

## LGBTQ+ Action Plan

The Board of Community Health Councils (the Board) is pleased to submit this consultation response on behalf of 6 of the Community Health Councils (CHCs) in Wales.

CHCs are independent bodies that reflect the views and represent the interests of people living in Wales in their National Health Service (NHS). CHCs encourage and support people to have a voice in the design, planning and delivery of NHS services.

There are 7 CHCs in Wales. Each one is made up of local volunteer members who live in the communities they serve, supported by a small team of paid staff. Each CHC:

- Carries out regular visits to health services to hear from people using the service (and the people providing care) to influence the changes that can make a big difference
- Reaches out more widely to people within local communities to provide information, and to gather views and experiences of NHS services.
- CHCs use what they hear to check how services are performing overall and to make sure the NHS takes action to make things better where this is needed
- Gets involved with health service managers when they are thinking about making changes to the way services are delivered so that people and communities have their say from the start

- Provides a complaints advocacy service that is free, independent and confidential to help people to raise their concerns about NHS care and treatment.

The Board of CHCs (the Board) exists to support, assist, advise and manage the performance of CHCs. It represents the collective views of CHCs across Wales.

## **Questions:**

### **1. Do you think the Action Plan will increase equality for LGBTQ+ people and what do you think the priorities should be?**

The plan is moving in the right direction with regards to establishing equality and it is welcomed that the rights of LGBTQ+ people are recognised across the public sector.

We are pleased with point (3) (we will ensure that all public service workers understand LGBTQ+ needs, encouraging comprehensive, intersectional equalities training to be undertaken where necessary) to ensure public service employees understand the needs of LGBTQ+ people appropriately.

It is important that the reason for any data collection is fully explained and the decision to share the information must rest with the person.

**2. Do you agree with the overarching aims? What would you add or take away in relation the overarching aims?**

We actively support all efforts to promote equality and inclusivity.

We have a particular interest in ensuring that NHS bodies and Trusts engage with service users and take all views into consideration when making decisions.

**3. Do you agree with the proposed actions? What would you add or take away in relation the actions?**

It is important that the reason for any data collection is fully explained and the decision to share the information rests with the person.

**4. What are the key challenges that could stop the aims and actions being achieved?**

The action plan needs to be properly resourced from the outset and capacity also needs careful consideration. There is a need for staff to be properly trained and supported. The initial drive should not be lost due to staff shortages. We also feel that the action plan needs to have robust financial backing.

**5. What resources (this could include funding, staff time, training, access to support or advocacy services among other things) do you think will be necessary in achieving**

## **the aims and actions outlined?**

We feel that staff training, sufficient funding and awareness are vital to ensure the action plan achieves its aims and the outlined actions.

### **6. We would like to know your views on the effects that these proposals would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.**

**What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?**

We welcome the proposals for people to use the Welsh language, however we do have the following concerns: -

- We have concerns over online/paper dictionaries/ online tools not keeping abreast with current trends; this, together with a lack of, or no standardisation, there is on occasion a tendency to use an English term in order to 'fill in the gaps in the language's vocabulary'. This is particularly prevalent in areas such as health, primary and secondary and social care.
- We find that the delay in the time a Welsh phrase has been agreed, the damage has been done and the English term has been adopted and used in everyday vocabulary.

**7. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy approach could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.**

We feel that the Independent Expert Panel should work with the Welsh Language Standardisation Panel to ensure parity and standardising of mainstream terminology of both languages.

**8. This plan has been developed in co-construction, and discussions around language and identity have shown that the acronym LGBTQ+ should be used. This stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning people, with the + representing other sexual identities. As a result we refer to LGBTQ+ people in the Plan.**

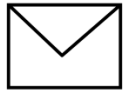
**What are your views on this term and is there an alternative you would prefer?**

We agree with the term but also recognise that there will be different views and usage across communities and that languages also change. Therefore it is important and the terminology used is kept under review and changes made when necessary.

9. We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them:

CHC's would be interested to understand the timeline for delivering the actions within the plan and if a midpoint review will be undertaken.

## Board of CHC's Contact details



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