



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Information and Advice Action Plan

December 2016



Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

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Information and Advice Action Plan - Introduction

Strong and well integrated advice services have an important role to play in promoting the wellbeing and prosperity which are essential to building resilient communities.

The Welsh Government is committed to working with partners to establish a comprehensive network of quality assured information and advice providers from the public, private and third sectors by 2026. Working together, providers will deliver a range of information, advice and support, including preventative help and crisis relief. These are important to individuals, families and society in general.

In 2013 the Welsh Government's Advice Services Review of third sector services covering social welfare law, made a number of recommendations. These were broadly grouped into 3 themes:

- Funding, commissioning and delivering advice services
- Developing a quality assurance framework for information and advice
- Developing Advice Networks

Good progress has been made against each of these themes in partnership with the advice sector and other stakeholders.

This document focuses on those practical actions needed to make further progress towards our vision for 2026. It has been developed by Welsh Government in partnership with the National Advice Network and other stakeholders and is intended to be a living document.

The actions set out in this report are not matters for the Welsh Government alone. The sector needs to make best use of the limited resources available to provide the best possible information and advice services to the people of Wales. That requires all stakeholders (including providers, funders, planners and policy-makers) to adopt a strategic approach. They need to build on past successes, learn from best practice, and generate measurable benefits by working together in partnership.

Good advice has a vital part to play in improving people's lives and is an essential part of delivering our Equalities Objectives and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act. Information and advice make a significant contribution to improving employability, tackling financial exclusion, reducing Child Poverty and Adverse Childhood Experiences and contributing to the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. I look forward to receiving reports on progress against the actions which will deliver integrated advice services which offer clear and tangible benefits for the people of Wales.



Carl Sargeant
Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children

Commitment: Welsh Government will work with the advice sector and others to implement the Information and Advice Quality Framework for Wales and promote a culture of continuous quality improvement

Vision: All information and advice providers delivering services in Wales are accredited to the appropriate level by the conclusion of the designated implementation period.

Actions	Timelines	Key contributors (lead shown in bold)	Success criteria and evaluation measures
1. Welsh Government to implement and support the phased introduction of the IAQF Wales for Social Welfare law information and advice providers including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support and training for the information and advice sector ○ Awareness raising for the public, providers and funders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gradual rollout of IAQF Wales between April 2017 and March 2020 • 6 monthly monitoring of IAQF rollout by NAN • Rolling 3 year audit cycle thereafter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh Government • Other public sector commissioners of information and advice services • Other funders of advice services • Advice Quality Standard owners • Information and advice providers • Accrediting body for Standard Owners • National Advice Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number/ proportion of social welfare law information and advice providers accredited by March 2020 to the appropriate level • Number of Advice Quality Standard Owners offering proportionate and accessible accreditation against the IAQF Wales • Quality assurance consistently recognised as an essential revenue cost by advice service funders

Actions	Timelines	Key contributors (lead shown in bold)	Success criteria and evaluation measures
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good practice examples identified and shared through IAQF audit process including peer support • All Welsh Government information and advice funded services IAQF accredited within 6 months of date of award following roll out of IAQF • Number/ proportion of Information and advice providers contributing to continuous improvement through participation in best practice sharing and peer support • Proportion of people able to access the advice services they need (National Survey for Wales)
2. Encouraging other funders of advice services to recognise and adopt IAQF Wales as an assessment and award criteria	Commence 17/18	Welsh Government National Advice Network Advice funders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of IAQF Wales as an assessment and award criteria by other funders of advice services including other public sector funders

Actions	Timelines	Key contributors (lead shown in bold)	Success criteria and evaluation measures
3. Welsh Government to explore with partners the establishment of a second tier specialist support service for IAQF accredited providers to include, if appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPD accredited adviser training offer • Telephone advice on complex cases • Direct representation for test cases • Occasional policy evidence papers 	Second tier support service to be explored during 2018/19	Welsh Government National Advice Network Specialist Advice Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of organisations using second tier support • Delivery and take up of CPD accredited training • Satisfaction levels with services offered • Policy papers produced by second tier support service • Outcomes and impact of test cases
4. Welsh Government to explore opportunities to adapt and extend IAQF Wales to cover the broad range of information and advice services	By 19/20	Welsh Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The broad range of information and advice services adopting IAQF Wales principles
5. Welsh Government to maintain strategic oversight of IAQF Wales	Annual	Welsh Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual best practice updates • IAQF revisions
6. Work with/ or encourage the development of local/regional networks	2018 onwards	Welsh Government Local Government Local information and advice providers Wider stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number or proportion of local/regional networks demonstrating effective networking ensuring no door is the wrong door.

Commitment: Welsh Government to ensure the strategic design and effective delivery of information and advice services in partnership with the advice sector and wider stakeholders

Vision: People in Wales have equitable access to information and advice services which both prevent and address crisis need.

Actions	Timeline	Key contributors (lead shown in bold)	Success criteria and evaluation measures
7. National Advice Network to produce and share a key messages paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key messages paper by March 2017 	National Advice Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing awareness amongst providers and funders of advice sector contribution
8. Advice sector seek to work with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Service Boards where advice and support has been identified as a priority Regional Partnership Boards to ensure wider advice offer is fully integrated with Area Plans produced under the Social Services and Well-being 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSB/ Regional Partnership Board pilots areas 16/17 – rollout 17/18 onwards 	National Advice Network Welsh Government Public Service Boards Partnership Boards Advice Sector DWP WLGA Local Government Health sector Wider stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number or proportion of Public Service Boards having considered information and advice services as a way of meeting their priorities Number or proportion of public sector Partnership Boards factoring needs analysis and preventative

Actions	Timeline	Key contributors (lead shown in bold)	Success criteria and evaluation measures
(Wales) Act 2014			approach in area plans as above
9. Improving service user experience by removing barriers and ensuring inclusive engagement of all groups, including minority groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop by 19/20 	Advice Sector Wider service providers Public Service Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Survey for Wales/ Future Generations indicator measure of people satisfied with their ability to access the services they need Examples of good practice shared through IAQF Wales
10. Work to shift demand over time from crisis help towards prevention	20/21	Welsh Government Other stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of new programmes which include preventative and/or crisis help

Actions	Timeline	Key contributors (lead shown in bold)	Success criteria and evaluation measures
<p>11. Welsh Government to encourage information and advice providers to create and maintain their entries on the Dewis portal so that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals can find the help they need • Providers and other stakeholders can make effective referrals • Funders and commissioners can see clearly what services are available both locally and nationally to inform service planning 	<p>Map published 2016 and maintained/ promoted thereafter</p>	<p>Welsh Government Advice Providers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number/ proportion of local information and advice services appear on online map • Increasing usage of the portal to identify information and advice providers
<p>12. Welsh Government to publish independent advice needs analysis</p>	<p>Needs analysis published March 2017 and maintained/ promoted thereafter</p>	<p>Welsh Government Other funders Local/regional networks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice needs analysis published in by end March 2017 • Advice needs analysis referenced and refreshed as part of subsequent commissioning processes
<p>13. National Advice Network to reflect collective evidence based policy concerns to policy makers.</p>	<p>Working group to be established to look at practical steps 2017/18</p>	<p>Local and regional networks Advice providers National Advice Network</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy changes consequent to collective policy concerns shared with the National Advice Network

Actions	Timeline	Key contributors (lead shown in bold)	Success criteria and evaluation measures
14. National Advice Network to monitor delivery against the action plan and report to the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children on emerging priorities	Annually in April	National Advice Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Report to Cabinet Secretary

Commitment: Welsh Government will adopt a strategic approach to funding for quality assured information and advice services and will encourage partner organisations to adopt the same approach.

Vision: Existing and potential funders of information and advice support quality assured services which close the gap between need and supply having reference to national and local priorities.

Actions	Timeline	Key contributors (lead shown in bold)	Success criteria and evaluation measures
15. Welsh Government to explore a funding advisory hub to encourage a consistent strategic approach to information and advice funding based on agreed principles which support national and local funders and delivery bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding advisory hub proposal for development in 17/18 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welsh Government – direct advice services funding leads Welsh Government – indirect advice services leads Other public sector funders Other current and potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding advisory hub established if appropriate Funding advisory hub used by a range of commissioners and policy makers for advice Funders and policy makers adopting consistent

Actions	Timeline	Key contributors (lead shown in bold)	Success criteria and evaluation measures
		funders of advice services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non funder advocates for better commissioning (policy influencers) 	assessment criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and Advice providers reporting a reduced administrative burden • Funding gaps filled (between need and supply) • New or additional funding leveraged
16. Welsh Government to integrate their funded advice service provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamlined SWL programme from April 2018 • Further integration of Welsh Government funded provision thereafter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh Government • Funding advisory hub 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh Government working with the funding advisory hub in revising existing programmes or developing new programmes which deliver information or advice or which may give rise to increased demand for these services
17. Welsh Government and the National Advice Network to encourage other funders and commissioners to adopt the same approach.	2017 - 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh Government & National Advice Network • Wales Funders Forum • Local Government • Local Health Boards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number or proportion of funders and commissioners working with the funding advisory hub

Actions	Timeline	Key contributors (lead shown in bold)	Success criteria and evaluation measures
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other funders 	
18. Funders and commissioners of information and advice to support a mix of preventative measures and crisis help based on need	2017-21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh Government & National Advice Network • Wales Funders Forum • Information and advice providers and representative groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of new programmes which include preventative and/or crisis help • Number or proportion of programmes taking a well-being and future generations approach to services.
19. National Advice Network to scope further work on potential shared outcome measures	Shared outcomes work - 3 to 4 year timescale	National Advice Network	Outcome measures developed and adopted by 2021