# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Consultation on workforce elements of phase 2 implementation of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016** |
| **DATE**  | **12 June 2017** |
| **BY** | **Rebecca Evans AM, Minister for Social Services and Public Health** |

Today, I am launching our consultation on the workforce elements within phase 2 of implementation of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016. This consultation, which will run for eight weeks, builds on last year’s consultation on our proposed response to the issues facing domiciliary care in Wales. It sets out how we will use the statutory framework we are putting in place under the 2016 Act to support the sector in addressing pressing issues around recruitment and retention and working practices, and so uphold the rights of Welsh citizens to dignified, safe and appropriate care and support.

The consultation is available at:

<https://consultations.gov.wales/consultations/phase-2-implementation-regulation-and-inspection-social-care-wales-act-2016-workforce>

When we consulted on our policy proposals last year, we received clear messages about the need to support the recruitment and retention of workers and to preserve the continuity and quality of care. The adverse effects that can result from support being provided via zero hours arrangements and the need to promote processes and practices which preserve the amount of time actually spent delivering care and support both came through strongly in the responses we received.

This consultation therefore tests a draft regulation that requires providers of domiciliary support services to distinguish clearly between travel time and care time when arranging those services. This is intended to promote greater transparency and to inform action to ensure that care time is not unduly eroded, and the quality of care affected, by travel between visits.

Research findings and our previous consultation responses also evidenced a link between the prevalence of zero hours contracts and a reduced quality of care, due to issues with continuity of care and support, and with communication between domiciliary care workers and those they support. As a Welsh Government we consider that the quality of care and support is paramount. I have therefore also taken this opportunity to put forward a draft regulation that seeks to influence the use of zero hours contracts within domiciliary support services, so as to safeguard the quality of care provided.

Both of these proposals link directly to the draft Regulated Services (Service Providers and Responsible Individuals) Regulations 2017 that were published for consultation on 2 May.

This consultation is available at:

<https://consultations.gov.wales/consultations/phase-2-implementation-regulation-and-inspection-social-care-wales-act-2016>.

It would be my intention to use these Regulations as the legislative vehicle for the changes I am consulting on today. Collectively, the aim of the draft provisions is to improve the quality and continuity of care for those receiving domiciliary support.

Improving the profile and standing of domiciliary care work is a core aim of the Welsh Government and we have long made it clear that we regard the mandatory registration of workers in domiciliary support services as a necessary component of this. The extension of registration to new groups of the workforce needs to be appropriately timetabled to allow sufficient time for workers to familiarise themselves and comply with the registration requirements, and to add them to the register in a measured way. I am therefore also seeking views on proposals to open the Social Care Wales register of social care workers to those employed in regulated domiciliary support services (i.e. domiciliary care workers) from 2018, to support this managed transition.

Finally, as a Welsh Government we are clear that good social care management is critical to the quality of care and support received. However, we are also aware of the challenges of recruiting and retaining social care managers, including the difficulties experienced in obtaining the required qualifications and the extent of turnover in this part of the workforce. This is a problem which all stakeholders within social care need to work together to quantify and address. I am therefore using this consultation to seek views on how we may address current challenges in the recruitment and retention of social care managers, to help secure a sufficient supply of trained, capable social care managers which the future of social care in Wales requires.