

Advocacy Newsletter

September 2016 Issue no. 1

Welcome to the first edition of our new advocacy newsletter which will be produced on a bi-monthly basis and will bring you information, updates, good practice, and provide links to useful documents, training, websites and news all about advocacy!

The Golden Thread Advocacy Programme

Our first good news is that the Welsh Government have funded Age Cymru to deliver the Golden Thread Advocacy Programme in partnership with Age Connects and Diverse Cymru. It will support the implementation of Part 10 (Advocacy) of the Social Services and Well-being Wales Act 2014. The programme covers advocacy not only for older people but for all adults over the age of 18, picking up where the remit of the Strategic Leadership Group for Children's Advocacy ends; which means that, between us, we have the whole population covered!

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Wales Act 2014 came into force on the 6th April 2016 and it will have a big impact on the types of Local Authority services that are delivered and how they are delivered in Wales. It puts people right at the heart of service delivery. It also means that in certain circumstances local authorities must ensure that an individual has access to advocacy.

Independent Professional Advocacy is a service that can support someone to participate fully in decisions about their well-being and ensure that their views, wishes and feelings are heard, respected and taken account of. Advocacy supports people to have their rights upheld, to express their views and opinions, to make decisions about things that affect them, and if necessary to represent people's views at meetings.

The Welsh Government is funding The Golden Thread Programme for 3 years to:

- improve the well-being of adults through advocacy and to give them a stronger voice
- improve the availability of advocacy services to adults, and
- work with local authorities and service providers to support the development and commissioning of advocacy services for adults

More information can also be found at www.agecymru.org.uk/advocacy

Continued...

The Golden Thread Programme team are:

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Meet the team

Carys Griffiths

Carys joined Age Cymru in June as Programme Development Officer for Partnerships with Age Cymru's Golden Thread Advocacy Programme. Carys will work with new and existing advocacy service providers pan Wales to ensure they are ready to apply for advocacy tenders. She will be developing and delivering workshops that include Sell2Wales registration and profiles, the tendering process and what commissioners look for in a tender, electronic tendering as well as scoping collaboration with smaller providers and how they can work together to present a stronger bid. Carys will also be developing resources to support advocacy providers as the new duty around advocacy is implemented.

Having spent most of her previous career in business support, in her varying roles she assisted companies to identify company and individual training needs, provided business advice to new start-ups and also supported mainstream business support providers across Wales to become more diverse in their advisory roles and working practices. With a commitment to meeting personal and organisational objectives, Carys has a wealth of experience in client management at all levels, ensuring an understanding of needs, building and developing working relationships as well as encouraging and motivating clients to achieve their desired outcomes.

Paul Swann

Paul is Programme Development Officer for Commissioning on the Golden Thread Advocacy Project, covering SE Wales. This involves working with local authorities, health boards, advocacy providers and others to support development of a strategic approach to provision of Independent Professional Advocacy under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act.

Continued...

Paul joined the project after 7 years as an Independent Living Policy Officer with Disability Wales and 5 years as a Social Services Commissioning and Planning Officer with Wrexham County Borough Council, where he produced an advocacy commissioning strategy. Paul has delivered some advocacy on behalf of the National Youth Advocacy Service, which gave him a lot of respect for the highly skilled and challenging work that advocates do. He is also an informal advocate and carer for someone who has Asperger's Syndrome.

Paul lives near Brecon and has two grown up sons. Outside work he is interested in the social and environmental impact of the global economic system, particularly on the climate, and the complex challenges this presents. For balance, he is a big fan of underground heavy metal and enjoys going to gigs and metal festivals. He also has a slightly warped sense of humour and enjoys dark comedy.

Valerie Billingham

Val Billingham is the Programme Development Officer for Commissioning (North Wales). Her role is to work with the six North Wales Local Authorities, Betsy Cadwalader Health Board and other stakeholders in North Wales, to support the development of new commissioning arrangements for an independent professional advocacy service alongside Part 10 (Advocacy) of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

Val was born and brought up in Port Talbot, but left to study Egyptology at Birmingham University and has spent most of her career in England. She is very pleased to have the opportunity to work in Wales!

Val is a former fast-stream civil servant at the Department of Health in Whitehall and former Head of User Involvement at the British Heart Foundation, covering the whole of the UK. Val has been committed to supporting autonomy for people of all ages since her teens, when she witnessed the declining health and independence of her great grandfather, who lived as part of her family for the last few years of his life. This experience was the reason she chose to study health, ageing and maintaining autonomy on her Harkness Fellowship to the USA in 1995-6.

Val is enthused and energised by the opportunities for service transformation to increase the appreciation of people of all ages as an asset rather than a burden, to enable everyone to continue to lead fulfilling and meaningful lives and to provide support to those who need it.

Huw Davies

Huw joined the Golden Thread Advocacy Programme in late June of this year as the Programme Development officer for commissioning working across Mid and West Wales including the Western bay region. Huw will work with commissioning officers across this region to develop capacity and practice methodology around commissioning Independent Professional Advocacy in line with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) act 2014 and the responsibilities placed upon Local Authorities and Health Boards by it. He will also work to support the development of new and sustainable models of advocacy ensuring that all individuals who come into contact with the auspices of the act are enabled to have their voice heard and their well-being supported.

Prior to commencing this role with Age Cymru Huw has spent the majority of his career supporting those whose voices are not always heard be heard, most recently as an advocate manager working for Age Cymru Sir Gâr running a successful advocacy scheme. Huw has a strong commitment to the promotion and protection of peoples basic rights, supporting those who need it most and firmly believes that the Golden Thread Advocacy Programme is the best way of ensuring that all those who are entitled to advocacy in Wales are now able to receive it. Huw has a wealth of experience working with a wide variety of stakeholders as well as working in a co-productive manner to ensure that services meet the needs of those who need them.

Louise Hughes

Louise has worked for Age Cymru for the last 10 years and until April this year she was Safeguarding Manager. In April she took up the post of Programme Manager for the Golden Thread Advocacy Programme. Her role is to ensure that the outcomes of the Welsh Government funded programme are achieved and to build and support strategic and local relationships with stakeholders across Wales.

Over the last 10 years Louise has been involved in campaigning for more access to independent advocacy and has undertaken research every 2 years on the state of advocacy in Wales. She Chairs the National Network for Older People's Advocacy Services in Wales. This network supports older people's advocates and is a source of expertise and best practice on issues relating to older people.

Louise has worked with older people for over 20 years in both a personal and professional capacity. Louise was a carer for elderly relatives and worked for a local domiciliary care agency as well as volunteering for the local Alzheimer's Society.

Prior to working for Age Cymru Louise has established and co-ordinated projects including an Information Service, Welfare Benefits Service and a generic issue based crisis Advocacy Service.

Ffion Jones

Ffion has worked for Age Cymru for the last 10 years. Up until April this year, she worked as the Safeguarding Programme Administrator. At the beginning of April, Ffion took on the new role as Golden Thread Advocacy Programme Support Assistant. Her new role involves many tasks such as acting as first point of contact for the programme, providing general support for the whole team, the Programme Manager and the Board. This includes doing desk research, arranging meetings and events including being the secretariat for the National Network for Older People's Advocacy Services in Wales. She supports the production of resources, developing and producing of bimonthly advocacy newsletter, maintaining the programmes' web pages and overseeing the social media promotion of the programme.

Ffion also works part time for Headway as the Network Support Coordinator for North Wales where she provides support to the Headway Branches in North Wales. Prior to working for Age Cymru, Ffion was a trainee Education Social Worker for Denbighshire County Council and worked with children and young people.

The Golden Thread Advocacy Programme team



From the left:

Huw Davies, Ffion Jones, Carys Griffiths, Paul Swann, Valerie Billingham and Louise Hughes.

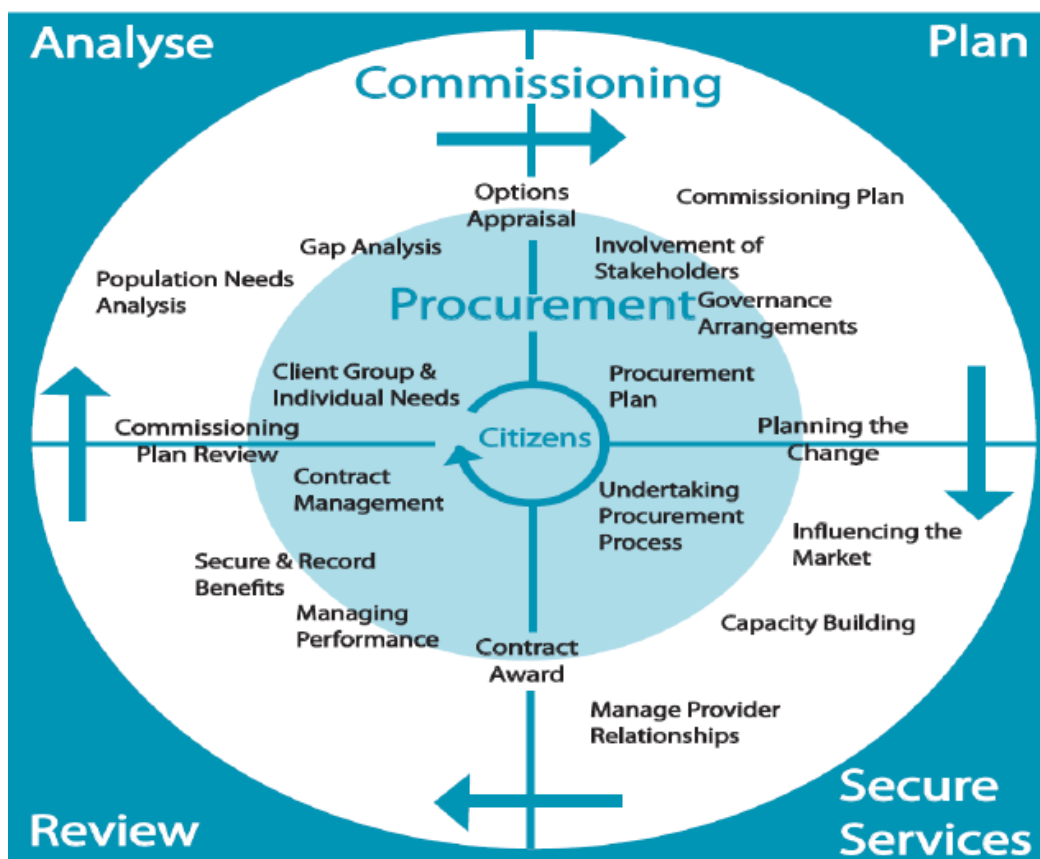
Supporting commissioning of independent professional advocacy services

The difference between commissioning and procurement

It's easy to confuse the terms "commissioning" and "procurement", and it's important to be clear about what they mean. Procurement refers to the actual process of acquiring goods and services through tendering and contracting, and starts with the service specification.

Commissioning is a cyclical process which should be undertaken by professionals and citizens working together co-productively. It starts with assessing the needs and assets of the local population and progresses to drawing up strategies and plans to meet those needs and the well-being outcomes that are most important to the people receiving services, while making best use of the resources available. This includes deciding on the location, cost and quality of services, how they will be delivered, who will deliver them, undertaking the procurement process, monitoring the delivery of services and using the knowledge gained to inform the next round of needs assessment.

The [Welsh Government has adopted a model](#) which shows the relationship between commissioning and procurement:



Commissioners of independent professional advocacy services will need to follow this wider cycle - ensuring meaningful and effective engagement with citizens and providers - and use it to inform the procurement process, if the services they commission are to be effective.

The development of commissioning for independent professional advocacy services

Commissioning know-how is still evolving in Wales, especially in relation to independent professional advocacy services for adults. Local knowledge and capacity vary, and local circumstances differ. The Golden Thread Advocacy Programme team is here to support local authorities and health boards to commission independent professional advocacy services, and to build the capacity of advocacy providers to deliver the new statutory service for adults under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. There are some resources, from within Wales and outside, on which we can draw.

In order to commission any service effectively, it is important that all those involved have a good understanding of what advocacy entails at the very start of the commissioning process. A number of resources have been developed with this purpose in mind, including an advocacy [training pack](#) developed by Age Cymru on behalf of the Care Council for Wales.

Within Wales, strategic planning for independent professional advocacy for children and young people is considerably more advanced than it is for adults. A Strategic Leadership Group, supported by a Task and Finish Group, is currently developing a national approach to independent advocacy for some groups of children and young people in Wales. The group is tasked with:

- identifying and developing the key components for a National Approach to Advocacy;
- seeking to ensure delivery of this approach via lead authorities within Social Services Regional Collaboratives.

In England the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) produced [Care Act 2014: Commissioning independent advocacy](#) which aimed “to help commissioning officers in local authorities think through their new duties and understand what they are required to do to comply with the requirements of the Care Act 2014”. A section on Good Practice offers some definitions of commissioning, outcomes and coproduction, and distinguishes between the different roles of commissioning and procurement. It also sets out some standards for good advocacy commissioning and describes a range of commissioning activities under the "analyse-plan-do-review" headings used in the standard model of commissioning and procurement.

In Scotland, where there is no direct equivalent to the English Care Act 2014 or the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, an [Independent Advocacy Guide for Commissioners](#) was published in 2013, with a broader remit which includes advocacy both inside and outside of the social services context. The document includes several illustrative poems written by a recipient of advocacy services. A section on Supporting Independent Advocacy provides some helpful guidance on the process of commissioning advocacy. An earlier version of the Scottish Guide helped inform the engagement process used in Wrexham to produce the joint commissioning strategy [Advocacy Works: Increasing access to independent advocacy in Wrexham](#).

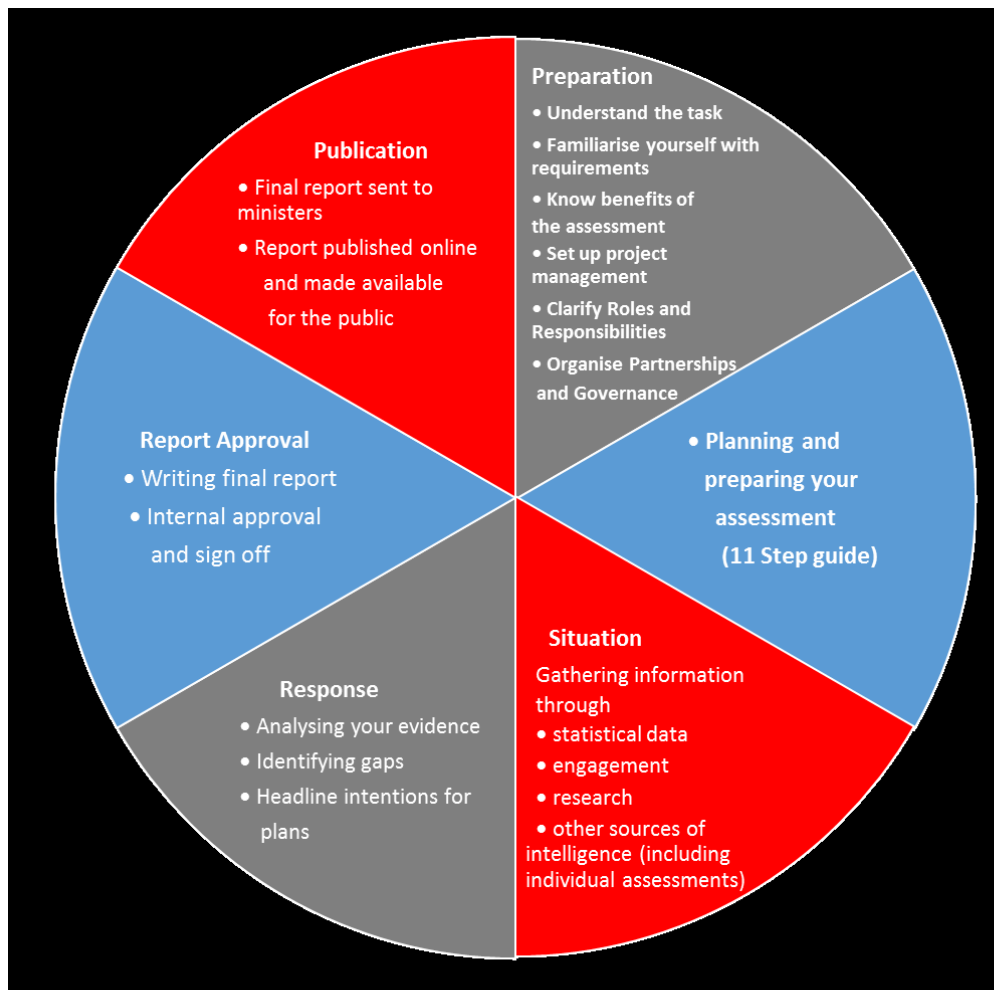
In Northern Ireland an *Advocacy action plan* was published in 2012 which included a [Policy guide for commissioners](#). This was designed to provide practical guidance on the commissioning of advocacy services in a health and social care setting, including how they can be supported, monitored and evaluated. The document recommended that regional advocacy commissioning groups should be established to ensure greater parity and consistency in commissioning. Six commissioning principles were set out, together with ten principles and standards for advocacy services. In January 2016 a [Review of advocacy services for children and adults in Northern Ireland](#) was published which makes eight recommendations for improvements in the commissioning process and quality of advocacy services. An appendix provides a flow chart setting out an example process for commissioning advocacy services.

The Golden Thread Advocacy Programme team will draw upon these and other resources as we go along. We will also develop new resources specific to commissioning independent professional advocacy for adults in Wales.

Population Assessment

The commissioning cycle begins with assessing the needs and assets of the local community, as a first step towards developing effective service plans and specifications. The Social Services Improvement Agency has produced a [Population Assessment Toolkit](#) to help commissioners carry out a good population assessment and produce a population assessment report. There is a clear

expectation that Local Authorities and Health Boards must work in partnership to carry out the assessment, and engage with a wide range of stakeholders, including advocacy service providers. Some formal and informal partnerships and networks are already in place (for example, the four [Social Services Improvement Collaboratives](#): North Wales; Mid and West Wales Health and Social Care; Western bay, and South East Wales), and the team will be engaging with them to help support the development of commissioning of advocacy services.

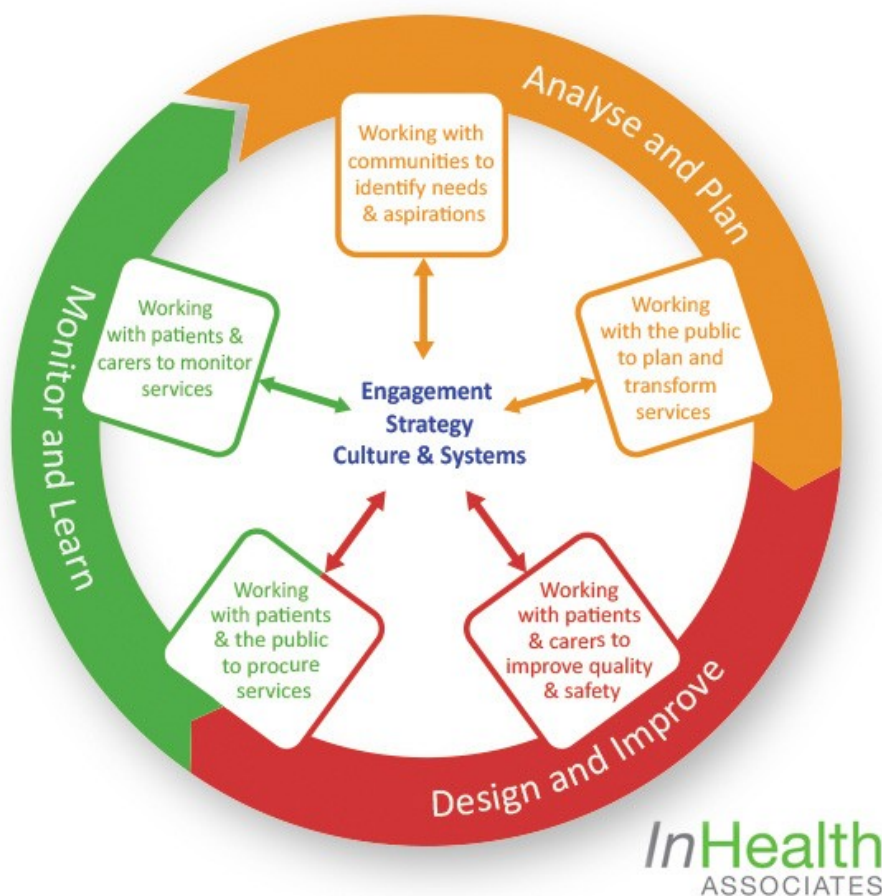


As far as advocacy is concerned, the toolkit states:

- advocacy is a primary prevention service, targeted at individuals who are relatively healthy and active and preventing the necessity for people to consider accessing care and support;
- the population report must set out the assessment of preventative services, including advocacy services;
- service plans must ensure a response to the advocacy requirements for all individuals;
- commissioners must engage with providers of independent advocacy services, among others, as part of the assessment process;
- where an individual is not able to express their views, wishes or feelings, commissioners must ensure the individual is supported to do so. The toolkit provides a link to the [Code of Practice on Advocacy](#), which sets out people’s rights and entitlements to advocacy support;
- under the Code of Practice, commissioners must in certain circumstances ensure an individual is supported by an independent advocate at no cost to the individual.

Citizen involvement

The Code of Practice on Advocacy states that a broad range of individuals, groups and organisations that reflect the diversity of the local population must be involved in the population assessment. There is a strong emphasis on active, innovative engagement, as opposed to consultation. The toolkit includes a section on engagement to help commissioners do this.



If commissioners are to get an accurate picture of the needs and assets within their communities, draw up robust plans, procure appropriate, sustainable services and monitor them effectively, it is vital that they include service recipients right from the outset of the commissioning process and all the way around the commissioning cycle. [The Engagement Cycle](#), a resource developed by InHealth Associates, a social enterprise in England, in partnership with many health and care commissioners and other public and voluntary sector bodies, helps organisations undertake meaningful patient and public engagement throughout the whole commissioning process.

Conclusion

Although commissioning independent professional advocacy is a new duty under the Act, commissioners are not starting with a blank sheet of paper; there are resources available, and existing networks and partnerships to support them, with more likely to emerge over time. It's part of the Golden Thread Advocacy Programme team's job to make sure that you know about them and that you get the best out of them, for the benefit of the most marginalised people in the community. We're here to help!

Val Billingham, Age Cymru

Support to new and existing advocacy providers

Whilst the role of the Commissioning Development Officers is to help build capacity of the Commissioners, the role of the Programme Development Officer for Partnerships is to help build the capacity of providers - ensuring they understand and are geared up for the tendering process. In the Autumn we aim to deliver workshops that will provide an excellent insight into how to formally tender, explaining the procurement process, when and if EU regulations apply, understanding Commissioner requirements as well as exploring the benefits of collaborating with other providers.

Workshop dates for your diaries:

8th November - North Wales - venue and details to be confirmed
10th November - Mid Wales - venue and details to be confirmed
11th November - South Wales - venue and details to be confirmed

Sell2Wales

Sell2Wales is the Welsh Government's portal for procurement. Any business, 3rd sector organisation or charity can register for free on Sell2Wales.

Public sector contracting opportunities are published on the Sell2Wales portal and once registered with all profiles, providers can be alerted to tender opportunities that match their specific profile.

<https://www.sell2wales.gov.wales/>

To ensure you do not miss out on any contracts, you must:

- **Complete and register your profile** - the organisations details, contacts, etc; describe your product or service succinctly, stating who your current customers or clients are, and including all relevant contact details
- **Secondly**, ensure that you complete the registration fully by selecting the codes for all the services that you provide under the main category of health and social care
- **Thirdly**, complete the **Supplier Finder Profile** - this allows you to advertise on the website. Here you can provide detailed information on your services so that:
 - a. Commissioners or partner organisations can find your profile via the search tool
 - b. Key words specifically chosen highlight the services you offer
 - c. Your chances of receiving a direct invitation from Commissioners using the 'quick quote' function will be much improved
- **Finally**, please be sure to complete the **Alerts Profile** providing the geographic locations where you offer the services, as well as your product/service categories that will be matched against any commissioning contracts, which then immediately informs you via your e-mail

eTendering

In very simple terms, eTendering enables the tendering process to be conducted electronically. By 2018 all public sector organisations will be using this method to source their products and services. There are numerous benefits to both commissioners and providers in adopting electronic tendering; e.g. process efficiencies, cost savings, improved payment/cash flow, enhanced transparency, to name just a few.

Please find the link below for the eTendering portal, you can register with an user name and password - this will allow you to access any relevant tender details once you have received your email alert:

<https://etenderwales.bravosolution.co.uk/home.html>

In each newsletter we will introduce you to some procurement vocabulary:

Open Procedure - Procedure whereby any interested business may submit a tender

Restricted Procedure - This is a two stage process that allows commissioners to draw up a short list of interested parties by undertaking a pre-qualification stage, prior to the issue of the invitation to tender (ITT) documents. This is most appropriate when many providers exist within the market and it is not feasible to issue an ITT to each one

Request for Quotation (RFQ) - Selection of a provider through an RFQ from a number of potential suppliers. The level of expenditure at which suppliers must be selected by an RFQ and the number of quotations required will be determined by the organisation's financial regulations. Typically, at least 3 quotations will be required by these regulations

Common Procurement Vocabulary (CPV)- A single classification system applicable to public procurement to standardise the references used by Local Authorities and Health Boards, and that describe the subject matter of the contracts. There is a main vocabulary and also a sub vocabulary which breaks down the main and describes more specifically the work activity or service.

Carys Griffiths, Age Cymru

Advocacy Network's 'Big Event' 21 September 2016, Maesmawr Hall Hotel, Caersws

Please note that this event is specifically for advocates and advocacy providers.

Age Cymru are delighted to once again hold their annual advocacy network 'Big Event' with fantastic speakers lined up to inform, facilitate, discuss and offer useful tools that you can take back to your individual services.

Our confirmed speakers are:

- David Clayton, Head of Protection and Advocacy from the Welsh Government to discuss the Regulation and Inspection of Independent Professional Advocacy services and to explore in more detail the implications of this and to clarify some of the challenges that this entails.
- David Teague, Assistant Commissioner and Helen Thomas, Senior Policy Officer from the Information Commissioner's Office who will be exploring issues around data storage, confidentiality, breaching confidentiality, and implications for data breaches or otherwise as a result of the Social Services and Well-being Wales Act new duty to report.
- Gail Petty and Kate Mercer, who will be talking to us about the new advocacy outcomes framework and toolkit
- Rachel Rowlands, Chief Executive from Age Connects Morgannwg, will be giving us an insight into the need for the Golden Thread Advocacy Programme based on the Safeguarding Advocacy work they delivered
- Louise Hughes, Age Cymru will be introducing the round table discussion session on why advocacy is the golden thread in the Act, what opportunities that presents for advocates and exploring good practice that could support the future development of services.

The event will be chaired by Ian Thomas, Chief Executive, Age Cymru.

All speakers will also be facilitating round table discussions on their specialist subject areas so that advocates get an opportunity not just to listen but to participate and learn from the event as well. Please note that due to higher than usual numbers of delegates who attend this event and the need to cover our costs we do have a small delegate rate charge of £35 to attend this event.

If you would like further information regarding this event or a booking form, please email Ffion: ffion.jones@agecymru.org.uk.

Getting the help you need from Social Services: A guide to the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

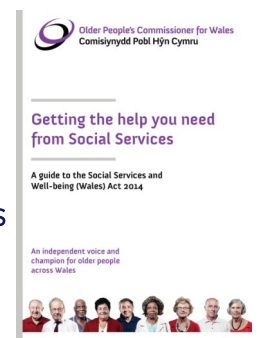
Following the implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 in April, the Older People's Commissioner for Wales has produced a bilingual guide to help older people understand their rights under the new Act.

The Act aims to create a national approach to the way in which Local Authorities promote well-being and protect people from abuse and neglect.

For the first time, the Act ensures that carers are treated on the same basis as those using services and have a right to support if assessed as needing it. There is now no threshold of caring hours to be eligible for a carer's assessment.

The guide is available on the OPCW website:

[Getting the help you need from Social Services](#)



New information site launched to improve well-being in Wales

A landmark new website service has been launched to help people find the information and advice they need to improve their well-being and access local support services in Wales.

The Dewis Cymru website is an important first for Wales – a single, clear and reliable point of access that can be used by members of the public as well as care service professionals across Wales to help support people achieve their well-being goals.

The new website forms part of the ongoing delivery of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act which highlights how the provision of high quality information plays a central role in helping people remain independent, manage their well-being and shape the care services they receive.

Initially developed as collaboration between the Welsh Local Government Association, the SSIA, the Data Unit, the North Wales Single Point of Access Programme and the North Wales Information Network, Dewis Cymru has now been adopted by almost all of the local authority areas across Wales.

www.dewis.cymru

Advocacy in the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016

The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 is designed to support implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. It provides a statutory framework for the regulation and inspection of social care services and the social care workforce, including advocacy services.

Welsh Government are presently consulting on Phase 1 implementation of the 2016 Act. In the consultation document (*) they state that their intention is to limit registration to Independent Professional Advocacy (IPA) as defined in the Social Services and Well-being Act Part 10 Code of Practice (Advocacy) (**).

Ministers do not propose to extend regulation to IMCA/IMHA or other forms of advocacy, and state that when an advocacy provider delivers a range of different services, the 2016 Act will apply “solely to IPA commissioned by local authorities to provide advocacy to support individuals to express their views, wishes and feelings as specified in the advocacy code of practice.”

Welsh Government propose that IPAs should come within the scope of the definition of social care worker as set out in sections 79(1)(b) and (c) of the 2016 Act. This would include "anyone who manages a place at, or from which, a regulated service is provided, or who, in the course of their employment with a service provider, provides care and support to any person in Wales in connection with a regulated service provided by that provider."

This means that an IPA would:

- fall within the scope of Social Care Wales’s functions (SCW will replace the Care Council for Wales in April 2017);
- be subject to codes which SCW produces; and
- be within the range of activity where SCW has a duty to provide high standards in services, conduct and practise etc.

Ministers propose to limit the requirement for registration to managers of advocacy services, which would be in addition to the need for advocacy practices to register as a service provider under Part 1 of the Act.

Questions 25 - 29 in the consultation document relate specifically to Regulation of Advocacy Services.

Advocacy providers, advocates and people who use advocacy are encouraged to submit responses to this important consultation, the deadline for which is **20 September 2016**. Age Cymru’s response will be drafted by Rosanne Palmer (Policy Advisor) who can be contacted at: rosanne.palmer@agecymru.org.uk or tel. 02920 431555.

(*) Consultation document: <http://gov.wales/consultations/healthsocialcare/regulation-and-inspection-act/?lang=en>

(**) Social Services and Well-being Act Part 10 Code of Practice (Advocacy).
<http://gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/151218part10en.pdf>

Paul Swann, Age Cymru

The Care Council for Wales Learning and Information Hub

The Care Council for Wales has been tasked to work with a range of partners to develop a national learning and development plan to support the implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act. The overall aim of this Welsh Government-funded initiative is to ensure the workforce is supported and informed to deliver social services in accordance with Welsh law, and its interface with other relevant statutes, and to practice in-line with the principles of the Act.

The national learning plan includes the development of a range of learning materials that can be accessed for free from one central [Learning and Information Hub](#) that also includes other information about the Act and its implementation. This prospectus provides an 'at-a-glance' guide to these resources.

Please note new resources are added to the Hub at regular intervals and this prospectus will be updated frequently.

Independent Professional Advocacy Training Resource

These resources have been designed to give you an overview of the key aspects of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 in relation to advocacy and specifically Independent Professional Advocacy. This resource has been developed by Age Cymru, in partnership with Disability Wales, Swansea University and former Action for Advocacy Chief Executive Martin Coyle. In this training manual, they explore Part 10 of the Act on advocacy and how advocacy fits with other parts of the Act. It also aims to build awareness and understanding of advocacy among those who could have the potential to work with, or make referrals to, advocacy services

All the materials are now available on the Care Council for Wales Hub. You can find them here:

English <http://www.ccwales.org.uk/learning-resources-1/advocacy/>

Welsh <http://www.cgymru.org.uk/adnoddau-dysgu-1/eiriolaeth/>

OPAAL launches Older People's Advocacy Manifesto 2016

Ahead of last year's General Election OPAAL produced a set of 5 key asks which members contributed to. As you may already know, OPAAL have consulted with members again to develop an up to date set of five key asks of UK government and devolved parliaments/assemblies in the form of their [Older People's Advocacy Manifesto 2016](#).

This Manifesto is a call to action by OPAAL to ensure older people's right to access advocacy is accounted for in policy and legislation, and older people are included in consultations and policy development.

We also encourage members to share the Manifesto via their own networks, and if you use social media we also ask that you share this alongside the #advocacyworks hashtag to help us to keep the conversation going about advocacy for older people (our twitter handle is @OPAALUK).

For more information, please visit: [Older People's Advocacy Manifesto 2016](#).

National Advocacy awards

The Awards are open to anyone contributing to the field of [Independent Advocacy](#). This includes individuals, organisations, informal groups and professionals. We don't want to hear about *good practice* - we want to celebrate, share and learn about *outstanding* people, organisations and practice.



There are 5 categories people and organisations can be nominated in:

1. Outstanding advocate
2. Outstanding service
3. Best co-production
4. Outstanding contribution to equality and diversity
5. Best support of advocacy

From the 5 category winners, one will receive the overall 'Golden Advocacy Award' of the year.

Every nomination will be recognised with a Certificate of Nomination.

The best 4 entries will be shortlisted and the winner announced at the Award Ceremony October 12th 2016 in Birmingham.

[Click here to book tickets](#) for the event.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.advocacyawards.co.uk/>

SIAA guidelines for advocates working in prisons

The Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (SIAA) believes that everyone who needs independent advocacy should have access to it. However they recognise that access does vary from area to area and will be dependent on local Contracts or Service Level Agreements. Priority is given, in all areas, to those with a statutory right of access as detailed in the Mental Health (Care & Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003. The right of access is for anyone with a mental disorder (mental health problem, learning disability, dementia, acquired brain injury) and includes access to both one-to-one and to collective advocacy.

The SIAA has been aware of and has reported on very limited access to independent advocacy within many Scottish prisons. The transfer of responsibility for healthcare from the Scottish Prison Service in 2011 has led to NHS Boards looking at this gap in relation to their local advocacy planning and advocacy organisations increasingly have to consider how they can provide advocacy within a prison setting.

To read the guidelines, please visit the link below:

[SIAA Guidelines for advocates working in prisons](#)

Useful training and events

The 2016 Be a force for change: National Advocacy conference 13th October 2016, Birmingham NEC

For more information please visit:

http://www.katemercer-training.com/conference_2016/

Making your advocacy accessible

Mon 19th Sep 9:30am, full day , London—£114

This course looks at how advocates and services can make their service accessible to the groups of people they aim to support. In particular, the course explores the barriers potential service users face in accessing the advocacy service, how to establish accessible referral processes (including referrals from professionals, family members and carers) and accessing hard to reach groups (such as people who lack capacity or have augmented communication).

Managing Advocacy Services

Thu 6th Oct 9:30am, full day, London—£114

Managing advocacy services requires the manager to develop skills across a broad spectrum of areas: from understanding what support individual advocates need to effectively submitting a tender bid, managers need to be competent in many areas. This one day course will address managing and supporting advocates, how to effectively involve service users in the running of the advocacy service, building relationships with commissioners, building relationships with service providers and effective business planning.

Measuring Advocacy Outcomes

Tue 1st Nov 9:30am, full day, London—£114

This course is primarily aimed at managers and experienced advocates who want to learn more about what outcomes to measure and how to do this. The course explores the difference between qualitative and quantitative outcomes, development of effective of record keeping and how to use the Net Promoter Score (NPS) to gauge service user satisfaction. you will also have chance to explore how to use your data to influence local policy and practice.

For more information on the above training, please visit:

[Www.katemercertraining.co.uk](http://www.katemercertraining.co.uk)

Useful publications

Advocacy Outcomes Framework: Measuring the impact of independent advocacy

The development of an outcomes framework for advocacy that will help advocacy providers evidence good practice, and commissioners and people who use advocacy know if an organisation is delivering good outcomes for people.

NDTi research identified there is currently no substantive body of evidence around the impact of advocacy – either positive or negative. An outcomes framework will help to address this challenge and help show the value of good advocacy.

To view the document, please visit:

http://www.ndti.org.uk/uploads/files/Advocacy_framework.pdf

Being Heard: a self-advocacy toolkit for carers

The Carers Self-Advocacy Toolkit is a group of integrated resources produced by Carers Scotland to help carers get their voices heard.

At its centre is our Being Heard guide, which provides information and suggests techniques to help carers advocate for themselves. It also offers signposts and links to other elements of the Toolkit for carers to access for more information.

For more information, please visit the link:

[Being Heard: a self advocacy toolkit for carers](#)

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- If you have any comments or questions about the articles
- If there's anything you would like to see in the next newsletter

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