

**1 What has happened so far**

Community Housing Cymru (CHC) and Public Health Wales (PHW) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in November 2015, formalising an exciting and purposeful partnership between health and housing to improve the lives of people in Wales.

A mapping exercise was carried out to capture information on projects where health and housing were working together in Wales, which illustrated that there are many effective health, social care and housing collaborations already underway. Projects encompass a wide range of activities which aim to improve lives and reduce pressure on the NHS and Social Care services. Health and Housing recognise that this is particularly effective when focussing on prevention.

Two project groups, the ‘Health and Housing Public Health group’ and ‘Health, Social Care and Housing group’ have been set up as a result of the MoU and also following a unanimous commitment by all NHS organisations to support joint working between health and housing. Following several meetings, a total of five working groups have been set up to take forward identified priorities.

As a result of the project and working groups we:

* Are piloting a project in the Hywel Dda area, along with the wider National Taskforce for Falls Prevention to provide a housing response to falls, promote the ethos that falls are not an inevitable consequence of growing old and are delivering training sessions to enable sensitive but structured conversations that highlight the primary risks of a fall
* Have highlighted the need for a National Taskforce for homelessness prevention with Welsh Government, identified and shared key priority areas to feed into a single focused action plan on homelessness prevention across Wales
* Began the implementation phase of an ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and housing pilot with Bridgend County Borough Council with the aim of raising awareness of ACEs with housing staff and residents
* Have gained information on the current infrastructure of health, social care and housing engagement
* Have established what the key challenges are in the care and support sector for RSLs and have fed this information into relevant reviews
* Are engaged with Welsh Government to influence how we can source more capital funding into collaborative health and housing projects

**2 Health and Housing Public Health Project Group**

The Health and Housing Public Health project group focuses on how we can improve the health and wellbeing of people living in our communities across tenures. The group will also prioritise two added value areas of health and housing integration; falls prevention and preventing homelessness.

**2.1. Falls Prevention**

The Falls Prevention working group is Chaired by Neil Williams (Head of Agency Support and Development, Care & Repair Cymru) and its main purpose is to provide a health and housing response to falls. The group is setting up a Partnership Working pilot in the Hywel Dda area, with Ceredigion County Council, Care & Repair and the Fire and Rescue Service to develop a standardised assessment tool for home visits. This work aligns with the Ageing Well in Wales and Prudent Healthcare principles within a housing response to falls. It aims to send the same messages and utilise the same pathways around falls prevention with partners that carry out visits in people’s homes. Alongside this work, the group is aiming to set up a data sharing pilot between NHS and non NHS organisations in Wales, this aims to reduce the risk of duplication of assessments, resources and costs to individual organisations but most importantly is to ensure a collaborative approach that provides a positive experience for the individual.

Next Steps:

This group is delivering ‘Training the Trainer’ events in North and South Wales which aim to provide the tools to maximise conversations between tenants and support staff and to embed a proactive culture of preventing falls.

**2.2 Preventing Homelessness**

The Preventing Homelessness Group has been Chaired by Duncan Forbes and aims to bring together key partners in Welsh Government, RSL’s, Local Authorities, Public Health Wales and third sector organisations to tackle homelessness with an emphasis on prevention. The group outlined some provisional priorities, such as pre-tenancy support for tenants, a ‘don’t let go service’ which would provide support to individuals who move between different locations to ensure that homeless people’s needs are owned by somebody, and joint training of health and housing professionals.

This group put forward the suggestion of a National Taskforce for Homelessness prevention, with the purpose of constructing a single focused action plan on homelessness prevention across Wales.

A meeting was held in April 2017 with representatives from Welsh Government, WLGA, Cymorth Cymru, Police and Crime Commission, Public Health Wales and Community Housing Cymru, to highlight the need to have a National Taskforce for homelessness prevention which would co-ordinate the work of other groups, ensuring that key issues were being tackled without duplication of work.

Welsh Government are reviewing the role and remit of the National Homeless Strategy Working Group, with the aim of fulfilling the role of the National Taskforce, providing a single focused action plan on homelessness prevention across Wales.

Next Steps:

The key priority areas identified by the Preventing Homelessness Working Group have been shared with Welsh Government for consideration into the action plan and we will liaise with Welsh Government to progress these priorities where possible.

**3 Health, Social Care and Housing Project Group**

The Health, Social Care and Housing project group formed three working groups, the Care and Support group; Collaboration group and Funding Group and each have been working hard to identify the barriers and solutions to collaborative working across the health, social care and housing sectors. The aim of this work was to establish a picture of the current infrastructure of health, social care and housing engagement and aimed to identify the right mechanisms and processes to work together through sharing models and knowledge and scaling-up good practice.

**3.1 Collaboration Working Group**

The aim of the group was to find out where there is regular engagement between health, social care and housing by Health Board area across Wales. The group identified the formal and informal structures that are in place for engagement between health and housing and found that there are many forums already set up where housing issues are discussed and these differ between Health Boards.

From this work we are developing a ‘collaboration guidance note’ to share with Health, Housing and Social Care professionals to facilitate cross-sector working. The guidance will provide examples of collaboration already underway, outline the benefits of working together and provide guidance on how to get the conversation started with each other. It will encourage staff to get in touch with the PHW and CHC partnership to seek support and share their experiences.

**3.2 Care and Support Working Group**

This group aimed to identify the key challenges and solutions in providing care and support in the not-for-profit sector and to consider a new ‘not-for-profit’ revenue based model of care and support. This work has been shared with Judith Phillips the Chair of the Expert Group in Housing an Ageing Population and also recently fed into the Parliamentary Review of Health, Social Care and Housing.

**3.3 Funding Group**

The group has also looked at ways in which we can source more capital funding into collaborative projects. The Chairs of the Health, Social Care and Housing group corresponded with Welsh Government outlining our suggestion for stable and secure funding to enable the health, social care and housing sectors to build partnerships and deliver health and housing solutions in Wales.

Welsh Government have invited members of this group to meet with them and set out the ideas and thinking about a new programme of funding. A meeting is being organised for June/July 2017, this is an excellent opportunity to shape a proposal for Health, Social Care and Housing funding and is the main focus of the Funding group currently.

For further information on the National Health and Housing work, please contact:

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