



PRESS RELEASE

Older People's Commissioner: Lack of Welsh Government action is failing care home residents across Wales

The Welsh Government has failed to take the action it promised in a number of key areas to drive up the quality of life of older people living in care homes in Wales, according to a new report published today by the Older People's Commissioner for Wales.

The new report – *A Place to Call Home: Impact & Analysis* – also shows that while some positive progress has been made by Health Boards and Local Authorities, with a wide range of activity now underway, many still need to do much more work to provide the Commissioner with assurance that the change required to improve the quality of life of care home residents will be delivered.

The report sets out the findings of a programme of follow-up work undertaken by the Commissioner during 2017 to assess whether public bodies have delivered upon the commitments they made when the Commissioner published the findings of her Care Home Review in 2014, which showed that too many older people living in care homes in Wales have an unacceptable quality of life.

The Commissioner focused on 15 of the areas of concern identified by her Care Home Review – including falls prevention, the use of anti-psychotic medication, dementia training, inspection processes and workforce planning – areas that have fallen outside of legislative developments or relate to ongoing issues that have been shared with her casework team. Public bodies submitted written evidence setting out the progress made against the Requirements for Action set out in the

Commissioner's Care Home Review, which were analysed by the Commissioner and her team.

Older People's Commissioner for Wales, Sarah Rochira, said:

"When I published the findings of my Care Home Review, I was clear that a wide range of action was needed, at both a national and a local level, to ensure that quality of life sits at the heart of our care home system.

"All of the public bodies subject to my Care Home Review welcomed its findings and made specific public commitments to take action in response to the requirements for action set out within my Review report, 'A Place to Call Home?'.
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"Health Boards and Local Authorities have made some positive progress and as a result of my Review are now delivering a wide range of activity focused on improving the quality of life of older people living in care homes, but more needs to be done and the pace of change must increase significantly to deliver the best possible outcomes for care home residents.

"I am very disappointed, however, that the Welsh Government has failed to show sufficient leadership and take sufficient action in a number of key areas, such as continence care, falls prevention and workforce planning, where a national approach is needed to drive meaningful cultural change, ensure greater accountability and promote the more effective use of evidence-based good practice."

The Commissioner has provided detailed feedback to all of the bodies subject to this follow-up work and now expects further action, with oversight at board level, to improve the quality of life for older people in the key areas highlighted in her follow-up report.

The Commissioner added: "There must be a renewed focus from the Welsh Government, Health Boards and Local Authorities on taking meaningful action to deliver upon the commitments they made in response to my Care Home Review. A failure to do so will mean that our care home system is unable to meet the changing care and support needs of older people and, more importantly, will mean that too many older people living in care homes continue to have an unacceptable quality of life."

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Notes to editors:

The Commissioner's 2014 Care Home Review found that too many older people living in care homes in Wales have an unacceptable quality of life. The 2014 Care Home Review Report is available here:

http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/en/reviews/residential_care_review/viewreport.aspx

The Commissioner's follow-up report – A Place to Call Home: Impact and Analysis – is attached for information.

For further information about the work of the Older People's Commissioner for Wales, visit www.olderpeoplewales.com