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**Cyngor Gofal Cymru**  
Care Council for Wales

*Hyder mewn Gofal - Confidence in Care*

NEWSLETTER OF THE CARE COUNCIL FOR WALES

## Introducing new Care Council Chair Arwel Ellis Owen



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Lywodraeth Cymru  
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WITH CARE

## Care Council welcomes new reports

The Care Council for Wales has welcomed the publication of recent reports from the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) and Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) which provide an overview of the steps being taken to safeguard and protect children in Wales.

The Care Council also highlighted the importance of the social work degree and additional training for social workers in Wales, which are provided through a strong partnership between colleges and employers. In many parts of Wales, these partnerships have resulted in improved recruitment of social workers and have enabled employers to directly influence training and to make sure it meets their needs.

Responding to the reports from the CSSIW and HIW, Rhian Huws Williams, Care Council Chief Executive, said: "During the past 18 months, we have built on the achievement of the degree courses to make sure there is better information to plan for the future, as well as high-quality training, before and after social workers qualify, to keep pace with what is needed in the workplace. We are also working together to ensure that newly-qualified social workers are properly supported so that they can work safely and effectively."

Among the Care Council initiatives to help safeguard children are:

- A long-term study of newly-qualified social workers, which helps assess how well-prepared they are for the role and areas that may need to be addressed in their training;
- A pilot project to better define the roles and responsibilities of child care social workers and the qualifications best suited to those roles, particularly in relation to the new Integrated Family Support Teams for families where children are at risk and their parents have a history of substance misuse and mental health problems;
- A model to collect workforce information for social work training to help employers know how many qualified social workers they need and higher education institutions to know how many should be trained;
- A review of child care teaching and learning on the social work degree and recommendations that will be considered by the National Strategic Partnership for Social Work Training;
- The development, with employers, of post-registration learning opportunities for qualified social workers working in child and family services;
- Guidance on the first year in practice for newly-qualified social workers and their employers.

## What's on the horizon for Arwel? A chat with our new Chair



**Arwel Ellis Owen** was appointed new Chair of the Care Council for Wales in July 2009. Originally from Llansannan in Clwyd, he now lives in Cardiff and is well known in the field of journalism and the media in Wales.

Arwel has been working hard over the past three months, and following his appointment we had a chat with him to hear what he's been up to so far, and what his plans are for the future.

### New to the sector

"I am completely new to the whole social care profession," explains Arwel. "So far, I have been reading numerous documents in detail to gain an understanding of the work of the Care Council.

"I have also been travelling across Wales meeting Council members for a chat. The Council appears to be quite a unique one to me – not only as it's such a large one, but also because it includes representatives from different fields within the social care sector, so I was eager to meet all the members face-to-face to understand their points of view.

"Of course I have also been working closely with senior officers of the Care Council while trying to understand the challenges which we face and to set them in a wider context."

### Why then the Care Council?

Although he doesn't have a background in the sector, Arwel partly believes that his family background attracted him to the field. There was a

strong tradition within the family of helping others, as some family members were ministers and missionaries, and therefore he saw many people visit the house to discuss their problems when he was younger.

Arwel added: "By now, I have reached an age when I see a challenge and an opportunity for me to use some of my skills, especially communication. On a personal level, I feel that someone should use whatever talent they possess for the benefit of others if there is an opportunity to do so, and therefore, instead of retiring, I would rather use my skills for the good of others and hope that they are of some use to the Care Council. The Care Council is long established and has completed its work successfully, and now I believe we need to discuss and persuade other people of the Council's virtues and strengths.

"I am completely aware that the care sector will become more and more prominent, and that there will be an increase in demand, not only from older people but also from children, young people and families. Society has changed so much recently. Where people used to depend upon the support of their community, this is of less importance in this day and age, and, as a result, there is an increase in demand for support from external agencies.

"Therefore, before I applied for the post of Chair, I read extensively about the work of the Council, and realised that the work which is being done is very important, so I decided to put my name forward as I believe I have the necessary skills and experience to help."

## Clear communication

With his background in journalism, Arwel brings a lot of experience of communication to the Care Council, and he is eager to see the Care Council take advantage of that.

"The Council has had eight years to establish itself; to set high standards and rules. All of these have been completely necessary but, now, there is an opportunity to build upon this successful foundation and consider what kind of workforce we will need

in the future, in terms of skills and roles, to offer effective care to an ageing population. It is also an opportunity for us to consider what we have learnt so far through regulation, and how this will develop in the future.

"I now feel the need to go out more to communicate and share the message about our work. And, of course, we will continue to work closely with the sector to strengthen the relationship with the workforce by using the power of our influence to ensure that the provision of education and training is of the highest standard for the profession and that it is available across the whole of Wales."

## Looking to the future

Arwel acknowledges that social care is complex and that the pressure on the sector will increase as a result of an ageing population, and a population that is likely to live longer in the future. Such developments will have major implications in the future, and, therefore, I believe that the Care Council's voice needs to be a part of this public discussion on the future of the sector.

"There's a lot going on in the sector at present, and also on a wider scale around the UK, and some things will certainly affect us in Wales. The next period will be an opportunity for us to consider if we're acting in the best possible way, and to look at our relationship with the civil service and the Assembly. Ten years have passed since devolution, so it's about time we look at how this relationship works in this day and age.

"I will certainly take full advantage of the opportunity to work in close partnership with the Assembly and other key establishments to fulfill the social care agenda. Through the evidence of our work, we can also contribute to those major discussions regarding strategies and policies and the improvement agenda in general.

"The Council is confident enough by now to play an influential role in these important discussions, as well as continuing with the important work which continues to take place in regard to standards and registering."

## An uncertain period for the public sector as a whole

One thing the Chair acknowledges will affect our work is the current economic situation, especially due to all the current discussions about public spending.

"We may as well face the fact that it's going to be a difficult period," explained Arwel. "There's no point denying it, especially as the politicians and prime minister have admitted there will be cutbacks in the future.

"Since devolution, it has been a very prosperous decade in Wales, with quite a lot of investment in the public sector. The challenge that we face now is how we deal with the results – how the cutbacks will affect public money. We will have to face this challenge by using our expertise to defend our corner as best we can.

"I believe that, through communication, I can offer strength to the Council. In the current economic climate, increasing communication to debate and influence will be very important. We must be ready to argue our case to succeed and stand out during the coming years. Raising our profile as a Council will have a positive effect on the sector and raise public confidence – which was the original reason for establishing the Care Council."

**Educated:** Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle and the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth (International Politics).

**Work History:** Editor of News and Current Affairs, BBC Wales working on Newsnight and Panorama. Head of Programmes, BBC Northern Ireland. Established independent media company, Cambrensis Communications. Through Cambrensis and work with the Thomson Foundation, trains journalists, business people and elected representatives in the UK, Middle East, India, Russia and South Africa.

**Other:** Awarded the Guardian Fellowship at Nuffield College, Oxford; Churchill Fellow; Fellow of the University of Aberystwyth; Vice President of the National Library of Wales; Member of the Council of the University of Wales; former Chair of Derwen and former Chair of Bafta Cymru and the International Film School of Wales.

# REGISTER

for Accolades Best Practice  
Sharing Events

Events are to be held between now and next March to give people working in social care in Wales the opportunity to learn more about the projects that recently won Social Care Accolades.

The workshops will demonstrate how the winning projects impressed the Accolades judges with their contribution to improving learning and development in the social care sector, resulting in better services for those receiving them. Each of the events will have an over-arching theme and will include workshops presented by the winners themselves. All events are free and if you or your colleagues are interested in training and development within the social care sector, you are welcome to join as many of them as you wish.



To register your interest in these events, contact [accolades@ccwales.org.uk](mailto:accolades@ccwales.org.uk) or call **02920 780687**

# RESEARCH

## Research to find real value of 'on the job learning'

The Care Council has commissioned a study into the informal training and learning that takes place in social care jobs.

The research will focus on information from social care employers on what informal, in-house learning is currently taking place and how much, if any, is accredited, and by whom. The research will look at the benefits of this sort of learning and how it could be accredited under the Credit and Qualification Framework for Wales.

The project, funded by DCELLS, runs for two years and focuses on ensuring that learning that does not lead to formal qualifications is valued and recognised.

Toni Leggett, Head of Qualifications and Learning, said: "The Care Council knows there is a tremendous amount of excellent work-based learning happening across the sector by voluntary, private and public employers. We need to find out how much of this learning is currently accredited and how we can best work with employers to broaden the use of credits in learning, with quality assurance built in."

The project will also develop methods to allow for the accreditation of new learning. A short on-line survey, which social care employers and staff can complete, will soon be available on the Care Council website.

For more information on this project, contact [michael.thomas@ccwales.org.uk](mailto:michael.thomas@ccwales.org.uk) or visit the Care Council website.

## Also joining the Council... Roger Gant and Philip Champness

Roger is a former army officer and company executive, with a wide range of international business experience, in multi-cultural environments in many countries.



Since 2004, he has worked in the voluntary sector with Crossroads Care, Britain's leading provider of support for carers and the people they care for. In 2006, working in partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support, he established a palliative care service for people living with cancer, in support of their carers, which has demonstrated the value of partnership working and reinforced the need for and value of such models of care. His interests centre around the quality of the social care workforce and the support provided to people with care needs and their carers.

Philip works as a freelance consultant to public and voluntary organisations, facilitating the development of leadership and corporate governance, and supporting culture change.



He is currently a Non-Executive Director of Gwent NHS Trust, and chairs the Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Committee and the Health at Work Group. He holds particular responsibilities as a Mental Health Act Manager, and for developing leadership and healthcare standards.

# QUALIFICATION NEWS

## Other news...

There's been a significant response from the social care sector to events held recently to explain further changes to vocational qualifications.

Around 250 people attended the workshops across Wales, which were the first events of their kind in any sector to explain the changes.

In the meantime, it is business as usual for NVQs. These will still be listed as recognised qualifications for regulation and registration and workers are being encouraged to continue with these until the new qualifications are available in early 2011.



## Announcement drives uptake of NVQ

All managers of residential care homes are being urged to gain the qualification they need before registration becomes mandatory in July 2010.

This follows an Assembly Government announcement that all managers of adult residential care homes have to be registered with the Care Council by 2010. They will be followed by managers of domiciliary care by 2012.

Toni Leggett, Head of Qualifications and Learning, commented: "Our focus is to ensure that all managers in adult residential care gain the required NVQ by next July to continue working in Wales and to encourage managers in domiciliary care to achieve the relevant qualification as soon as possible."

For information on qualifications, please visit the Care Council website or contact us via [qualifications@ccwales.org.uk](mailto:qualifications@ccwales.org.uk)

## New tool helps makes it easier to use qualification framework

A new interactive tool to simplify the qualification framework has been developed by the Care Council.

The web-based application provides easier access for social care employers, practitioners and education and training providers to the occupational qualifications needed for different kinds of social care work. The new qualification tool is useful for human resource planning and mapping qualification routes and career pathways across the sector. People can find what they are looking for by following options on the screen and the information presented has been simplified, making it easier to navigate around the qualification framework.

For further information on the qualification framework tool, visit the Care Council website.

## Care Council relaunches one of the **largest bilingual websites** in Wales

The Care Council has relaunched its bilingual website. With almost 900 pages and more than 1,200 documents, the new website is now one of the largest that is produced bilingually in Wales.

The website contains useful information for people working in all areas of social care, as well as those who receive services and the general public. This includes information for those workers who need to register with the Care Council, as well as guidance on work practices, qualifications, training and careers. There is also a section where those receiving services and the general public can get involved in the work of the organisation. Care Council Chair, Arwel Ellis Owen said: "At a time when an effective online presence is essential to communicate with those people who need to know about our work, we've taken the opportunity to overhaul the design of our website and the way in which we present information to our audiences.

"As a Care Council, we feel it is particularly important that all this information is available bilingually, as one of the key messages we convey to the social care workforce is that choice of language and respect for culture are fundamental to providing high-quality services for those who need them.

"The development of the website is one of many pieces of work to improve the way we communicate, be that with people working in the social care sector, or those who are receiving services. The new website offers a range of information which will be useful to all these audiences, and presented in a way that is simple, clear and easy to find," he added.



## UPDATE on Post-Qualifying Courses

The Care Council continues to work with employers of social workers to influence developments in post-qualifying education, in partnership with Higher Educational Institutions.

The PQ framework enables social workers to study throughout their careers and continue their professional development.

There are now 22 PQ modules available across Wales, with others under development.

The Post-Qualifying Consortium for Wales will close on 31 December 2009. All information relating to candidates who have registered for, or achieved, a Post-Qualifying Award in Social Work/Advanced Award in Social Work is to be transferred to the Care Council for Wales. Verification for previous PQ Awards will be handled by the General Social Care Council.

For further information on the post-qualifying training available, please visit the Care Council website.

## New student booklet launched

The booklet *Different Words, Different Worlds?* was officially launched by Hywel Williams MP at the Meirion and District National Eisteddfod this year.

The booklet was published jointly with the North Wales Practitioners' Learning Centre. It sets out a different viewpoint and understanding of bilingualism, and it aims to ensure that social work students and their teachers develop a thorough understanding of bilingualism in Wales. This will then enable students to meet the needs of the Welsh language and culture in all aspects of their work during their degree course.

Launching the publication, Hywel Williams said: *Different Words, Different Worlds?* is an important bilingual resource that offers us a better understanding and solid basis to conduct current discussions regarding the reasons why sensitivity towards language choice is key to the provision of quality services. Through the evaluation of bilingualism from a world-wide perspective, the publication expands our

understanding of the complexities involved in language choice."

Hywel said, "This is a great resource for the sector and the hope is that it will be used extensively. I foresee, if it is used correctly and widely, that this will be a means of promoting good practice and raising awareness of the need to recognise and respond in a more sensitive and flexible way to the linguistic needs of those using the services."

*Different Words, Different Worlds?* explains how language choice and sensitivity are core elements in providing quality services in a bilingual Wales, which will benefit not only the social care sector but also wider fields.

If you would like to receive copies of *Different Words, Different Worlds?*, contact Meilir Thomas on 01745 586 850 or by email [meilir.thomas@ccwales.org.uk](mailto:meilir.thomas@ccwales.org.uk). It is also available on our website.

**Above:** Rhian Huws Williams, Hywel Williams MP, Gwennan Prysor, Elaine Davies and Arwel Ellis Owen.

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