

CIW National Advisory Board meeting minutes - 6 June 2024

Welcome and apologies

Chair, Dr Ruth Hussey welcomed members to the meeting.

Attendees	CIW representatives	Apologies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Ruth Hussey (Chair) • Órlaith Brennan • Kate Cabbage • Natalie Fletcher • Rachel Harris • Bethan Louise Kay • Peter Max • Melanie Minty • Julie Nawell • Claire Protheroe • Rachel Thomas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gillian Baranski • Emma Mackintosh • Myfanwy Moran • Hedydd Mullins • Richard Payne • Andrew Perry • Margaret Rooney • Lisa Smith 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valerie Billingham • Melanie Davies • Stuart Davies • Carole Jones • Vicky Poole • Jenny Williams • Sharon Williams
<p>Guest speakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martyn Palfreman • Paul Pavia 		

Actions from previous minutes – 7 February 2024

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

Previous action: Share childcare and play best practice document developed as part of the childcare and play improvement project.

In progress: Secretariat to share this with members via email.

Previous action: Gillian Baranski to discuss financial advice and support available for the childcare and play sector with Business Wales.

Gillian has set up a meeting with Business Wales about how they might be able to provide further business support for the childcare sector.

Previous action: Gillian to discuss health inequalities within early years with the Chief Medical Officer for Wales.

Gillian has met with the director of health in Welsh Government with responsibility for early years to discuss how CIW can best share information about the early years sector and encourage thinking about early years not just through the prism of child health, important as that is. It was a very timely conversation. There are opportunities for CIW to inform ongoing work in early years.

Previous action: Discuss disabled carers' and carers' assessment under 'Voices from members' segment of the June 2024 meeting.

In progress: Some members were unable to attend today, discussion about disabled carers moved to the autumn meeting.

Opening conversation and Q&A

Gillian outlined the First Minister's priorities. The top 5 priorities include:

- Reducing waiting times for the NHS
- First 1,000 days in a child's life
- Educational excellence – childcare and play provision helps prepare children for more formal ways of learning in school.
- Greener jobs
- Transport

Dawn Bowden MS is Minister for Social Care and Jayne Bryant MS is Minister for early years. Gillian has met with both Ministers.

CIW has been advised to expect additional resource enabling some targeted recruitment. Our work to improve what we do will continue.

Rachel Thomas (Older People's Commissioner's Office) asked about the future for Joint Inspections of Child Protection Arrangements (JICPA).

Gillian confirmed CIW remains keen to continue with JICPA because there is significant value in looking at issues at a system level. CIW is in discussion with partner inspectorates.

Myfanwy Moran (Senior Manager, Local Authority Inspection team, CIW) said there will be an overview JICPA report published later this year. CIW's findings were similar to those from our [rapid review of child protection arrangements](#), with similar strengths and areas for improvement highlighted.

Gillian encouraged members to continue to share the topics discussed at NAB with their networks and sectors and vice versa.

Ratings for care homes and domiciliary support services

Margaret Rooney (Deputy Chief Inspector, CIW) explained Welsh Government plans to introduce published ratings for care homes and domiciliary support services from April 2025. Published ratings are already in place for childcare and play services in Wales. CIW's learning from implementing childcare and play ratings has helped inform the process for rating care homes and domiciliary support services.

The independent evaluation of ratings has concluded and a report is due to be published shortly. Martyn Palfreman of Practice Solutions Ltd, which undertook the evaluation, gave a presentation to members on key findings and recommendations.

CIW is currently considering the recommendations. One option is to remove the link between the 'wellbeing' rating and the other three ratings i.e. where one of the other themes is rated as 'poor' the wellbeing rating is impacted by this.

Peter Max welcomed removing the link between the other theme ratings and the wellbeing rating and suggested sharing best practice and learning outlined in recommendation 13 should involve Social Care Wales.

Melanie Minty (Care Forum Wales) stated providers have advocated removing the link to wellbeing from the other ratings.

Dr Ruth Hussey, Chair thanked Martyn and Paul for their comprehensive work and engagement.

(Martyn and Paul left the meeting).

Margaret Rooney outlined next steps, including publication of the [evaluation report](#).

Dr Hussey suggested members may want to make further observations when the report is published.

Margaret Rooney confirmed the Welsh Government consultation on the regulations will be out at the end of July.

Voices from National Advisory Board members

Natalie Fletcher (provider, children's residential services) raised the impact of [Health and Social Care \(Wales\) Bill](#) in respect of residential children's services and the elimination of profit agenda. She asked if CIW had a view on the impact on the sector and outcomes for children. She suggested the detail was still unclear and feared the loss of good provision for looked-after children.

Gillian Baranski (Chief Inspector, CIW) advised the Bill is going through scrutiny, with the last evidence session on 17 July. Whatever the government determines at the end of this process is the framework CIW will be regulating and inspecting within. It is very important views are fed in during this period.

The current intention is for the legislation to come into force on 1 April 2026 after which time CIW will not be able to register a for-profit provider.

Members were provided with a [web link](#) to the Senedd timetable for the progression of the Bill through scrutiny.

Melanie Minty (Care Forum Wales) confirmed CFW will give a written response.

NAB members raised concern about the impact on the sector and availability of provision for children and young people.

Rachel Thomas, Office of the Children's Commissioner for Wales advised the office would give evidence on 10 July and asked if CIW has any information about the current position in terms of registrations. Gillian Baranski confirmed there are many more for-profit private providers than local authority providers.

Margaret Rooney confirmed the number of local authority homes registering has increased; last year 86% of new registrations were for-profit independent providers but this year it is approximately half and half independent providers and local authorities.

Dr Hussey agreed it is important to keep children's well-being in mind during any transition and to monitor the impact on availability of services.

Peter Max raised a question about whether agencies which provide staffing could be registered again. Some agencies do reference checking while others don't do this but the fees are the same.

Margaret Rooney confirmed it would be a Welsh Government decision to make it a legal obligation to register. She advised members about a new Home Office requirement in England i.e. to become a sponsor to bring overseas workers into the UK, they must register with the Care Quality Commission (CQC). This does not apply in Wales and the Welsh Government are still considering if this should be extended to Wales. If that was to happen, agencies may want to register because they would want to become a sponsor.

Melanie Minty asked for a CIW view on agency staff employed from English agencies (on the border) who won't have the level 2 qualifications. Margaret Rooney advised that the requirement to register with Social Care Wales doesn't kick in until six months after they are employed. With agency workers, they are usually only employed for a few days and are not there for six months – therefore the requirement does not apply unless the agency worker is employed for a longer period of time i.e. 6 months.

Rachel Harris (childcare and play provider) raised the idea of introducing peer inspectors in childcare and play services. Gillian Baranski said CIW has considered the concept of peer inspectors and using lived experience for adults and children's homes and local authority work.

Margaret Rooney suggested it would bring in experience of what people see in their own settings and increase diversity.

Gillian added this is an opportunity for CIW to have role in helping to grow leaders providing an enriching experience and exposure to working practices across Wales.

Updating CIW's online directory of care services

Andrew Perry and Lisa Smith from CIW's ICT Services team demonstrated the forthcoming updated care directory, which should be ready to deploy later this year.

Margaret Rooney, Deputy Chief Inspector, CIW, explained CIW is legally required to maintain an accurate register of services. The online directory is the vehicle to make the register available to the public.

Andrew showed a number of new features of the updated directory including the potential to display ratings for those services which have published ratings, such as childcare and play services. The aim is to improve people's ability to access CIW information.

Rachel Harris (childcare and play provider) asked whether people would be able to filter by whether services offer early education and/or receive a joint inspection with Estyn – however, it depends whether these data are recorded on the system.

Margaret Rooney gave an overview of the recently published [joint equality, diversity and inclusion strategy](#) with Healthcare Inspectorate Wales.

She set out the actions CIW will be taking forward under each of the strategic objectives. She explained CIW undertake joint work with Social Care Wales and are hoping to establish a diverse stakeholder group to work with us on both of our respective EDI strategies.

Peter Max said the Board of Social Care Wales is now more ethnically diverse than it used to be. He asked if there would be any merit in having one of their board members co-opted onto this Advisory Board.

Margaret stressed CIW wants equality, diversity and inclusion to be central to everything we do, not something 'other' or extra. She asked if members had any experience of doing this themselves or having seen this elsewhere.

Dr Hussey indicated every organisation she works with is working on this and is core to everybody's purpose. Each one has different challenges and contexts to operate in but very similar themes. She stressed the importance of making this central to CIW.

Kate Cabbage (Director for Wales, Carers Trust) said this is a very solid foundation upon which to think about how this comes to life. She explained providers have needed support to engage with EDI requirements relating to funding Carers Trust

provides. In particular, asking about protected characteristics has been a challenge. Carers Trust is developing some online resources to help build practitioner confidence in asking these questions and provider's thinking about the value of doing so. She agreed to share these more widely once these resources have been developed.

Gillian Baranski welcomed the opportunity to link to that work.

Margaret explained CIW is considering what support the sector will need with this and asked members for their views on this.

She shared a link to a tool developed by the Care Quality Commission in England called 'equally outstanding'. She explained CIW will be exploring how it can support and influence good practice and equal and inclusive cultures in social care through regulation and inspection.

Peter Max asked if 'what good looks like' could be included in existing inspection and ratings methodology. He suggested providers could share what's worked well around EDI in their own services.

Rachel Harris explained Early Years Wales are developing work in this area for staff and managers in settings.

Dr Hussey thanked members for their comments. She also thanked Myfanwy Moran as this is her last meeting as CIW staff representative on the Board and wished her well in her new role.