

WITH CARE

NEWSLETTER OF THE CARE COUNCIL FOR WALES

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Launch of guide to support newly-qualified social workers

An important new guide to help social workers make the transition from students to full-time practitioners is now available.

The Care Council's guide, *Making the Most of the First Year in Practice: A Guide for Newly-Qualified Social Workers*, was launched at a recent Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) conference in Llandrindod Wells.

The guide covers the transition to professional practitioner and sets out newly-qualified social workers' responsibilities as employees. It is a companion to a guide produced for the employers of newly-qualified social workers by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW).

Graduates are informed on what to expect from employers and the guide considers how to develop social work practice in line with the *Code of Practice*, continuous professional development and post-registration training and learning.

Rhian Huws Williams, Chief Executive of the Care Council said, "The transition from student to being a registered

practitioner is a crucial time in the career of social workers. It is important that newly-qualified social workers are clear about the expectations on them as regulated practitioners to reflect and continuously develop as professionals. This guidance is part of a bigger programme to secure and sustain high-calibre social workers for Wales."

Making the Most of the First Year in Practice uses the examples of five fictitious social work students who have entered the degree through different routes, to illustrate the variety of paths to employment. Newly-qualified social workers should find at least some similarities to their own situation within the examples.

The guide will automatically be sent out to graduates as soon as they change their registration status from student to newly-qualified social workers. **For additional copies, please contact Bethan Thomas on 029 2078 0629.**



Lifetime Achievement Award for Mutale

Mutale Merrill, Chair of the Care Council for Wales, was honoured at the recent Wales Care Awards.

She was awarded the Craig Thomas Lifetime Achievement Award at a glittering ceremony in City Hall, Cardiff.

The award, in memory of Care Forum Wales Council member Craig Thomas, was presented to Mutale in recognition of her outstanding contribution to social care in Wales. She became only the sixth person to be presented with the award.



The Deputy Minister, Mutale Merrill & Craig Thomas's family

PEOPLE NEWS



Workforce Development

We have recently completed a restructuring exercise to modernise the Workforce Development department to reflect the scale and diversity of the evolving workforce improvement agenda in the social care sector. As a result, the following new appointments have been made.

Toni Leggett has been appointed to the new role of Head of Qualifications and Learning. She will lead a team that includes Ian Thomas as Manager for Higher Education and Social Work Education; Jacky Drysdale as Manager for Further Education Learning Supply; and Workforce Development Officers Mared Llwyd, Stephanie Coleman and Karen Wakelin.

Meanwhile, Sioned Williams has been appointed to another new role as Head of Development and Innovation. In her team, Vicki Neale has been appointed as Workforce Development Officer, Early Years.

More new appointments will be made in both teams and will be included in the next issue of our newsletter.

Communications

Malcolm Williams has been appointed Communications Manager. Formerly with BT Retail in London, Malcolm will be responsible for all aspects of the Care Council's communications strategy.

And Finally, a Fond Farewell...

Malcolm Thomas, who worked for CCETSW for four years and has worked for the Care Council for over seven years as Workforce Development Advisor leading on social work training, is retiring on 31 January 2009. Malcolm has made a very important and valuable contribution to modernising social work training over the years, and we wish him all the best for the future.



Care Council Review looks to the future

A report on the Care Council's performance to-date is expected to be presented to the Assembly Government early this year.

The Deputy Minister for Social Services commissioned the review to run the rule over the Care Council's performance for the five years since it was established and to make recommendations for the future.

The review is a key part of the modernising government programme aimed at improving the quality and effectiveness of public services. It will consider how the work of the Care Council is undertaken and if it should be looking at new ways of working to account for changes in the social care sector.

A member of the Permanent Secretary's office is consulting with external and internal stakeholders to identify future needs for the organisation's work.

Rhian Huws Williams, Chief Executive of the Care Council commented: "This is a good opportunity for us to get recognition for what we have achieved so far and the progress we have made. It is also an opportunity to consider what, in the light of experience and as we look forward to the future, could or should be done differently.

It is therefore important to consider this as a positive and constructive exercise."

Above:

Sioned Williams
Ian Thomas
Jacky Drysdale
Toni Leggett
Malcolm Williams
Malcolm Thomas

Major drive launched to transform future care for older people in Wales

A major push to transform future care for older people in Wales was launched recently by the Care Council for Wales and a host of partners.

The Older People Workforce Network for Health and Social Care has been set up to map out a blueprint for the kind of workers needed to provide the best care for a section of the population that will grow significantly as the 21st century draws on.

The Network will focus on workforce issues, including how to provide an enhanced service that combines social and health care for older people. It will also be responsible for setting out the number of social care and health care support workers required to deliver services, and the skills and knowledge they would need to support older people in remaining independent and in control of their lives.

The Care Council is leading on the project, which involves a range of organisations, including the Welsh Assembly Government and employers and workers from the voluntary, private and statutory sectors across health and social care.

Rhian Huws Williams, Chief Executive of the Care Council, said the work of the Older People Workforce Network would be vital in ensuring Wales would be well-set to meet the challenge of having a third of the population aged 50 or over by 2020.

"This is a really important development to help us provide a high standard of care for our growing number of older people in Wales. As older people make up a greater proportion of the population, we have to review the care they get and put the right building blocks in place, so they are given the best opportunity to remain as independent as possible into the future.

"This is a matter of interest to everyone. As we all get older and live longer, our needs are likely to become more complex and diverse. That's why we need a strategy for the workforce to be able to meet those needs with confidence, professionalism and a high standard of care," she added.

A strategy for the workforce is expected to be developed within the next 18 months.



Working for better outcomes for people living with dementia

A project to gain a better understanding of practices within dementia care is being undertaken by the Care Council in partnership with the Older People Workforce Network.

The project was set up after analysis showed that there was scant information available for non-specialist workers who work with people developing dementia.

There was also limited support and practical advice for workers and unpaid carers working with people with more complex needs.

The aim of the project is to develop a community of practitioners that will identify what currently works well, including the principles and skills of good practice for working with people who have dementia-related illnesses.

Toni Leggett from the Care Council commented: "With the number of people with dementia expected to increase by 30% by 2021, we need to review existing practices, identify any gaps in service provision and gain an understanding of the different tasks and competencies required of workers in this area.

"It's likely that this research will highlight other issues for workers and service users, particularly when considering the personalisation of care agenda and the complications that can arise when a person has dementia-related needs.

"The results from this project can directly inform a workforce strategy for older people, as well as being used to explore the issues with other service user groups, for example, the strong link between early onset dementia and people who have Down's Syndrome," added Toni.

SOCIAL CARE ACCOLADES



Rhondda Cynon Taf
CBC Student Learning &
Development Service



KIM Project



Merthyr Tydfil
CBC Youth Supported
Employment Programme



Ceredigion Social Services



NEWI
Service User & Carer
Participation



Coleg Sir Gâr
Social Care Small Medium
Enterprise Project



NCH Cymru
Vale Short Breaks

Time to shine again



I am very confident that we can expect the same again next year."

So what are the judges looking for?

They want to see innovation and projects which make a real difference to people who receive services. Projects should be tried, tested and evaluated to ensure they achieve what they set out to do. Entries that display good practice are welcome from private, statutory or voluntary agencies, be they residential or community based, large or small, working with children or adults.

Representatives from the Accolades partnership organisations will form the judging panel and will be looking for evidence of the improvements and achievements that learning and development initiatives have made to the quality of services and outcomes for service users. As part of the judging process, the judges will want to visit shortlisted entries during March and April 2009 to assess the entries.

So do you think you've got what it takes?

To gauge whether your project might be good enough, take a look at some of last year's winners featured here, or there are full details of previous winners on our website.

Do you have a project you're really proud of and want to shout about? Do you want to get your glad rags on to attend a glittering gala award ceremony in prestigious Cardiff City Hall next June?

Well now's your chance. The Social Care Accolades return in 2009, and after the recent official launch by Gwenda Thomas AM, the Deputy Minister for Social Services, the race is on to get entries in by the 2 February deadline.

Anticipation is high for strong competition in the third Social Care Accolades. Held every two years, the awards are now established as a key event in the social care calendar, recognising and celebrating good practice in social care and early years across Wales. They're awarded to teams, groups or organisations who have transformed their services through investment in learning and development to meet the aims of the Assembly's ten-year strategy for social services, *Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities*.

As the awards grow in stature, so does the expectation among the judges of a large number of high-quality entries. Mutale Merrill, Chair of the Care Council said: "In previous years, we've seen some incredible examples of organisations really pushing the boundaries to add value to people's lives.

If you think you can win, make the next few months count and put pen to paper and tell us your story. You'll need to fill in an entry form, which you can either download from **www.ccwales.org.uk** or receive by contacting the Care Council on **029 2078 0687**, or via e-mail at **accolades@ccwales.org.uk**.

WINNERS FROM 2007

Category:

Offering Opportunity, Changing Chances

Winner 2007:

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Project:

Intermediate Labour Market



A ten-month training initiative in social care involving gaining an NVQ Level Two while at the same time gaining on-the-job experience.

JobMatch helps to promote social care as a career and provides opportunities for people to gain employment and qualifications, delivering the message of the importance of continual learning and development. The JobMatch initiative successfully breaks down barriers to employment in social care by working in partnership with other organisations within and across the sector to engage young people in employment.

"It's a tremendous achievement to receive this award that reflects the good and hard work carried out by council staff across a number of service areas including regeneration, social services and the independent and private sector social care providers. The award is recognition of Blaenau Gwent's commitment to developing high-quality social care through a highly-trained and skilled workforce."

Phil Hodgson, Corporate Director of Community Services, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

Category:

Learning Together

Winner 2007:

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Project:

Traineeship Scheme



The Traineeship Scheme is a creative and innovative development programme designed to improve employment outcomes for young people aged 16-24 living in, or leaving care.

The project demonstrates the power of using models of practice from outside social care and blending it with social care to offer realistic opportunities to young care leavers. Individuals worked in a range of places in the real world of work. Staff members place young people in a variety of jobs within the Authority and members of the HR department learnt why young care leavers struggle to enter the employment market. The flexible approach taken ensures the needs of young people are addressed.

"Winning the Accolade has attracted a lot of attention from across the UK. Winning has brought recognition to everyone who contributed to the project. While the work has been hard, it's been very worthwhile and has improved everyone's skills.

"The application process is not too complicated. You fill in an application form, give a bit of background and explain the purpose of the project.

Several of the mentors, workers and young people had an interview with the judges, and while this process was formal, it wasn't uncomfortable – more like a chat.

"I'd encourage other Councils to submit an entry because it's real recognition of all the hard work that's been carried out."

Ceris Wilson-Jones, People Development Officer, Community & Children's Services & Catering, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.

Social Care Accolades 2009 CATEGORIES

- 1. Leading on learning**
Successful learning and development programmes which aim to develop future leaders of the social work and social care profession.
- 2. Offering opportunity, changing chances**
Examples of development schemes which have led to proven improvement in workers' abilities and practice in social care.
- 3. Learning about caring, caring about learning**
Promotion of social care as a career of choice for new recruits into the sector.
- 4. Community engagement**
Projects where teams, groups or organisations have worked in partnership with their community to get a better understanding of its profile and needs.
- 5. Being a learning organisation**
An organisation or service which draws on the knowledge and experience of practitioners, service users and carers to inform the ongoing improvement of the organisation and the learning and development programmes required.
- 6. Investing in the workforce**
Innovative and creative learning opportunities or programmes which assist the development and delivery of modern services by actively supporting Continued Professional Development.
- 7. Learning together**
Learning and development programmes involving staff across professional boundaries which have been designed to strengthen and improve the provision of a seamless service.
- 8. Language choice and dignity in care.**
Examples of good practice from across the social care sector from organisations which are providing development opportunities for staff to improve their understanding of the importance of Welsh language sensitivity in effective practice.

Full details about the categories are available on our website and in the information packs.

The Accolades are delivered in partnership by ADSS Cymru, BASW Wales, the Care Council for Wales, Care Forum Wales, CSSIW, WCVA and WLGA.

Care at home study launched

Your input is sought for research project

Anyone involved in care at home is invited to be part of a new 18-month study to get a better understanding of the challenges facing that facet of social care.

Input is sought from those who commission or provide care at home, as well as carers and service users.

The study has been commissioned by the Care Council for Wales and the research team will be led by Professor Marcus Longley of the Welsh Institute for Health and Social Care (WIHSC) at the University of Glamorgan.

The research will cover care at home for people of all ages and aims to understand the challenges facing home care from the viewpoints of those receiving services and their carers, and those who have an assessment, provider or commissioner role.

Toni Leggett, Head of Qualifications and Learning at the Care Council, said: "This is an important study because it will help us understand a lot better the largest element of the social care sector. By getting a detailed picture of every aspect of care at home, we will be better placed to identify the skills and competencies required of the workforce in the future."

If you have information on any aspect of care at home or wish to get involved in the project, please contact Mark Llewellyn at WIHSC on **01443 483070**, or via email on mrllewel@glam.ac.uk



Assembly response to consultation expected in New Year

Results from a recent consultation aimed at providing high-quality care services for children and young people in Wales have been submitted to the Welsh Assembly Government.

The Assembly Government will now consider the results and decide on the next steps for the children and young people's workforce.

The aim of the consultation on the Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy and the common core of skills was to create clarity around the workforce and the issues to be addressed in re-shaping it to provide quality services for children and young people in Wales.

Continuing success as Investor in People

The Care Council for Wales has once again been recognised as an Investor in People organisation.

Investor in People status recognises achievements in planning, action and evaluation, measured against a rigorous National Standard.

The award was first granted by the Wales Investors in People Quality Centre in September 2004 and has been reaffirmed following an independent review process.

Neil Wicks, Care Council Director of Corporate Services, said: "The Review shows that the organisation has embedded the Investors in People culture and ethos into its systems and has processes in place to ensure continuous commitment and improvement."



BUDDSODDWR MIEWN POBL
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

A fresh look at National Occupational Standards

Revised National Occupational Standards (NOS) covering two areas of social care are expected following a review.

Feedback from the review highlighted a number of important issues and changes required to ensure that the standards are current and relevant.

The review of Health and Social Care and the Children's Care, Learning and Development NOS, began in March 2008. Comments were gathered from questionnaires distributed through the social care, early years, children and young people networks, as well as feedback from the Care Council's website.

Toni Leggett of the Care Council said: "The feedback will help the Care Council, along with its UK partners, make the important steps to ensure the NOS in these areas are fit for the future of the social care, child care and early years workforce."

She added: "Thank you to all those who provided feedback to inform the review and contributed to discussions."

Information updates on the NOS review will be provided on our website www.ccwales.org.uk or you can contact Mared Llwyd on: **029 2078 0671** or email to: mared.llwyd@ccwales.org.uk

Conduct Hearings

Social worker removed from Register

A former social worker for Conwy County Borough Council has been removed from the social care register after being found guilty of six charges of misconduct for failing to comply with policies and procedures while working in Children Services.

At a Care Council for Wales Conduct Committee hearing in Llandudno between 22 and 26 September 2008, Mr Les Herman Dube, a registered social worker was found guilty of failing to follow 'Looked After Children' procedures; failing to make case-work recordings of statutory visits; and inappropriately sharing confidential information with the Care Council in the absence of proper justification for doing so.

Les Herman Dube will no longer be able to use the title of 'social worker', or work as a social worker in the UK.

Social worker admonished for misconduct

Registered social worker Douglas Christopher Allanson has been admonished for five years after admitting misconduct in front of a Care Council for Wales Conduct Committee in Cardiff.

This means Mr Allanson, who previously worked for Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, will be able to continue working as a social worker but there will be an admonishment against his record on the Register of Social Care Workers for five years. Anyone contacting the Care Council about Mr Allanson's registration during that time, including future employers, will be told he has an admonishment.

Mr Allanson admitted misconduct in nine charges relating to failing to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with a service user/former service user.

Demand for social work courses peaks

Demand for places on the social work degree in Wales has reached its highest level since it was introduced in 2004.

Data from the Care Council's review of Social Work Qualifying Trends 07/08 shows that social work degree courses throughout Wales were over-subscribed with six applications being made for every available place.

The review also reveals that 93% of registered graduates with a qualification in social work gained employment on completing their training, the majority with local authorities.

Rhian Huws Williams, the Care Council's Chief Executive said: "These figures are very encouraging as they demonstrate the interest in social work as a profession, showing that social work is viewed as a stimulating and worthwhile career.

"The number of Welsh-speaking students on social work courses has also increased to 24%, overtaking the population average of Welsh speakers. This takes us a step closer to having a workforce that is able to meet the needs of service users in their language of choice."

She added, "Students have clearly embraced the degree. The data reinforces our own feedback that they see the value of being able to undertake academic depth in their discipline plus breadth of practice experiences. They also like gaining a degree which gives them the flexibility to pursue a range of career pathways within social care."

Copies of the Social Work Qualifying Trends are available online or alternatively contact Rhys Edwards on:

029 2078 0663 or via email on: rhys.edwards@ccwales.org.uk

Positive response from social work graduates

Results from a recent survey paint a positive picture of the how the first social work degree graduates have fared in the workplace.

They have been able to find posts in social work, and have chosen to enter the profession rather than taking up some other type of job. On the whole, they are also happy with their chosen field of work, and most are well-supported by their employers.

These are results from a study which is part of a project funded by the Care Council and conducted by Swansea University. The study was developed and is being monitored by the National Strategic Partnership for Social Work Training.

The aim of the three-year project is to find out how many newly-qualified social workers enter the profession inside and outside Wales. It also seeks information on how many, if any, newly-qualified social workers choose not to enter the profession, why, and what are they doing instead.

Data is gathered annually in a postal survey and the recent study was focused on those social workers who graduated in 2007 or early 2008.

Altogether, 64 questionnaires were returned, representing a good response rate of 47% for a postal survey.

MAIN HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SURVEY

Registration and employment: Three-quarters of the sample found employment immediately and all but one graduate were registered with either the Care Council or the GSCC.

Service user groups: Two-thirds went to work in one of the children's services, and one in five went to work in services for people of working age. The remainder worked with older people or in youth offending teams.

Preparation for practice: Only about one in five had mixed feelings about how well they were prepared for practice by undertaking the Social Work Degree, and only five were in any way dissatisfied.

What they like about social work: People-centred activities such as work with service users, team work, and advocacy. More than four-fifths found achieving positive outcomes for service users rewarding.

What they dislike about social work: Administration and paperwork, the lack of resources, stresses and time pressures.

Caseloads: On average, graduates carried a caseload of 22.5, but these ranged from 9 to 50.

Post-qualifying training: Although less than one-quarter of respondents had a personal development plan prepared for them, most were at least 'mostly satisfied' with the post-qualifying training and development opportunities, but almost one third reported having 'mixed feelings'.

Good early response to Gofal 2

Gofal 2, which was officially launched at last year's National Eisteddfod by Hywel Williams MP, has been widely welcomed by the social care sector.

Sioned Williams, Head of Development and Innovation at the Care Council, who is leading on the project, said: "The response to-date has been great – Gofal 2 has been very well received. We've already had a number of requests for copies, and we're anticipating many more over the coming months."

The CD-Rom sets the context for social care for adults in Wales post-devolution and uses case studies, case law and examples of the policy and legal issues facing practitioners on a daily basis. It includes tasks and offers analysis which is useful to all workers within adult social care services.

Four workshops are planned for February and March 2009 to explain to practitioners and students how best to use the wealth of information on the Gofal 2 CD. Look out for further details in our next newsletter and on our website.



Published by:

Care Council for Wales
7th Floor
South Gate House
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Tel: 029 2022 6257

www.ccwales.org.uk

ISSN 1759-8567

Copies are available from the Care Council – contact Gethin White on:
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