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More than just words....

Delivering the 'Active Offer' Information Pack – Health

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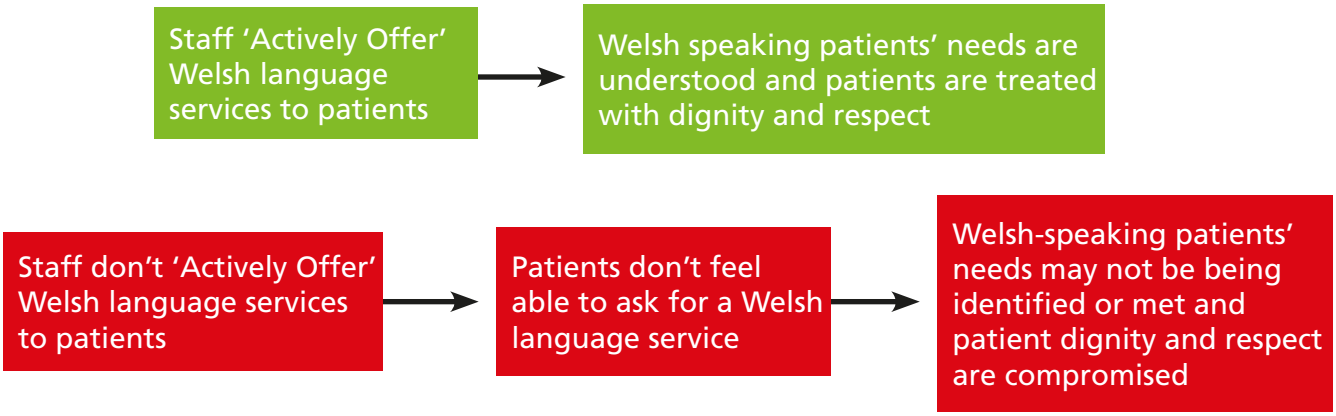
Introduction

Welcome to the 'More than just words....' Information Pack. This pack is aimed at supporting all staff across NHS Wales in making an 'Active Offer'. We recognise that many of you may already be providing an 'Active Offer'. But for some of you, this will be a new concept. This Information Pack contains the minimum that should be provided to users of your services. It contains this booklet, a DVD of patient stories, a 'Welcome to our Ward' poster example, a Pocket Book for Students and a 'Working Welsh' poster.

What is an 'Active Offer'?

An 'Active Offer' simply means providing a service in Welsh without someone having to ask for it. The Welsh language should be as visible as the English language.

- It means creating a change in culture that takes the responsibility off the patient to ask for a service through the medium of Welsh.
- Providing a service that is patient-centred is fundamental to the 'Active Offer'. What this means in practice is providing a tailor-made service that enables the individual to be assured that he/she is in control and fully understands the services being offered.
- Making an 'Active Offer' means not making assumptions that all Welsh speakers speak English anyway! It ensures Welsh-speaking patients are treated with dignity and respect by asking them what their preferred language is and acting on it.
- What is needed is a proactive approach that ensures language need is identified as an integral part of safe high-quality patient care.
- Making an 'Active Offer' is also about creating the right environment where patients feel empowered and confident that their needs will be met.



How can I deliver the 'Active Offer'?

We all have a part to play in ensuring quality and safety for Welsh speakers. It is a team effort and everyone's contribution counts.

Delivering the 'Active Offer' can be achieved in many different ways and does not need to be costly. It may be challenging in some areas due to a possible shortage of Welsh speakers, but non-Welsh speakers also have a role to play in delivering the 'Active Offer'.

Here are some practical things you can do to provide an 'Active Offer':

"I make an 'Active Offer' by greeting patients bilingually. Knowing who speaks Welsh in my team means I'm able to ask them for help if a patient needs to speak Welsh."

"I make an 'Active Offer' by asking each patient what their first language is and by recording it in their notes if it's not already there. This means that everyone is aware of the patient's language need."

"I provide an 'Active Offer' by greeting my patients in Welsh if that's their first language."

"I provide an 'Active Offer' by labelling our sandwiches and cakes bilingually. By doing this, I am meeting our Welsh-speaking patients' needs."

Bilingual greetings

Here are examples of bilingual greetings you can use. If you, or someone you know doesn't have any Welsh language skills or is learning, why don't you show the table below to them to help them to make an 'Active Offer' like in the examples above?

English	Cymraeg/Welsh
Hi, how're things?	Shwmae/Su'mae = **Shoo my (S Wales)** **Sim my (N Wales)**
Good morning	Bore da = **Bore eh dah**
Good evening	Noswaith dda = **Noss wythe ('th' as in 'think') thah ('th' as in 'the')**
How are you?	Sut ydych chi? = **Shoo deech chee? ('ch' as in Loch) (S Wales) Sid dach chee? ('ch' as in Loch) (N Wales)**

If you answer the phone often, why not use some of the following examples of bilingual phone greetings:

Bore da Ysbyty xxx / xxx Hospital good morning…
(pronounced: Bore eh dah uss butt ee)

Helo Sam sy'n siarad, hello Sam speaking
(pronounced: Hell-oh Sam seen shah-radd)

For more useful Welsh words and phrases, take a look at the 'Pocket Book for Students' included with this information pack.

How do I provide information to service users bilingually?

Here are some examples:

- All Welsh-speaking staff in your organisation should wear a 'Working Welsh' or 'Learning Welsh' pin badge or lanyard. For information on obtaining some of these, contact your Welsh Language Officer.
- Make sure that all signs are in Welsh and English and displayed with Welsh on the left, and English on the right and/or Welsh on top and English below.
- All information which is public-facing should be bilingual.
- Make sure your staff know the importance of having bilingual menus to ensure Welsh-speaking patients are making an informed meal choice.

Provide visible commitments through bilingual signage

What are the benefits of the 'Active Offer'?

- Patients feel more comfortable discussing personal and emotional matters in their first language. Making an 'Active Offer' will help to ensure a quality service that meets patients' needs.
- Language is at the heart of effective clinical assessment and safe treatment. Making an 'Active Offer' recognises that effective communication is key to meeting the needs of Welsh-speaking patients.
- Making an 'Active Offer' is particularly important for vulnerable people such as **children and young people, mental health service users, people with learning disabilities, older people and people with speech and language difficulties**.
- Making an 'Active Offer' is a behaviour that reflects the core values of the NHS to treat all patients as individuals and with **dignity and respect**.

Who is responsible for delivering the `Active Offer´?

The Strategic Framework 'More than just words….' action plans have identified a number of areas where the strengthening of Welsh language services is crucial in order to provide an equitable service.

The responsibility lies not only with your Welsh Language Officer but with all other departments across your Health Board or Trust. Each of the sections below refers to specific actions within the strategic framework.

Workforce & Organisational Development

Workforce Planning and Organisational Development have a central part to play in the delivery of 'More than just words...' for example:

- Provide staff training in relation to the framework and mainstream into induction programmes.
- Lead on the development of a Bilingual Skills Strategy that will identify the language needs of the organisation.
- All relevant education and development programmes to include awareness of the 'Active Offer'.
- Training programmes for staff to be offered in order to increase the ability of staff to provide services through the medium of Welsh.
- Initial training programmes to focus on encouraging staff to use the Welsh language skills they have and increase staff confidence to use those skills.
- Welsh language skills are mainstreamed into the KSF (Knowledge and Skills Framework) core competencies and should be reflected in discussions at annual staff appraisals.
- Workforce planning should reflect the commitment to strengthen Welsh language services.
- Map current provision and capacity to deliver an 'Active Offer' within services, in particular dementia services, as this is a specific group identified within the framework as a vulnerable group who will need specific attention.
- Develop an effective recruitment and retention strategy to ensure that staff teams have the capacity to provide services through the medium of Welsh.

IT Departments

- Data systems must enable the service to operate bilingually. For example, Welsh language interfaces should be available for those members of staff who speak Welsh.
- Welsh language software (such as Cysgliad) should be available to all Welsh-speaking staff who wish to use it. For more information, see the 'Can technology help?' section.
- The e-rostering system should allow Welsh-speaking staff to be matched with Welsh-speaking service users.

For guidance on Welsh language technologies, websites and software guides, visit: **http://www.comisiynyddygymraeg.org/English/Assistance/Pages/welshlanguagetechnology.aspx**

All front-line staff

If you have contact with patients and the public either face-to-face or on the phone, you should:

- Comply with the mandatory requirements regarding the language skills element of the Electronic Staff Record (ESR).
- Ensure you know who the Welsh speakers within your team are. They will be an invaluable source of support when dealing with a Welsh-speaking patient initially by offering them words of comfort.
- Show that you are a Welsh speaker through wearing a 'Working Welsh' lanyard or badge. These can be obtained from your Welsh Language Officer.
- If you are learning Welsh, why not wear a 'Learning Welsh' badge or lanyard? If you would like a stock of these, contact your Welsh Language Officer.
- Try and use Welsh when dealing with the public, using simple phrases when you communicate. To help you do this you could use the included 'Pocket Book for Students' developed by the University of South Wales that gives you Welsh translations of words and phrases relevant to health and social services, you could also use the table of phrases found on page 3 of this pack.
- Ensure your ward or department has a bilingual environment and is welcoming for Welsh speakers. You can do this through providing Welsh language reading materials (such as Y Cymro, Golwg or other Welsh language papers and magazines). You can also help create a bilingual environment by making sure that S4C and radio stations like BBC Radio Cymru are available for Welsh speakers.
- Ensure that you know who your Welsh Language Officer is. They will be a valuable source of support and guidance for you in trying to make an 'Active Offer'.

Understanding the Context

The Welsh Language Strategic Framework 'More than just words...' was launched in 2012. Its focus is to provide a framework to strengthen Welsh language services within health, social services and social care. It recognises that many people can only communicate and participate effectively in their care as equal partners through the medium of Welsh.

If there is any doubt as to how crucial Welsh language services are to service-users, the User Experience DVD found within this information pack demonstrates clearly how important they are. The Strategic Framework is an ambitious strategy and its three-year action plans aim to improve users' experiences of care by increasing access to services in the Welsh language. Our vision is for Welsh speakers to receive services that are centred on their communication needs rather than those of the provider.

In order to achieve this, **everyone** has a part to play in delivering a Welsh language service, as a Welsh speaker or a non-Welsh speaker.

As you work in an organisation which provides services to the public, you must ensure that you are aware of the language needs of your community. This will be reflected in your Bilingual Skills Strategy. For more information on the language profile of your community, contact your Welsh Language Officer.

Legal Context

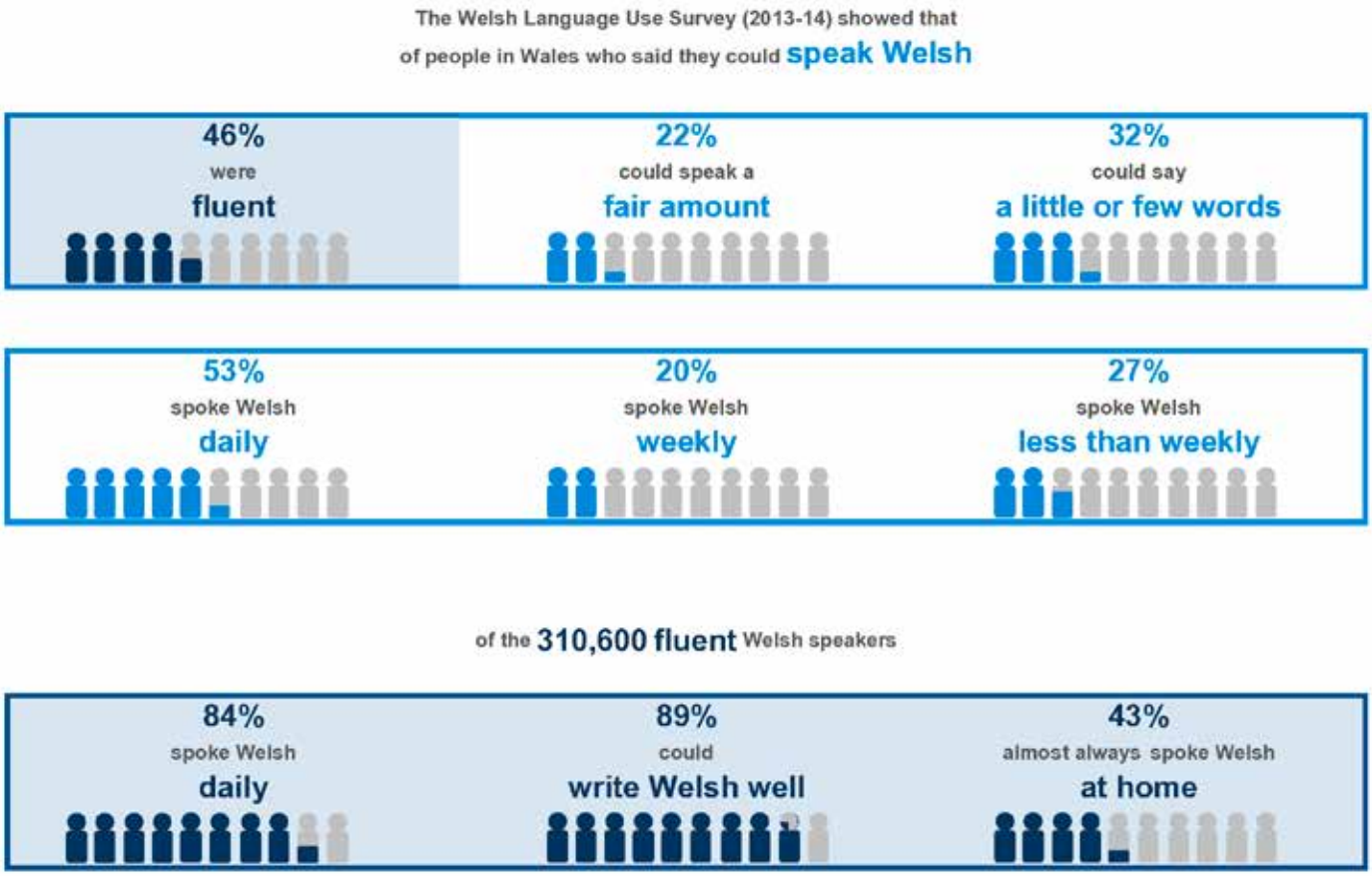
The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 received Royal Assent on 9 February 2011.

This Measure by the National Assembly for Wales:

- Gives the Welsh language official status in Wales
- Provides for a Welsh Language Partnership Council
- Establishes the role of the Welsh Language Commissioner
- Provides for an Advisory Panel to the Welsh Language Commissioner
- Makes provision for promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language
- Makes provision about standards relating to the Welsh language
- Establishes the principle that the Welsh language should be treated no less favourably than the English language
- Makes provision for the investigation of interference with the freedom to use the Welsh language
- Establishes a Welsh Language Tribunal

Some useful statistics...

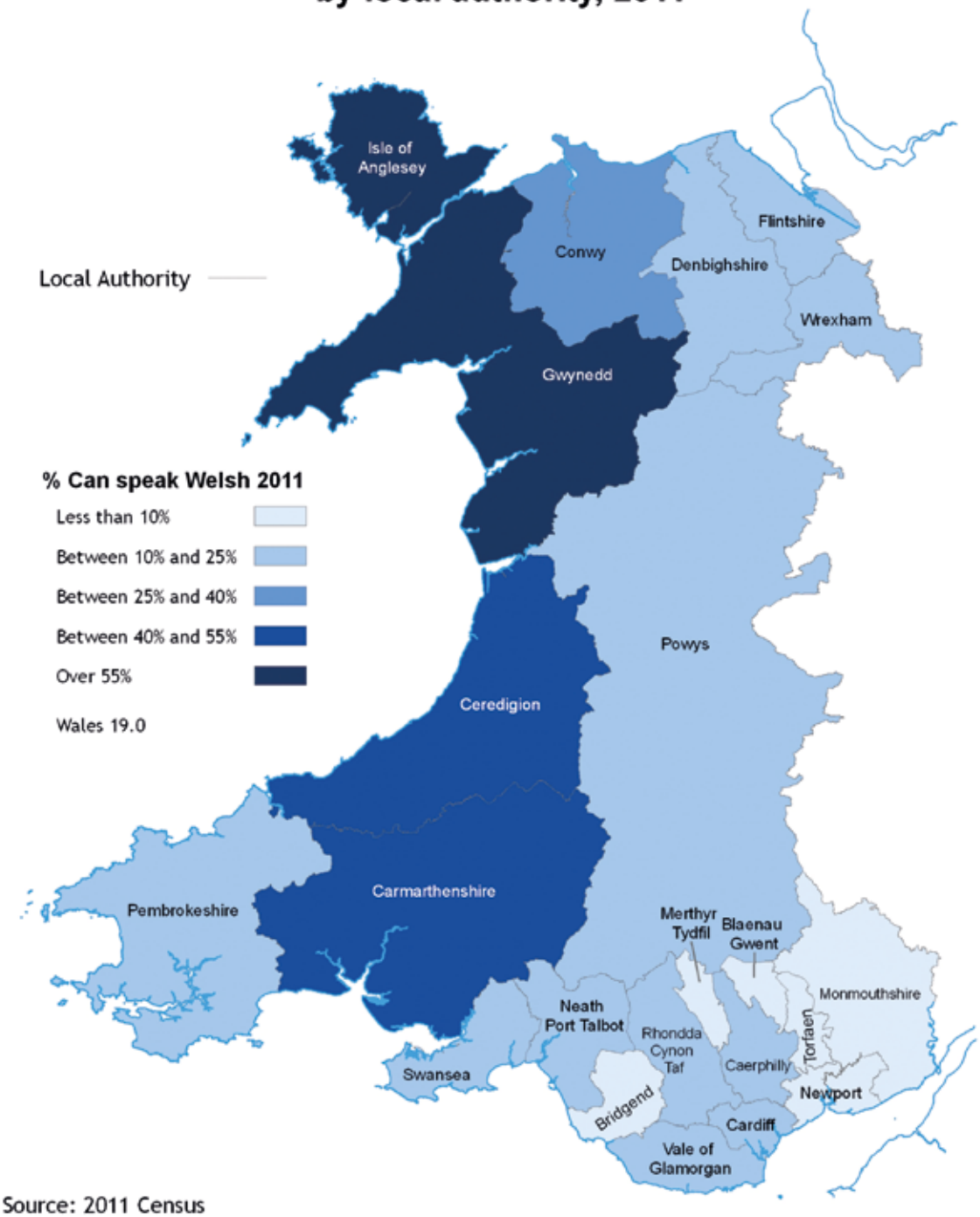
- Take a look at the following figures. Are you surprised by how often people use the Welsh language?



Take a look at the following two maps.

Are there more Welsh speakers in your area than you thought?

Proportion of people (aged 3 and over) able to speak Welsh, by local authority, 2011



Source: 2011 Census

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Geography & Technology

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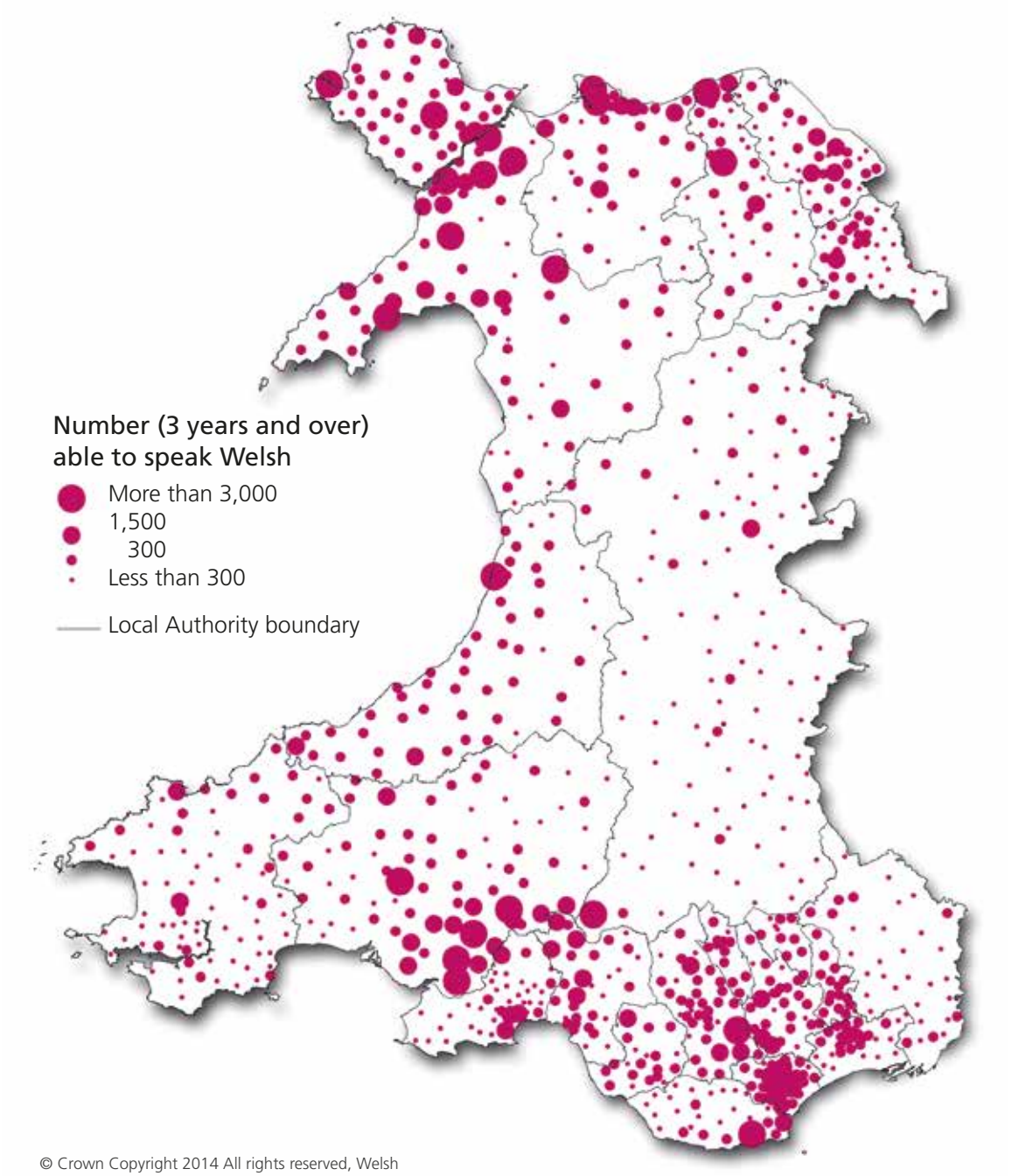
Number able to speak Welsh by Community, 2011



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What do these maps show me?

As you can see from the first map, in some areas (such as Cardiff), the percentage of Welsh speakers may be low. However, when you look at the second map, you can see that the number of Welsh speakers might be higher than you expected.

Welsh Language Training and Awareness

Ensuring you receive the right training is an important part of being confident and competent to deliver the 'Active Offer'. Below is an example of some of the behaviours you would see if the 'Active Offer' is being made and the impact this can have on patient care.

What behaviour would you expect?	What behaviour would you not expect?
Patients are asked to state their preferred language. **Impact:** Patient feels their language needs have been respected.	Patients are not routinely asked what their preferred language is as the assumption is that it will be English. **Impact:** Patient dignity is compromised and they lack the confidence to ask for care in their first language.
Language preference is recorded and all services provided after that point reflect the patients' language needs. **Impact:** Quality and safety of care is improved and patient confidence is increased.	Preferred language is not identified and needs are not met. **Impact:** Quality and safety of care are potentially compromised. Patient doesn't feel confident in the care they are receiving.
The environment in the department is a bilingual one. Ward information and signage are bilingual. S4C and Welsh language radio (such as BBC Radio Cymru) are readily available. Staff wear 'Working Welsh' badges. **Impact:** Patient feels welcomed and included.	Ward information and signage is in English only. S4C and Welsh language radio (such as BBC Radio Cymru) are not available. Welsh-speaking staff are not identifiable. **Impact:** Patient feels unwelcome and excluded. May miss out on important information about treatment.

Reflect on the behaviours above and ask yourself if you are able to deliver what is expected. If you need support or more training there are a number of options available.

- In the first instance, contact your Welsh Language Officer who will be able to tell you what is available in-house and signpost you to what is available in your area.
- Making an 'Active Offer' is good evidence for your KSF (Knowledge and Skills Framework) and is an important part of your annual staff appraisal.

Can technology help?

There are several ways technology can help you with providing an 'Active Offer'. For guidance on Welsh language technologies, websites and software guides, visit: http://www.comisiynyddygymraeg.org/English/Assistance/Pages/welshlanguagetechnology.aspx

Take a look at the examples below, can you use any of these to improve Welsh language services for your patients?

- **Apps:**

Gofalu trwy'r Gymraeg – This is an app developed for Swansea University and the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to increase the confidence of service providers when using the Welsh language in work or study.

Ap Geiriaduron – This app, developed by Bangor University, is a dictionary application that gives translations of thousands of words, even in offline mode.

Cymraeg i'r teulu – This app provides a more general introduction to speaking Welsh with examples, vocabulary units and practice sessions.

Learn Cymraeg Gogledd – This app is aimed at those who want to start learning Welsh vocabulary and grammar. The app also includes various activities and Welsh language games to help with learning the language.

- **Welsh Software:**

Cysgliad pack (available from **www.cysgliad.com/cysill/arlein/telerau.aspx**) containing:

Cysill – **Welsh spelling and grammar checking**

Cysgeir – **a list of standardised Welsh terminology**

- The 'More than just words….' Facebook page **www.facebook.com/mwynageiriau**

This site will be useful to keep you up to date with information and general guidance, along with examples of best practice.

- For information on learning Welsh, or to learn more about opportunities to use the language, visit **www.cymraeg.gov.wales**

Sharing best practice

The annual Welsh Language in Health, Social Services and Social Care Conference and Awards is an excellent way to learn about new and innovative ways you can provide Welsh language services.

Workshops are held to help service providers to overcome problems they may have faced in providing Welsh services, and awards are given to those who have gone the extra mile to provide Welsh language services. This includes the prestigious Minister's Special Award for the best overall initiative.

To learn more about this event, e-mail **uned-yr-iaith@wales.gsi.gov.uk**. You could also get in touch to order a booklet of the previous year's winners. Why not see if you could implement some of the winners' award-winning work in your department?

Frequently asked questions....?

Q: What if I don't have anyone who can provide a Welsh language service, what do I do then?

A: Firstly, you should ensure that every member of your team have completed the Welsh language competencies within ESR. Don't forget that we all have a part to play in delivering the 'Active Offer'. Simple day-to-day Welsh language phrases can be introduced to use with patients. Any attempt to make the patient feel at ease will be appreciated by them. There are a number of Welsh language resources available to you free of charge: like the Pocket Book for Students included in this pack.

Q: If I don't have anyone who needs the Welsh language, do I still have to spend money and time on it?

A: If you look at the maps provided earlier in this pack, you will see that there are Welsh speakers all over Wales. Try and plan your services accordingly and you will be surprised how many people actually do need your services in Welsh.

Q: I know I have to provide information in Welsh to my service users, but can the Welsh Government help me with the cost?

A: The Welsh Government would ask you to consider how you provide information in other languages, and by doing so, ask why you cannot think of doing the same in Welsh.

Q: What are the simple things I can do to encourage my staff to use the Welsh language?

A: 'More than just words….' focuses on using everyday conversational Welsh. Why not introduce a Welsh language noticeboard to your area which provides up-to-date information and relevant links for staff. For example, you could introduce a 'Welsh word of the day'. Your Welsh Language Officer will be able to help you with this.

Q: I have some Welsh-speaking staff who could translate some material for me but they're not confident in their Welsh writing skills. What can I do about this?

A: Welsh language translation is a specialist skill and as such, staff should not be asked to provide written translations. Your organisation will have a formal process in place to facilitate Welsh language translations. Please visit the Welsh language pages on the intranet or contact your Welsh Language Officer for more information. Don't forget that the 'Active Offer' is about ensuring patient care, dignity and respect.

Q: I work in a predominantly English-speaking area, why should I care about the 'Active Offer'?

A: Did you know that the biggest increase in the use of the Welsh language, as stated in the most recent census, was in the areas predominantly seen as having fewer Welsh speakers? Cardiff had the biggest increase in Welsh speakers. Just as you would offer other language opportunities, the Welsh language in Wales should be visible to all service users. Legislation in Wales (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011) states that the Welsh language should be treated:

> *"no less favourably than the English language"*

Conclusion

Making small changes to how you provide services in Welsh and English can make a huge difference to those who need it. Providing a bilingual service by offering equitable status to both languages, rather than just a translation service from one language to another is a start.

Thinking of the needs of Welsh speakers is about dignity of care. It's about recognising that without the right communication with patients, you cannot possibly give them the best care, the care that they are entitled to, the care that they deserve.

There are examples of good practice across the NHS, such as the 'Welcome to our ward' poster that follows. Why not use this kind of poster in your place of work to show you acknowledge the importance of Welsh language services? Think of how you may help to make a difference.

Please remember that everyone has a part to play in delivering the 'Active Offer'. Whether your contribution is large or small, you'll be making a real difference.

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Cymraeg

Welcome to Our Ward

Place a picture of the Sister of the Ward over this area

Hello,

I am the Sister of this Ward.

It is important to us that you have a positive patient experience.

If you have any queries or comments, please speak to me (or the Nurse in Charge in my absence).

Open and honest communication is essential and all patients will be treated sensitively, with individual language needs being addressed to promote dignity.

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board are signed up to "make an Active Offer"

More than just words....