

Paying for Care

Get it Right - PUBLIC HEALTH PUBLIC SERVICE

The Royal College of Nursing Wales believes that care should be available after assessment, according to need, and should be paid for from taxation. We reject the current distinction between nursing and personal care as artificial and inequitable.

RCN Wales supports the proposed Social Care Charges (Wales) Measure which will allow Welsh Ministers to set out, in subordinate legislation and in guidance, the detail of a fairer and more consistent framework for local authorities to adopt when charging individual service users for non-residential social care services.

The Royal College of Nursing Wales would also like to see reform in the system of providing continuing NHS care. Many people with serious health conditions may not realise they may be eligible for fully funded NHS care. Nurses are struggling to implement the two stage process for assessing continuing care health needs in a way that is clear and fair. It is imperative that across Wales all people are assessed for continuing NHS care in exactly the same way and the unfair postcode lottery of assessments is ended.

Continuous nursing care, particularly for the older person, is at present in Wales almost wholly provided for in the independent care home sector. The funding is received from the NHS in an extremely complicated way and is very limited. Regulatory standards and expectations are quite rightly rising yet many homes are struggling to finance staff training and continuous professional development.

The limited and short-term nature of funding for nursing care beds in the independent sector results in pressure that may force nursing care homes to close creating a shortage of nursing care beds in the area. In turn this means that hospital patients are inappropriately transferred to a setting that lacks nursing care or they are kept in hospital unnecessarily. This is quite simply unacceptable and reflects a lack of care and consideration for the nursing care needs of the older person.



KEY POLICY ACTIONS

- The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure a nationally consistent framework for local authorities to adopt when charging individual service users for non-residential social care services.
- The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure that health organisations accurately assess the needs of their community for nursing care beds and for care in people's own homes from nurses who have knowledge of and experience in meeting the nursing needs of older people.
- The Welsh Assembly Government should support the provision of and access to appropriate training and development for both nurses and health care support workers involved in the delivery of continuing nursing care in the independent sector.
- Access to fully funded continuing NHS care should be available on the same basis across the whole of Wales.
- The Welsh Assembly Government should invest in E-Health solutions that help in providing nursing care outside the acute setting.
- The Welsh Assembly Government should invest on the provision of flexible respite care to support carers in their caring role.