

Consultation

Impact of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 in relation to Carers

- [View the background to this consultation](#)
- [View all current consultations](#)

Purpose of the consultation

The [Health, Social Care and Sport Committee](#) would welcome your views on the impact of the [Social Services and Wellbeing \(Wales\) Act 2014 \[Opens in a new browser window\]](#) in relation to Carers.

Terms of reference:

The [Health, Social Care and Sport Committee](#) is calling for evidence in relation to;

- The impact of the [Social Services and Wellbeing \(Wales\) Act 2014 \[Opens in a new browser window\]](#) on carers of all ages in Wales, including;
 - Assessments of need;
 - Provision of support, including respite care;
 - Provision of information, advice and assistance;
 - Information collected by local authorities and Local Health Boards on carers and their needs.
- To consider broader Welsh Government policy on carers.

The inquiry will consider the following issues in relation to carers of all ages:

1. The number of carers' assessments undertaken in Wales and how this has changed as a result of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and whether there is variation between local authorities;
2. The number of carers receiving support following a local authority assessment, including respite care, how this has changed since the Act came into force, and whether there is variation between local authorities;
3. The extent to which local authorities are fulfilling their duties under the Act to provide information, advice and assistance to carers;
4. Whether local authorities and Local Health Boards have sufficient information on the number and needs of carers in their areas;
5. Other changes since the Act came into force which may impact on carers, for example changes to the services provided to people who are cared for;
6. Broader Welsh Government policy on carers and how it should be developed.

The deadline for responses is **20 September 2018**. Please send your views to:
SeneddHealth@assembly.wales

Response to Questions from Torfaen County Borough Council.

1. The number of carers' assessments undertaken in Wales and how this has changed as a result of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and whether there is variation between local authorities;

Below is a table showing Adult Carers PI's before SSWB Act (2014/15 & 2015/16) and after the introduction of the Act (2016/17, 2017/18 & 2018/19 to date).

Questions	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Q1 2018/19
Assessments of need;	65	60	105	90	21
Provision of support, including respite care;	56	43	10*	10*	3*
Provision of information, advice and assistance;	N/A	N/A	105*	90*	21*

It is difficult to compare the services provided to carers before and after the Act as we now record services in a different way. In many cases, services are recorded against the Cared For rather than the actual Carer, this would account for the low number of support plans. In addition we now only include commissioned services in care and support or support plans, whereas previously we were recording all services provided.

Prior to the Act, information, advice and assistance data was not recorded, we only recorded numbers of carers assessments. We now recorded advice and assistance however we still do not record contact relating to information only.

It is difficult to use the data above for any comparison as the PIs have changed and therefore we are not comparing like with like.

Work is now being undertaken to develop the new WCCIS system to record Carers information in their own right. This will include all contact with carers, carers assessments undertaken, any IAA provided and any referrals or services offered. We hope that all of this information will be available to report in future as well as the standard WG PI requirements.

2. The number of carers receiving support following a local authority assessment, including respite care, how this has changed since the Act came into force, and whether there is variation between local authorities;

See numbers and note for 1.

Carers requesting and receiving respite or short breaks has increased in the last 2 years. Additional funding from WG has allowed for more traditional (eg institutional) as well as more alternative forms (eg recreational groups) of respite to be made available to carers. (see appendix 2 for carer numbers and breakdown of spend per category). Funding has also been used for 3rd sector initiatives within the borough eg Age Connects Torfaen (see appendix 1 for report).

3. The extent to which local authorities are fulfilling their duties under the Act to provide information, advice and assistance to carers;

In Torfaen we provide IAA in a variety of formats. We have recently employed a Carers Support Worker to work directly with carers and their IAA needs. We also discharge some of our IAA duties by referring to Torfaen Carers Centre (see appendix 3 for attendance figures). Here a dedicated team of carers coordinators and volunteers are on hand to deal with all forms of IAA in relation to carers. This can be in the form of; conversations, group therapies, sessional work, activities, trips and overnight stays, training, various forms of information and advice on a range of subjects that effect carers day to day caring duties eg carers rights and benefits.

We are also introducing a Carers Induction Course aimed primarily at new carers. This will be a 6 week course held at the carers centre and will cover all carers issues and information. We have recently started to produce and publish a quarterly Carers Newsletter to keep carers informed of national and local carers information and events as well as relevant links and contact information.

4. Whether local authorities and Local Health Boards have sufficient information on the number and needs of carers in their areas;

As previously stated in Q1, we recognise that we do not have sufficient information on carers or their needs. We are trying to rectify this by introducing new recording and reporting information areas in WCCIS specifically for carers. However we do engage with carers in a variety of formats and listen to what they say and ask what matters to them.

5. Other changes since the Act came into force which may impact on carers, for example changes to the services provided to people who are cared for;

In Torfaen we have tried to embrace not only our statutory requirements but also the whole ethos of the act. We have developed a person centered approach to care based on the “what matters” conversations. We have found that we are seeing a shift from residential institutional care to more community based care where suitable. This often results in greater reliance on family and friends of the cared for person – especially their main carer. We endeavor to provide support and assistance to the cared for person and also the carer to allow the best possible care that is suitable to all parties.

6. Broader Welsh Government policy on carers and how it should be developed.

The message we are hearing from Carers is that they need to know that help and assistance is available from the local authority, if it is required. Too often we only hear a cry for help when a carer reaches crisis point and feels that they can't go on with their caring role. Applying the principals of the SSWB Act, especially regarding early intervention and support, will help to stop carers reaching crisis point.

Overall we don't think that the majority of carers are fully aware of their rights as a carer despite the introduction of the SSWB Act. Hopefully in time with continued promotion and awareness raising, carers rights and issues will be addressed and provided for.

Young Carers in Torfaen.

In Torfaen we have a dedicated Young Carers team who have always had a very proactive role in identifying young carers and carrying out young carer assessments. As a result, we don't feel that the SSWB Act has had a significant impact for requests for young carers assessments.

We would like to think that Torfaen is one of the leading authorities where young carers have care and support plans, as the majority of young carers services in other local authorities are with the voluntary sector and the way they assess young carers hasn't changed.

One area where we are seeing increased referrals is from schools especially when it is shown to have a positive impact on a pupil who is a young carer, other referrals often follow.

Appendix 1

Additional Information Provided by Age Connects Torfaen.



Age Connects Torfaen- Information & Advice Services Statistics April 2017-March 2018

Clients who gained Carers allowance after appointments	Contacts Who have had Carers Info & Advice and welfare benefits	Carers and Family members who have attended appointments	Referrals made for carers assessment Through Social services	Carers assessments that have been turned down	Carers who were already registered and accessed social services carers assessment
7 £23,514.40	21	140	10	2: 1.client not being on correct benefit 2.client who works	15

Home Services Department, Age Connects Torfaen

The Supervisor for this service noted that only a very small proportion of referrals, approximately 5 % are referred from Social Services.

Usually, these referrals are for people that are at crisis point, with risk of carer breakdown. Referrals do not tend to come through as a preventative measure. As an organisation, it is felt that the preventative work would be far more beneficial to carers, as well as being more economically viable.

Future Plans

'Zest for Life' Young Onset Dementia Service (July 2018-July 2021)

This is a new service which is accessible by carers following evidence collated in the Young Onset Pilot Service (October 2016-October 18). A need for appropriate carer support was identified by the pilot project. Specifically, the need for a more flexible service which is responsive and tailored to the needs of the individuals, their carers and support network.

The service aims to further embed the requirements of the SSWB (Wales) Act 2014 by-

- Improving individuals' well-being and promoting outcomes.

- Transforming the way services are delivered- flexible to the needs of individuals and carers and empowering each individual to have a stronger voice, protection and more control of their lives
- Partnership working with statutory, health and third sector organisations.

We have specialist counselling sessions available to individuals, carers and other family members. This is being delivered by a trained counsellor from Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent MIND.

Carers are also able to access telephone or email support.

We will shortly be launching a drop-in group for carers and individuals on a Friday afternoon. There will be specialist information and advice, activities, respite, peer group support. Qualitative and quantitative evidence is being collated on-going.

Age Connects Torfaen Response

We have found through the implementation of the Wellbeing Wales Act that the emphasis is on prevention. However, our services are used at the point of crisis. Earlier intervention and more preventative services are needed, therefore providing the ability to support people before their needs become critical. We are often approached by professionals or carers when they have nowhere to turn, if we had been contacted earlier and services put into place, the carer and their loved one would hopefully not reach crisis point.

We adopt the principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act by ensuring that individuals are put at the centre, giving them a stronger voice and control over services they receive.

We believe that there should be more work carried out to encourage working in partnership. Age Connects Torfaen have several well-established models of service provision established, rather than duplicating services partners could tap into the skills, knowledge and lived experiences to enhance services available for service users.

Age Connects Torfaen are constantly reacting to gaps or trends to ensure that we can manage a person's wishes and feelings. There needs to be a greater emphasis on sharing services and ensuring that the services provided are specialised to suit the needs of the individual.

Appendix 2 – Additional Funding to Provide Respite and Short Breaks to Carers (2017/18)

The number of carers who benefitted from this additional funding and the associated costs

Local Authority: Torfaen County Borough Council

Respite Provided	Number of carers benefitting	Funding allocated to support the provision of respite care
Day Care	21	£725.02
In home respite	44	£7,414.42
Host family respite	14	£3,585.00
Institution/Overnight respite	36	£51,501.77
Total of Above	115	£63,226.27
Other: Respite Trips or Group Therapy Sessions	579	£27,121.43
Other: (Eg Transport or Room Hire)	37	£6,056.68
Overall Totals	731	£96,404.38

Appendix 3 – Torfaen Carers Centre Attendance Figures (2017/18)

TORFAEN CARERS CENTRE ATTENDANCE RECORD 2017/18												
	Drop in*	Art Class	Media Class	Fun & Games	Dementia Group	Therapy Sessions	Torfaen Youth	Kinship Carers Group	Meetings	Other Carers or Visitors**	Totals	New Referrals
Totals	650	51	25	43	748	289	55	24	92	135	2111	90
	* Not including attendance at group sessions.						(Advice, guidance groups,etc)**					