



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

**Number: WG39273**

## Welsh Government Integrated Impact Assessment Summary

**Title of proposal:**

Substance Misuse Delivery Plan 2019 - 2022

**Department:**

Health and Social Services

**Minister responsible:**

Minister for Health and Social Services, Vaughan Gething AM

**Start Date:**

November 2019

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Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

This document is also available in Welsh.

# What action is the Welsh Government considering and why?

## Background

Our Programme for Government, *'Taking Wales Forward'*, outlines the commitments to drive improvement and make the biggest difference to the lives of everyone in Wales. *'Prosperity for All: the national strategy'* takes those commitments, places them in a long-term context, and sets out how they will be delivered by bringing together the efforts of the whole Welsh public sector.

By taking significant steps to shift our approach from treatment to prevention and focusing on improving the health and well-being of individuals and families, we are supporting the delivery of the Government's well-being objectives in *'Prosperity for All: the national strategy'*. Our cross Government approach will also see a contribution to the Government's priority areas, such as Early Years, Housing and Better Mental Health helping us to achieve our ambition of prosperity for all.

In June 2018, the Welsh Government published *'A Healthier Wales: our Plan for Health and Social Care'*. The plan sets out the vision for health and social care services and ten national design principles. The vision and principles apply to the substance misuse sector as much as any other area. Our substance misuse agenda requires the Health and Social Care sector to work together, alongside other partners, to give the most appropriate help to an individual, based on their needs and circumstances.

*'A Healthier Wales'* sets out a whole system approach to health and social care, outlining a 'wellness' system, which aims to support and anticipate health needs, to prevent illness, and reduce the impact of poor health and inequality. There is a recognition that primary care, as the first point of contact for the majority of citizens accessing health services, has a key role in maximising the opportunities for prevention and self-management, including around substance misuse and medicines management.

We know that more needs to be done to support people and help them to access the services they need in order to improve outcomes for those whose lives are affected by substance misuse in Wales. The most recent data in relation to alcohol shows there were 535 alcohol-related deaths in 2018, this is a slight decrease on the previous year. However, in relation to drugs there were 208 drug related deaths in 2018, an increase from 185 in 2017.

The actions in the *'Substance Misuse Delivery Plan 2019-2022'* therefore respond to what we have been told through the evaluation of the previous strategy and the Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) Review. It also takes into consideration the feedback received from the extensive engagement process, with both providers and service users, including young people, which has been undertaken relating to the key priorities for substance misuse.

The delivery plan covers services for both drug and alcohol misuse. Our substance misuse services in Wales are citizen centred, adopting a strengths based public health approach with an emphasis on harm reduction, prevention and treatment, ensuring that an individual stays well, reduces the harms associated with substance misuse and sustains recovery.

## **Prevention**

The Welsh Government has defined prevention as working in partnership to co-produce the best outcomes possible, utilising the strengths and assets people and places have to contribute. As with the previous substance misuse strategy and associated delivery plans, prevention remains a key focus for individuals, their families and the wider community.

Key aim 1 in the table of actions specifically focuses on prevention, but many of the actions contained within the other aims through the plan also have a preventative element.

A harm reduction approach is to reduce the relative risks associated with drug and alcohol use/misuse. This delivery plan continues to see harm reduction at the centre of its approach. This is carried out by a range of measures such as reducing the sharing of injecting equipment, providing support for stopping injecting, interventions to reduce drug related death and providing a range of both pharmacological and psychosocial treatments for both drugs and alcohol. Recovery and abstinence also form part of the harm reduction journey, they are not mutually exclusive.

Over the lifetime of the 2008-18 strategy we worked closely with stakeholders to initiate and deliver a range of harm reduction initiatives and this remains the same in the 2019-22 delivery plan.

## **Integration**

Over its duration, the delivery plan will provide a focus for ensuring that substance misuse is embedded across other policy areas in the Welsh Government, particularly as more focus is placed on prevention. For example, close joint working will continue with Education, Children and Families, Employability, Housing, Social Services, Tackling Poverty and Crime and Justice to strengthen links with these areas so that fewer people are drawn into substance misuse in the first place and for those that are, we provide integrated and easily accessible treatment leading to recovery. Specific actions are set out in the plan, which highlight the important contribution other government departments, including non-devolved areas, can make to improve substance misuse outcomes for individuals through their policies and programmes. Whilst health services are designed to respond to the needs of individuals who suffer from substance misuse, there are other levers outside of health, which are critical in improving an individual's health and well-being.

## **Collaboration**

Our work with Area Planning Boards (APBs) will ensure they continue to provide services that meet the needs of the population and that the key performance indicators continue to be met and improved upon. To achieve this we will continue to ensure our interventions are 'joined up' across government, recognising that the needs of individuals go beyond their substance use, by developing a whole person approach to support them.

To ensure the actions set out in the delivery plan are achievable, we will continue our work in supporting substance misuse services through our APBs and Local Health Boards (LHBs). APBs have been the key vehicle for supporting the delivery of substance misuse services and this will continue to be the case.

Good partnership working is critical if the best possible support is to be provided to individuals and communities. Given recent developments in the local and regional partnership landscape, such as the establishment of Regional Partnership Boards, we will review the partnership relationships and consider how we can support APBs to operate well within this. We recognise that a key element of delivering substance misuse services is that APBs work closely with other partnerships and structures, such as Regional Partnership Boards, Public Service Boards and other structures, in order to provide the best support possible to the individual and wider community.

Service user involvement has been instrumental in the development of this plan and we are clear that continued involvement will be key to the successful delivery of actions within this plan. The plan aims to ensure that service user involvement is embedded into the planning, design and delivery of services. Across Wales, the seven APBs are responsible, within their regions, for the assessment of need, commissioning and monitoring of delivery of substance misuse services, using the funding allocated by the Welsh Government.

### **Cost and Savings**

We invest almost £53 million annually to deliver our commitments on this agenda.

### **Mechanism**

Legislation is not proposed as part of this plan, a regulatory impact assessment is therefore not necessary.

## Conclusion

### 1. How have people most likely to be affected by the proposal been involved in developing it?

The Welsh Government has completed extensive engagement and consultation with key stakeholders involved in delivering the aims of this plan. Service user involvement was integral to the delivery of the previous plan and has continued to feed into the development of the 2019-22 delivery plan.

Before formal consultation, officials held engagement events (involving service providers and service users) in Cardiff, Newport, Llanelli and Llandudno. An additional event was held in Powys for the Area Planning Board (APB) and service users, plus a specific service users event for the Cwm Taf area. There was also a specific young persons event held in West Wales. All events were very productive and informative and were well attended (over 400 people in total, with around 150 of these being service users). During the events, officials captured a range of views and comments which were reflected as far as possible in the draft plan which was then consulted upon. In particular, the engagement events provided confirmation and reassurance that the areas identified as potential priorities (as highlighted in the evaluation of the previous strategy and the HIW Review) were broadly correct.

Pre-consultation events were carried out during February and March 2019. These events were carried out in the following locations:

- Cardiff - 14 February
- Newport - 15 February
- North Wales - 21 February
- Llanelli - 22 February
- Young People event at Folly Farm - 6 March

The pre-consultation events were split into morning and afternoon sessions consisting of service providers and commissioners and service users respectively.

## 2. What are the most significant impacts, positive and negative?

The entirety of the substance misuse delivery plan is dedicated to improving outcomes for all. It gives equal opportunity for all who access services for substance misuse including family members and the wider society and community.

Most significantly, it positively approaches dealing with substance misuse in a preventative manner with harm reduction at its heart of the approach. It seeks to positively impact on health, education, employability and recovery.

The policy proposals as set out in the consultation document have no effect on the Well-being of Future Generations goals or ways of working. They have been developed, however, in line with the five ways of working in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

The Integrated Impact Assessment has raised no issues associated with the social well-being of people and communities in Wales or on Wales' cultural well-being or on the Welsh Language. Neither has it raised any issues on the economic well-being of businesses and the public, the Environment, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child or the Tackling Poverty agenda.

### 3. In light of the impacts identified, how will the proposal:

- maximise contribution to our well-being objectives and the seven well-being goals; and/or,

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 provides a unique opportunity to coordinate effective multi-sector action on the devastating effects of substance misuse. The Act places statutory responsibilities on public sector bodies to act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the wellbeing needs of future generations. The case to address the harms associated with substance misuse is compelling and has both positive impacts on wellbeing, as well as the wider Welsh economy. There is a real opportunity to use the powers and levers set out in the Act to create a step change. This also places an approach on preventative health as a core feature and the delivery of the plan will drive integration, collaboration and involvement across both partners and communities themselves.

- avoid, reduce or mitigate any negative impacts?

The Welsh Government will engage with Area Planning Boards (APBs), service users and key stakeholders throughout the delivery of the Plan. During the plan period there will be an opportunity to assess change and risk, we will ensure that officials monitor the progress of the plan and that progress is reported to the Substance Misuse National Partnership Board. Assessment of any changes required will be considered and any changes and negative impacts will be addressed.

4. How will the impact of the proposal be monitored and evaluated as it progresses and when it concludes?

Welsh Government Officials will monitor the delivery of the actions throughout the lifetime of the plan. Where actions fall to APBs, this will be done through the monitoring work undertaken with them.

The Substance Misuse National Partnership Board (SMNPB) will oversee delivery of the actions contained within the Substance Misuse Delivery Plan 2019-22. The Board will also guide and monitor progress, and facilitate co-ordination of the cross-cutting approach required across Welsh Government, Statutory Agencies, the Third and Independent Sectors. An internal programme board will be established within the Welsh Government and this will inform the National Partnership Board of the progress being made.