

Concordat puts people at heart of social care commissioning

The Concordat between the National Commissioning Board, National Provider Forum (Wales) and the WCVA-hosted Alliance of Alliances will be launched by the Minister at the United Kingdom Homecare Association's (UKHCA) Annual Domiciliary Care Provider Forum in Cardiff later today. UKHCA is the professional association of home care providers and represents over two-thousand members across the United Kingdom

The Concordat sees those who commission and provide social care in local authorities, health boards as well as the third and independent sectors, pledge to focus on delivering quality services based on the needs of individuals as well as delivering value for money.

The Welsh Government is committed to supporting social care, including domiciliary care, investing an additional £55 million in total in the sector in 2017-18. This includes an extra £25 million to help local government respond to the pressures, and an extra £19 million to help manage workforce costs.

The Concordat forms part of the work the National Commissioning Board is carrying out to support regional partnership boards, which were provided for by the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. These bring together health, social services and the third sector to plan and deliver integrated care and support services. From April 2018, all of the partners within Boards will be required to pool their money and jointly commission care home placements for adults, rather than doing so separately as is currently the case.

Minister for Social Services and Public Health, Rebecca Evans said:

“Commissioning can sometimes be seen as a ‘backroom’ function, rather than a core component of delivering quality care. That is simply not the case.

“That is why I am delighted that commissioners and providers of social care, as well as advocates for citizens and communities, have come together to develop this Concordat. It commits to an integrated approach to commissioning which both provides value for money and improves people’s wellbeing.

“This is in keeping with the vision of our revolutionary Social Services and Well-being Act, which focuses on delivering sustainable care services which put the needs of individuals at their heart.

“Dave Street, Chair of the National Commissioning Board, said: “We are all well aware of the serious challenges confronting health and

social care in terms of rising demand, workforce and financial pressures. Commissioners, providers and the advocates of citizens and communities need to work together to find effective solutions to these challenges.

“The Concordat is designed to help the National Commissioning Board, Provider Forum and advocates for citizens and communities nominated through the WCVA-hosted Alliance of Alliances, to work collaboratively on the shared objective of developing effective commissioning practice across Wales to improve outcomes for people in need of care and support.”

[Carl Sargeant pledges to tackle rough sleeping](#)

Addressing a conference to mark the 50th Anniversary of Crisis, the Cabinet Secretary called on organisations to work together to come up with innovative solutions to get people off the streets and into homes of their own.

Carl Sargeant said:

“We have made significant strides by introducing ground-breaking legislation and have already helped to prevent homelessness for over 8,800 households in Wales since the new homelessness legislation came into force. Yet we face a sharp rise in rough sleeping, and know that young people are experiencing increasing problems in finding accommodation as a base from which to build their futures.

“It is simply unacceptable that some of our fellow citizens continue to sleep on our streets with no decent alternative and I am determined to reduce incidents of rough sleeping.”

The Cabinet Secretary said that the causes of rough sleeping are complex, and often start with poor early life experiences, so it is important to provide tailored support to help people overcome their difficulties.

Carl Sargeant added:

“We need to rethink our strategy to help single vulnerable people avoid or escape homelessness. Our aim must be to secure long term solutions as quickly as possible and focus our resources on

supporting people to rebuild their lives in their own homes.”

First Act of Assembly term receives Royal Assent

Land transaction tax will replace stamp duty land tax in Wales when it is devolved in April 2018.

At an official sealing ceremony, the Land Transaction Tax and Anti-avoidance of Devolved Taxes (Wales) Bill became an Act of the Assembly. It is the first Act of this Assembly term.

A Bill receives Royal Assent when Letters Patent under the Welsh Seal signed with Her Majesty’s own hand signifying Her Assent are notified to the Clerk of the Assembly.

The First Minister of Wales Carwyn Jones applied the Welsh Seal to the Letters Patent at the sealing ceremony, which was also attended by Finance Secretary Mark Drakeford.

First Minister Carwyn Jones said:

“This Act is a significant step in our devolution journey – for the first time in almost 800 years we will have our own taxes.

“It will bring additional responsibility as we become responsible for raising a proportion of our own money and an opportunity to make a real difference to public services in Wales.”

Finance Secretary Mark Drakeford said:

“ This Act will enable us to introduce a new made-in-Wales tax on land transactions to replace stamp duty land tax, ensuring public services continue to benefit from the revenues raised by this important tax.

“I would like to thank all those who have helped us shape this Act and look forward to continuing to work with them as it is implemented.”

Accelerated Growth Programme passes the 1000 job creation milestone

To-date the programme – which offers a bespoke package of support helping businesses to grow faster, stronger and for longer – has created 1,200 jobs, helped participating companies attract £21.4m of private sector investment and generate £8.3m worth of exports.

It means that every £1 spent on the programme leverages a further £5 of private sector investment – and a further £2 of exports for the Welsh economy.

The programme, launched just two years ago with EU and Welsh Government funding, is currently supporting 370 companies, including start ups, working across Wales in a wide range of sectors.

Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

“SMEs and start ups are the lifeblood of the Welsh economy and this programme is specifically designed to help these businesses overcome any strategic constraints that may be hampering their true high growth potential.

“This approach is working – these businesses are delivering results, creating jobs, increasing turnover and export sales which in turn are providing benefits to local communities throughout the country. I am pleased to note that a number have already created more than 50 jobs each and some have attracted in excess of £1m of private investment.”

One example is Laser Wire Solutions, based in Treforest Industrial Estate, Pontypridd, that has seen exports increase by more than £1m since it joined the programme in 2015 – and which it aims to double over the next twelve months.

The company manufactures laser based equipment that strips ultra-fine wires used in industries such as medical device manufacturing, high speed data and aerospace. The business has tripled turnover in the last three years and employs more than 20 highly skilled engineers.

CEO Paul Taylor said:

“We joined the programme to help us overcome the challenges we faced in rapidly scaling the business and fulfilling our true growth potential. We see ourselves as very much a global business

and the support we have had has helped us to focus on growing an international company. The Accelerated Growth Programme has been a fantastic resource as it is so flexible and responsive to our needs as we develop.”

The company has benefited from: specialist 1-2-1 consultancy on market research to identify high value clients; HR advice to support management of people in a growing business and ICT advice to ensure they have robust systems critical for back office management and information.

Wales stands in solidarity with the people of Manchester – First Minister Carwyn Jones

First Minister of Wales, Carwyn Jones, said

“Wales stands in solidarity with the people of Manchester, and all those families who are suffering today. There is a particular cruelty at work in this act directed as it was towards teenagers coming out of a concert. It is difficult to imagine an act more appalling and more senseless.

“I pay tribute to the police, the ambulance service, the NHS in Manchester and all those many others in the city who opened their doors and reached out the hand of help when help was needed. Already we have seen countless stories of bravery, generosity and solidarity which show beyond doubt that the people of Manchester, and this country, will not bow to terrorism. That hope, togetherness and unity will always beat hate, and those who seek to divide us.

“Manchester is well known and well loved to very many Welsh people, especially those living in the north. It has seen terrorism before and I have no doubt about the resilience and strength of that great city.

“I have written both to the Prime Minister and the Mayor of Manchester, Andy Burnham, expressing our outrage at the attacks and offering our solidarity with the people of Manchester.

“I received a National Security briefing from the Cabinet Office by phone this morning, and we will continue to monitor events as they develop. The priorities at this stage must be to give families the

support they need, and allow the police the time and space required to conduct their fast-moving investigations without distraction.

“We must never get used to terrorism – at home, or abroad. We can never accept these attacks as a fact of life. We should continue to call it what it is – alien, cruel and hateful. The message from this Chamber is that we will not be cowed, we will not shrink into the shadows and we will not change our way of life. That is the best tribute we can offer to the people of Manchester today.”