

Study Expert Reference Group (SERG)

Evaluation of the Implementation and Outcomes Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act [the ImpAct study]

Background

**where the term 'stakeholder' is used in this document it includes people who use services and their carers*

The Welsh Government has commissioned a partnership between academics across four universities in Wales and expert advisers to deliver the evaluation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Professor Mark Llewellyn, Director of the Welsh Institute for Health and Social Care (WIHSC) at the University of South Wales (USW), is the Study Director will lead the team alongside Professor Fiona Verity, Director of the Wales School for Social Care Research. Colleagues from Swansea University, Bangor University and Cardiff University will also work as partners in the study, which is being supported by PRIME Centre Wales.

The project will deliver an independent and objective assessment of the implementation of the Act and the way in which it has impacted on the well-being of people who need care and support, and their carers.

The Act is a significant departure from previous public policy, and sets out major change in social care and social services and in relationships between social services and citizens, communities, and sectors outside government. The approach of the team will be to examine the implementation and impact of the Act through its five principles – voice and control, well-being, co-production, multi-agency working, and prevention and early intervention – and the financial implications of each.

Each of these principles will be evaluated by an academic 'theme lead' supported by an expert adviser. This combination is crucial to ensuring that skills and knowledge of the academics is complemented by the practical expertise and experience of making and implementing policy, delivering and managing social care, working with citizens across organisational boundaries, and putting people at the centre of 'what matters' to them.

The study team will also be supported and challenged by the Study Expert Reference Group (SERG).

Role of the SERG

- The SERG will reflect the overall model of engagement and partnership underpinning the development and implementation of the Act, ensuring the evaluation reflects the on the ground experiences of key stakeholders including people who use services and their carers
- The group will not impact the outcome of the independent research undertaken but rather advise and offer a steer on the programming, methodologies and engagements developed by the team, acting as a critical friend

Agreed Version

- The group will be a sounding board and advise on overcoming potential barriers and on developing creative opportunities. The group will enable the development of strategic and sustainable linkages between researchers and key stakeholders. It will share information about approaches and services being developed locally and nationally to inform the researchers and the study
- The group will be jointly chaired by three lay people: a lay expert to link to the academic team, a young person to ensure the rights of children and young people are reflected in the study, and an adult to ensure the rights of service users and carers are reflected in the study. The C-Chairs will be appointed by the Study Director

Key objectives of the SERG

- To advise and support the research team for the study to evaluate the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act
- To ensure the study fully takes account of the rights of people who use services and their carers
- To ensure children's rights are embedded in the study
- To ensure the voice of the stakeholder community is heard in the study at a strategic level
- To enable the stakeholder community to inform the study and the team
- To advise on tools and methodologies chosen by researchers in order to ensure they are relevant and accessible
- To support the academic team in delivering the study timeline

Working model of the SERG

- The group will typically meet 3 times a year
- Venues and papers will be accessible to all, and will typically rotate between Cardiff, Swansea, and North Wales
- Group members will be provided with support to participate if required
- Secretariat to be provided by WIHSC, USW
- Agenda set jointly by Co-Chairs and the Study Director
- Papers will be publicly available via the WIHSC, USW website
- SERG will be jointly chaired to reflect the co-production principle of the Act and the study
- If appropriate the SERG can hold workshops or conferences to widen participation and strengthen engagement in the overall evaluation programme

SERG Membership

- Core membership of the Study Expert Reference Group will be drawn from key organisations and partners in the delivery and implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act. It will include people who use services and carers
- Organisations and partners will be invited to join the group by the Co-Chairs
- The group will be formed for three years with the option to continue if the evaluation goes into a five year project
- Membership will be reviewed regularly. The list below reflects members as at the date of this document, but can be expanded as appropriate and needed
- The Co-Chairs will be appointed by the Study Director

Membership

- Association of Directors of Social Services Cymru
- Welsh Local Government Association
- Wales Council for Voluntary Action
- Social Care Wales
- Care Inspectorate Wales
- Children in Wales
- Learning Disability Wales
- Disability Wales
- UNISON Cymru
- Age Alliance
- Voices from Care
- Community Housing Cymru / Cymorth Cymru
- Care Forum Wales
- British Association of Social Workers
- Royal College of Occupational Therapists
- Carers Wales
- Carers Trust Wales
- NHS Wales (through NHS Confederation)
- Regional Partnership Boards
- People who use services and carers
- Older People's and Children's Commissioner
- Measuring the Mountain
- Women's Aid
- Care to Co-Operate
- Diverse Cymru
- Academics from commensurate disciplines (without the study team)