



Consultation Response

Strategic Equality Objectives 2020 – 2024

Public Health Wales

November 2019

Introduction

Age Cymru is the leading charity working to improve the lives of all older people in Wales. We believe older people should be able to lead healthy and fulfilled lives, have adequate income, access to high quality services and the opportunity to shape their own future. We seek to provide a strong voice for all older people in Wales and to raise awareness of the issues of importance to them.

We are pleased to respond to Public Health Wales' consultation on their Strategic Equality Objectives 2020 – 2024.

Objective 4: Access to services and our environment

We welcome Public Health Wales' proposal to 'work to reduce physical and other barriers from our places of work and practice', and the examples listed as to how this will be achieved. We particularly welcome the commitment to work with others to embed the All Wales Standards for Accessible Communication and Information.

It is vital that the built environment is accessible and inclusive to enable older people to access services. The provision of facilities such as accessible toilets, lifts, handrails and public seating in premises help to facilitate this, along with good public transport links to help ensure that services are accessible to older people.

With reference to the provision of online services/programs, we would highlight that only 49% of people aged 75 or over were internet users in 2018-19.¹ We believe that older people must be supported and encouraged to acquire digital skills and get online, if they are able to and can afford to do so. Those who cannot or do not want to do so should continue to access services and support in a way that best suits them. Services provided online need to be high quality and

¹ Welsh Government, National Survey for Wales 2018-19 Internet use and digital skills
<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2019-09/internet-use-and-digital-skills-national-survey-wales-april-2018-march-2019-207.pdf>

easy to use, whilst offline services should be of equal quality and fully accessible. Service providers must ensure that the provision of online information is not to the detriment of the provision of information in other formats.

We also welcome the commitment to ‘analyse data to inform and target interventions to improve and report on outcomes’ as this will help ensure support goes where it is needed most and support transparency in decision making.

Objective 5: Listening, learning and responding

We welcome Public Health Wales’ proposal to be ‘an organisation who listens to individuals and under-represented groups, and will actively use their insights to inform and direct our work’. We are supportive of the examples as to how this will be achieved, including engagement with service users. Wales has a population with the highest proportion of older people in the UK and health services must adapt and respond to the fact that more people are living longer, often with chronic conditions in older age. Older people are the main adult users of most health and care services, and it is important that health services are designed with older people’s needs in mind. Older people must be at the centre of decisions and developments which impact upon them and their ability to access health services.