

Huw Irranca-Davies AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Gofal Cymdeithasol a Phlant
Minister for Children and Social Care



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-771
Ein cyf/Our ref HID/00170/18

David J Rowlands AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

government.committee.business@gov.wales

20 March 2018

Dear David,

Thank you for your letter of 23 February following the Committee's recent further consideration of Mr Nathan Davies' petition (P-05-771) regarding the Welsh Independent Living Grant (WILG).

While I appreciate the apprehension Mr Davies has, both about the implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and the change in which WILG recipients will be supported to live independently in future, I do not recognise the extent of the concerns he raises. The decisions we have taken have not sought to prevent disabled people in Wales from living independently at home, or to reduce the support for which they are entitled. As a government we have sought to support this right to live independently through the 2014 Act, where we are changing the emphasis upon the way people are supported to give them more voice and control over the care and support they require to meet the wellbeing outcomes they wish to achieve.

We are taking tangible action to deliver this aim. For example, Social Care Wales is working with a range of key stakeholders and partners in the delivery of the 2014 Act including employers, local authorities and the voluntary and third sector. This includes undertaking a programme of learning with the social care workforce and the wider sector on the requirements and expectations of the Act to ensure this is delivered on the ground, covering such issues as expert classes on advocacy, co-production, direct payments and supporting the workforce to move to delivery of outcomes focused practice.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

It is true to say it will take time for this change in direction to completely bed down. However, there are many signs of this becoming standard practice across Wales to the benefit of those who rely on support, which in turn will have a positive effect on the future support packages which are being agreed for WILG recipients.

As regards monitoring of the implementation of the 2014 Act, we have committed previously to a formal independent evaluation of the Act. A stakeholder evaluation group was established in 2017 to help guide the evaluation and includes a range of external representatives, some of whom were actively involved in the development of the Act.

The evaluation will commence this autumn and will last a minimum of three years. It will consider the implementation of the Act and its delivery, the outcomes delivered so far and the impact it has had on the well-being of those who need care and support, as well as their carers. It will also provide a rich source of evidence to support continued improvement in the sector. I am also seeking to capture care recipient's experience, through a complimentary evaluation project, on how local authorities provide care under the new provisions. I am issuing a Written Statement regarding the evaluation shortly which will contain more information and which will be available at:

<http://gov.wales/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2018/?lang=en>

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "My Kind Regards, Huw". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the name "Huw".

Huw Irranca-Davies AC/AM

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