



Welsh Parliament - Public Accounts Committee Consultation

‘Barriers to the successful Implementation of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015’

Response from Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB), October 2020

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) responses to the consultation questions are as follows:

1 Awareness and understanding of the Act and its implications.

1.1 Living Healthier, Staying Well (LHSW), 2018

The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 was central to the development of the Health Board’s long term strategy for health, well-being and healthcare ‘Living Healthier, Staying Well’ (LHSW).



LHSW Strategy
FINAL DOCUMENT.p

The information shared through the consultation and engagement process underpinning the development of the strategy clearly articulated the Act’s wellbeing goals, ways of working and sustainability principles. Thousands of individuals - staff, service users and the wider community contributed their time, opinions and feedback to help design the strategy and to give their views on the Health Board’s wellbeing objectives. The feedback received from this exercise was embedded in the Health Board’s refreshed set of wellbeing objectives and resulted in an increased awareness and understanding of the Act and its implications amongst internal and external Health Board stakeholders.

1.2 Governance

Well-being objectives have been made explicit in the Board’s governance process; all reports made to the Board and its Committees are required to identify the contribution to the relevant goals. In addition all initiatives, such as, service reviews and developments, must identify how they contribute to the well-being objectives, how they have used the five ways of working and have embedded the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act sustainable development principles. It is recognised that to be truly effective the Board and Committees need to ensure that the contributions to the Act identified through this process are realistic, achievable with arrangements in place to monitor progress.

1.3 Maintaining the profile and reinforcing the principles

Given the time elapsed since the Act came into force and from the approval of LHSW there is a need to ensure that the Act continues to be a central consideration

for any Health Board strategic decision and that opportunities are taken to reinforce the objectives and principles contained in the Act. The most recent Wales Audit Office report 'Implementing the Well Being of Future Generations Act – Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board' (2019) recommended a more population health based approach to include the development of longer term plans and funding commitments that are agreed and delivered with partners to discharge collective organisational responsibilities. The Health Board has noted these recommendations and will seek to address them through its planning processes.

2 The resources available to public bodies to implement the Act and how effectively they have been deployed.

2.1 Future Generations online resources

<https://www.futuregenerations.wales/resources>. The resources section of the website includes a range of helpful tools and a repository of supporting information – service specific, international, horizon scanning, progress reports etc. This resource is used and referenced by a number of departments within the Health Board. There are opportunities to expand use, for example, signposting within the Health Board's internal planning guidance.

3 Support provided to public bodies by the Future Generations Commissioner.

3.1 Annual reports

The Future Generation Commissioners Annual Reports provide a useful summary of progress to date and facilitate the sharing of learning and best practice across public sector organisations. Reports are shared with relevant Health Board committees and senior managers. To help maintain the profile of Act and emphasise its importance in the Health Board's current approach and strategic direction, there are opportunities to cascade the key findings of the report to all Health Board staff, for example, via weekly bulletins and/or messages from the Chairman and Chief Executive.

4. The leadership role of the Welsh Government.

4.1 Funding arrangements

Current funding arrangements, for example, annual funding allocations, short term non-recurrent funding and the limited pooling of budgets across public sector organisations are not conducive to supporting plans designed to deliver innovation and service transformation over the longer term. In addition, these arrangements do not support an integrated approach to partnership working. Opportunities exist for Welsh Government to top slice budgets to encourage collaborative multi-sector working and to ring fence funding for the development and implementation of initiatives, noting that these arrangements will be required over longer timescales to enable the significant cultural and transformational change required.

4.2 Annual operating framework targets

Annual performance targets attract a high level of attention and are a key measure of the performance not only of the organisation but also senior clinical and managerial staff thereby increasing the focus on short term service delivery. In addition to annual/short to medium term measures it would be helpful if the framework included specific targets that evidence progress in delivering the elements of schemes which pertain to the Act.

5. Any other barriers to successful implementation of the Act (e.g. Brexit, COVID, etc.).

5.1 Change in priorities and NHS Planning Outlook 2020/21

New and/or competing priorities can radically alter the approach to planning. This year COVID-19 lead to a foreshortened NHS planning outlook with the requirement changing from annual planning and/or development of 3-year Integrated Medium Term Plan to submission of plans covering quarterly periods. Although there remains a high degree of uncertainty in terms of planning to address the impact of COVID-19, both in terms of treatment and prevention of transmission, the Health Board is actively taking steps to reinvigorate the longer term strategic planning process.

5.2 Dealing with uncertainty over time

Developing plans for future generations involves a high level of uncertainty and requires a different approach to planning. Individuals need to be supported to think differently about the planning process in order to take a longer term view. Systems and mechanisms for assessing and informing decision-makers of the impact of decisions made now on future well-being will require investment and development.

6. How to ensure that the Act is implemented successfully in the future.

6.1 Accessibility of resources

The Health Board has recently migrated to a new Internet page which has a more user friendly search facility there are opportunities for the Health Board to develop a Well Being and Future Generations page, to sign post key resources.

6.2 Development of Annual Plan/Integrated Medium Term plans

The Health Board uses templates to assist in the development of its Annual Plan. Templates are revised and refined each year to take account of mandated planning requirements and in light of lesson learned from the previous year. There is an opportunity to include a section in the template, which requires the identification of the contribution that plans made to the relevant goals and describes how the five ways of working and sustainable development principles have been applied.