



Wales Alliance for Citizen Directed Support

Empowered Lives, Supportive Communities



Working in partnership with **in Control**

Submission to the Independent Commission on Social Services

Summary of key points

- Wales Alliance for Citizen Directed Support (WACDS) is a developing alliance that wishes to support and enable the transformation of social care services in Wales
- Current arrangements for social care support and services are disempowering
- People need to have more choice and control over how they live their life
- We need to build community capacity to enable this to happen
- There needs to be more transparent allocation of resources – regardless of label or diagnosis
- Personal budgets are only one way of people having more control but they are an important element
- There are clear links between CDS and current Welsh policy
- Wales is slipping behind on this important policy agenda

1.0 Wales Alliance for Citizen Directed Support (WACDS)

1.1 WACDS is an evolving Alliance between organisations that are committed to the principles below. A steering group has been set up to support the initial development of Citizen Directed Support within Wales, responding to the call for people to have choice and control over how they live their lives in communities where they can take responsibility and have valuing relationships, moving from the professional ‘gift model’ to the ‘citizenship model’. This call has come from members of our wider communities, who want to explore this avenue of support and have the opportunity to access the same developments that have been successful in other parts of the UK.

1.2 Members currently include Learning Disability Wales, Mencap Cymru, Disability Wales, Provider Network, Local Authority Learning & improvement Network, Carers Wales, Age Alliance and Social Services Improvement agency. WACDS intends to hold a formal launch in June and aims expand its membership.

1.3 Whilst drawing on learning from England, Scotland and Ireland and internationally, WACDS are supporting the development of a unique Welsh approach to increased choice and control for Citizens. The Alliance is maintaining links with In Control Partnerships in order to benefit from their experiences and learning and to be part of an international social justice movement.

2. 0 Principles of Citizen Directed Support

2.1 The underlying principles of Citizen Directed Support outlined below have been co-produced with the broader membership of the Alliance. The current version is ‘version

1' as we recognise that this is an iterative process and the principles will be updated as we learn more.

Change

Working together to create a major change in the way we support each other and meet our needs to create better lives. This includes

- working together,
- sharing skills and challenges
- help one another to have fulfilled lives,
- making best use of the resources available to us
- developing ways of supporting one another which will not fall apart because they are too expensive, are unfair, or damage our environment.
- being honest and fair in the way we deal with one another
- recognising that what works for some people doesn't work for others.

Choice and Control

Ensuring people have the greatest possible choice and control to direct their own life by

- ensuring the best opportunities to be independent and have control over the money and resources that are used for support;
- knowing how to get good information and advice;
- understanding rights and our responsibilities;
- having opportunities to learn and develop;
- exploring the options for leading full lives;
- exercising choice and having responsibility over how we live our lives;
- recognising that when we make choices, we share responsibilities for the safety of ourselves and other people;
- taking risks that are likely to make our lives better.

Community

Ensuring people have a rightful place in their community and an opportunity to contribute to it by and helping to build communities in which we all can exercise our responsibilities and enjoy our rights as citizens.

- helping one another to understand that communities are what we make together
- helping one another to understand the history, culture, and makeup of our communities
- helping one another to keep relationships with families, friends, neighbours, and work-mates, and to make new relationships
- helping to build communities in which all of us can exercise our responsibilities, and enjoy our rights as citizens
- helping one another to discover what contribution we can each make to our communities.

3.0 The Transformation WACDS proposes

3.1 WACDS assert that the focus should be on working with citizens who have social care needs with their communities to develop sustainable solutions for the future which are open and transparent. It is our belief that the current system focuses too much on deficits whereas the focus should be on people's strengths and abilities, exploring what they need to lead fulfilled and empowered lives.

3.2 We understand that that there is no single way of achieving more citizen directed support. The people that we represent are clear that they want more control over their lives and want support to be tailored to enable them to live the life they choose. In order to do this new service models need to be developed – models that work for all service users regardless of their label or diagnosis.

3.3 Whilst this may include providing people with personal budgets we do not promote the adoption of a single model or process. Instead we wish to see emergent approaches based on small scale 'experiments' alongside larger service transformation being developed. The learning from these should be proactively shared.

3.4 Some of the current experiments involve personal budgets being offered, for example in Wrexham and Flintshire. These differ from Direct Payments as they are based on a more rational approach to the allocation of resources and unlike Direct Payments, Personal Budgets do not have to be in the form of a cash allocation. Thus a cash payment is one of several options in a range of choices including continuing management by the Local Authority.

3.5 However experiments may equally involve approaches through which citizens can exchange support using co-productive techniques like Timebanking and Local Area Coordination.

4.0 The fit with the Welsh Policy Context

4.1 WACDS recognises that an individualistic or market driven approach is not right for Wales but we think that Citizen Directed Support is a clear fit with current public policy in Wales – both in social care and more broadly.

4.2 **One Wales** sets out the commitment to a progressive agenda for the government of Wales:

“the principles of social justice, sustainability and inclusivity.....We will help people to be independent and achieve their full potential, whilst also protecting people when they are most vulnerable”.

Social justice and empowerment are at the heart of Citizen Directed Support and resonate clearly with the One Wales statement that:

“Our vision is of a fair and just Wales, in which all citizens are empowered to determine their own lives and to shape the communities in which they live.”

Self-determination is a key element of Citizen Directed Support to enable people to have full control and make choices about their own lives.

4.3 In **Delivering Beyond Boundaries: Transforming Public Services in Wales** the emphasis is on ‘Putting citizens first’ clearly sets out the Welsh Assembly Government’s commitment to citizen-centred services. It states that

“Services must be designed to meet the needs of all citizens. Putting citizens first and involving them in the design of public services is central to achieving radical change.....People must not be seen as passive recipients.”

This aim is at the core of Citizen Directed Support. Supported and citizen led assessment, support planning and a transparent budget allocation mean that people can be at the centre of their own social care arrangements – actively involved in determining how to live their lives.

4.4 **Delivering Beyond Boundaries** has a strong parallel to Citizen Directed Support in making a commitment to:

“Rethinking social services so that ‘better educated, better informed and empowered service users, carers and their families, supported by more accessible, more widespread and independently available information and budget control will be able, and will expect, to play a much more active role, in managing their own situation, assessing their own needs, selecting their own care providers, and managing their resources.”

This commitment to the Citizen Model of public services carries through into the 10-year strategy for Social Services **‘Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities’** as well as service specific policy documents such as those for older people and people with learning disabilities.

4.5 **Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities** states that social services:

“promote social inclusion and independence....supporting them to achieve their potential and to be active citizens.”

and that:

“Whatever their difficulty or impairment, people should be supported to have control over the life they wish to live. People have a right to expect services, which help them to make full use of their potential, protect them from harm and offer a choice about how they are supported....Better educated, better informed and empowered service users, carers and their families, will rightly expect to play a much more active role in managing their own situations.

This will help to drive change and innovation.”

This belief is at the heart of what **WACDS** is also striving for, giving people the opportunity and freedom to use their imagination to utilise their Personal Budgets flexibly to find new ways of getting a life that is right for them and being supported in a

way that is right for the individual. Only when people have this flexibility will it be possible for individuals to have real choice and control over their lives. **Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities** is aligned with this goal.

4.6 The following extracts from **Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities** echo the intentions of **WACDS** and Citizen Directed Support:

“Social Services is increasingly becoming a champion and enabler of people’s independence. Services will be shaped by service users and their needs. This will require changes to assessment, a different approach to risk and giving the citizen a greater say in how a service is provided.

Councils and their partners will need to:

- *simplify access and assessment, develop self referral and self assessment;*
- *develop services that give people real say about when and how they are delivered*
- *deliver person centred care services with dignity and respect for the individual and no tolerance of abuse;*
- *recognise that we all accept risk as part of our daily lives and enable more informed and shared decisions about managing risks;*

People will expect services to respect the choices they make about managing risks. Services that are risk averse can prevent citizens from achieving their potential.”

Good assessment and care management supports person-centred care and the aim of helping a person to achieve control over their life. The emphasis should be on what a person might be enabled to do given the right type of support.”

4.7 Citizen Directed Support is also in harmony with the sustainable development framework of the Welsh Assembly government ‘**One Wales One Planet**’.

- Where we live is central to our quality of life and our wellbeing. A sense of shared vision and values, embracing equality and diversity, underpins a sustainable community. Empowering people and fostering community leadership is also critical to achieving sustainable communities. (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008 p. 27)
- The challenges of sustainable development mean that we need to engage with, and empower, all groups within society, to make the fullest use of their talent, knowledge and enthusiasm. We need to regenerate our communities, and tackle the causes of problematic behaviour, ensuring we protect the vulnerable. (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008 p. 35)

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 **WACDS** believes that there is a close alignment between its vision and that of the Welsh Assembly Government. We both wish to support the development of citizen-centred public services in Wales. We know that for those people with social care needs,

the current system does not meet their needs in the most effective and transparent way. Citizen Directed Support offers an approach to address this deficit.

5.2 However WACDS is disappointed that the Welsh Assembly Government have been so ambivalent to the development of Citizen Directed Support in Wales and wish to see recognition of and support for the current 'experiments' being developed and positive encouragement for further work.

5.3 We want Welsh citizens to enjoy the same opportunities as in England, through the development of citizen-directed support, co-production and community enterprise routes that are distinctively Welsh and reflect Welsh themes and priorities.

5.4 We recognise that the introduction of whole system change cannot be undertaken easily and **WACDS** is committed to support local authorities, their partners and communities in Wales to respond to this social justice movement in a measured and planned way, encouraging collaboration and learning together as well as drawing on the learning from other parts of the UK and wider afield.