

## CIW National Advisory Board meeting minutes – 7 February 2024

### Welcome and apologies

Chair, Dr Ruth Hussey welcomed members to the meeting. Five apologies were received.

| Attendees  | CIW representatives  | Apologies   |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr Ruth Hussey (Chair)</li> <li>• Órlaith Brennan</li> <li>• Kate Cabbage</li> <li>• Stuart Davies</li> <li>• Natalie Fletcher</li> <li>• Rachel Harris</li> <li>• Carole Jones</li> <li>• Bethan Louise Kay</li> <li>• Peter Max</li> <li>• Claire Protheroe</li> <li>• Rachel Thomas</li> <li>• Mary Wimbury</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gillian Baranski</li> <li>• Kevin Barker</li> <li>• Sarah Glynn-Jones</li> <li>• Emma Mackintosh</li> <li>• Myfanwy Moran</li> <li>• Richard Payne</li> <li>• Vicky Poole</li> <li>• Margaret Rooney</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Valerie Billingham</li> <li>• Melanie Davies</li> <li>• Julia Nawell</li> <li>• Jenny Williams</li> <li>• Sharon Williams</li> </ul> |

### Actions from previous minutes – 4 October 2023

[Minutes](#) from the last meeting agreed.

**Previous action:** Ensure longer discussion before the publication of the 2023-24 Chief Inspector's Annual Report to ensure members' views are captured in-depth.

**October meeting brought forward to September to facilitate this.**

**Previous action:** Kevin Barker agreed to share a best practice document developed as part of the childcare and play improvement project. **Kevin to share this.**

## **Opening conversation and Q&A**

Chief Inspector Gillian Baranski talked to members about the Welsh Government budget which was being published at the end of the month. Currently Care Inspectorate Wales has a flat-line budget which in real terms creates a significant financial pressure.

External recruitment for CIW is currently paused and the frequency of inspections and the programme of local authority performance work is being reviewed. Other areas such as joint work with Estyn, Healthcare Inspectorate Wales and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services will also be paused due to budgetary pressures.

## **Update on the care home and domiciliary support services 'silent' ratings pilot**

Head of adults and children's services inspection, Sarah Glynn-Jones, gave members an overview of the [pilot](#) which started last June. Practice Solutions Ltd were commissioned to carry out an independent evaluation and produce a report on findings in spring 2024.

It was encouraging to see the number of excellent/good ratings being awarded to services. Services receive four ratings across four inspection themes, not a single over-arching rating.

### **Silent (unpublished) ratings so far**

- Total number of inspections of care homes and domiciliary support services where silent/unpublished ratings have been awarded: 659
- Excellent: 248
- Good: 1594
- Needs Improvement: 441
- Poor: 176

Chair, Dr Ruth Hussey said the evaluation sounded "crucial" in terms of hearing the voices of everyone involved so CIW can make informed decisions going forward.

Sarah also updated members on the registration of special school residential services this year and publishing email addresses/telephone numbers for all adults and children's services on the CIW website, in line with legislation.

## **Joint mental health review of Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) with Estyn**

Myfanwy Moran, senior manager in CIW's local authority inspection team gave an update about this joint work with colleagues in Estyn.

Claire Protheroe (PACEY Cymru) asked if childcare and play services would be included. Myfanwy explained the work is looking at children aged 11-16.

Myfanwy added the team was interested in a holistic social care perspective.

## **Childcare and play update**

Kevin Barker, head of childcare and play inspection, spoke to members about the annual Self-Assessment of Service Statement (SASS) data collection exercise which registered childcare and play providers are required to complete.

The 2025 SASS will be particularly important as local authorities have to construct their childcare sufficiency assessments for Welsh Government, and they rely on the information supplied by the SASS.

Kevin demonstrated the CIW childcare and play self-reporting [data tool](#) which uses data collected in the SASS as well as some registration data.

The Welsh Government is working on a response to the independent review of childminding. CIW's childcare and play team led by Ceri Herbert is working very closely with Claire Protheroe from PACEY Cymru and others on a response to the review.

CIW ran 60 improvement meetings with services as part of the pilot childcare and play improvement project: 96% of those surveyed thought the guidance around the improvement meetings was clear; 91% felt they were helped to improve the quality of their setting as a result of the meeting and 57% were signposted to further sources of help and support, which is also a key part of improvement meetings.

Peter Max asked if the pilot would be replicated elsewhere within the inspectorate. Gillian Baranski said the organisation is always considering whether it is possible to replicate good practice.

Kevin also reported the joint inspection programme with Estyn was undergoing an [independent evaluation](#) as it had been running for five years.

## **CIW's response to coroner's prevention of future deaths notice issued to Ofsted**

Vicky Poole discussed the learning from last year's inquest into the tragic death of headteacher Ruth Perry, who took her own life following an Ofsted inspection which downgraded her school to a rating of 'inadequate'.

As a result of the inquest the coroner issued a prevention of future deaths report to Ofsted which is CIW's equivalent in England for this particular sector.

Vicky said CIW's executive leadership team felt it was important we took note of the coroner's recommendations. The coroner's report covered four main topics: conduct of the inspection itself; the Ofsted system of a single word judgement; a

confidentiality requirement which means headteachers aren't allowed to share findings of their inspection until the inspection report is published; and the length of time between inspection and the final report which can heighten distress for people.

Vicky explained a note for staff had been drafted and joint training with Healthcare Inspectorate Wales has been commissioned. This will include identifying signs of distress and potential impact on people's mental health; giving inspectors support; and where people can be signposted for additional support.

Mary Wimbury (Care Forum Wales) said she was really pleased CIW had looked at this in detail. She described feedback Care Forum Wales had received in terms of the effect not just on those directly involved but on residents and staff of the word 'poor' as one of the judgement categories.

The independent evaluation of the silent ratings pilot will consider the descriptors used.

Dr Ruth Hussey said this underlines the importance of the silent ratings pilot evaluation.

Rachel Harris (childcare and play provider) asked about CIW's joint inspections with Estyn and whether there is a confidentiality 'time lag' because there had been in the past.

Kevin Barker said the answer from a CIW perspective is 'no' but that from an Estyn perspective, possibly yes. Vicky Poole said Estyn is also considering the coroner's report.

## **Safeguarding**

Vicky Poole gave an update on the suite of safeguarding reports CIW had published recently, including the [rapid review of child protection arrangements](#); [Public Law Outline overview report](#); and [Powys Joint Inspection of Child Protection Arrangements \(JICPA\)](#).

Dr Ruth Hussey asked how people can know what good looks like when it comes to safeguarding practices.

Vicky signposted members to the Wales Safeguarding Procedures and Social Care Wales' published training standards. Further the National Independent Safeguarding Board and Manchester Metropolitan University have developed a set of performance measures for safeguarding.

## **Voices from National Advisory Board members**

Carole Jones (member who is a carer and uses care services) described issues she and others experienced with direct payments.

Vicky Poole reminded members although CIW cannot investigate individual complaints, we really want to hear people's concerns. When we plan our local authority review activity we use that to inform what we look at.

Natalie Fletcher (care provider) explained since our last meeting there had been significant challenges around staffing, which are impacting children.

Rachel Harris (childcare and play provider) shared concerns in respect of staffing and added the additional business pressures services experienced.

Claire Protheroe (PACEY Cymru) said there are similar staffing pressures with an ongoing decline in the number of childminders.

Órlaith Brennan (domiciliary support service provider and foster carer) said the situation was the same within domiciliary support, with their service losing a high volume of staff. Young people doing social care qualifications use these as a way into the NHS rather than social care.

CIW Chief Inspector, Gillian Baranski queried whether as a sector we're using recruitment and retention methodologies from a previous age.

Vicky Poole commented CIW's work around positive cultures supports retention.

Dr Hussey said pay and reward is fundamental as well as the wellbeing of staff, and that services will need to be re-designed to attract and retain staff. Dr Hussey said it may now be time to consider shared roles within health and social care in view of staff moving for career progression from social care into the NHS. Although pay scales are very different, there must be ways to design jobs where people could move between the two services and develop their skills.

Gillian said she was meeting with the Director General of Health and Social Services for Welsh Government and Chief Executive of NHS Wales, Judith Paget and would mention this topic.

Dr Hussey thanked Natalie for provoking such a rich discussion.

Financial viability of services was raised by Rachel Harris, adding settings were looking at fee increases which would be ultimately paid for by parents. There was a greater number of children with complex needs coming through into her setting with no specific funding unless they are eligible for the Childcare Offer.

**Action: Gillian to raise this with Business Wales.**

Childcare and play providers have described to CIW behavioural issues, some of which have been created by the pandemic, which is creating extra work.

Dr Hussey said health inequalities during the early years is one of the critical health challenges we face, and it is vital to give children the best start in life.

**Action: Gillian to raise this with the Chief Medical Officer for Wales.**

Órlaith Brennan raised inconsistencies she had seen between different local authorities and child protection, in relation to her role as a foster carer. Órlaith gave a

powerful description of the difference in support for two children with similar backgrounds and the difference in outcomes for each child. She described with one child how no therapy or advocacy was offered to that young person, nor additional support put in place to manage their trauma. Whereas another young person in similar circumstances was provided with multiple meetings with their foster carers, to see where they'd be living, bring toys in and had a whole team approach involving play therapists, psychologists, paediatricians, and physiotherapists all joining meetings and talking about different aspects of that person's care and how it impacts their day to day lives. Órlaith said every time a new behaviour arose, a team meeting was called straight away by the social worker, for all relevant professionals to get around a table and talk about it and put a plan in place for that person.

Órlaith said: "As a foster carer it's so disheartening because you're screaming for support and both social workers were fantastic, but it was about their ability to access support and partnership working, and the consistency of what's available across the different regions. That was the frustration we faced. You're trying to give this young person the best opportunity and you know if we got this support in place, it would make such a difference, but you're hitting a brick wall.

She continued: "We know [with] trauma the older they get, the harder it is to repair that earlier trauma. It was absolutely heart breaking to see the difference between the two approaches. That need for advocacy is so important for young people to feel they are being listened to."

Dr Hussey said it was "incredibly powerful to listen to your experience and reminds us of the important role foster carers play, and how much we rely on them."

Myfanwy Moran, senior manager in CIW's local authority team described Órlaith's testimony as containing important messages and emphasised the need to engage with foster carers as well as providers of services as part of the upcoming mental health review.

Carole Jones mentioned difficulties experienced by carers not getting the support they need and having to wait a long time for an assessment.

Dr Hussey suggested this be discussed at a future meeting.

**Action: Topic for June meeting.**

## **Inspection report feedback**

Margaret Rooney shared a summary of the feedback CIW collects from providers and the public about inspections and inspection reports, via surveys. She stressed the importance of this feedback and outlined how CIW uses this information to improve their work.