and Innovation**

To be effective in the longer term, the Forum needs to establish itself as an active and authoritative voice for the sector. There are a number of things we plan to do to achieve this over the next two years:

- We will draw together a unique comprehensive analysis of the sector, its markets, resources and challenges across care homes, home care, day care, reablement and community-based care and support.
- We will establish a clear brand for the Forum and develop effective communications routes including a website and a social media presence.
- We will build a programme of regular short reports on key topics and issues which we will use as the basis for engaging with other stakeholders and the public on an ongoing basis, and of influencing policy and practice.
- We will highlight and share best practice as developed within the sector.

### **5 Next steps**

This briefing paper summarises our plans. We will be working with partners and supporters in 2017 to get support as well as financial and intellectual resources to deliver on them.

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