# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Introduction of Inspection Ratings under the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016** |
| **DATE** | **12 October 2023** |
| **BY** | **Julie Morgan, Deputy Minister for Social Services** |

Inspection ratings are a key driver for the improvement of regulated social care services under the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016.

I intend for them to be of genuine value both to service providers and to people seeking or using care and support services. Inspection ratings will give a clear and objective indication of the quality of services and how well services are supporting people. They will recognise excellence and good practice, and they will highlight where improvements need to be made. I am committed to ensuring that inspection ratings are a success, and that the system we introduce is consistent, fair, and fully tested.

The inspectorate is commissioning an independent evaluation of the pilot phase. I am also mindful of the significant pressures the sector has faced over recent years and indeed continues to face as a consequence of the pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis and workforce recruitment and retention. I have therefore decided, following discussion with the Chief Inspector, to extend the pilot phase, during which silent (unpublished) inspection ratings will be used for care home services and domiciliary support services, to the end of March 2025. Published inspection ratings for these services will be introduced from April 2025.

Extending the pilot phase will provide an opportunity to learn from the findings of the independent evaluation, to make improvements and to test those improvements in practice. It will enable the inspectorate to have a better understanding of the impact of the system on service providers and inspection teams.

I will be bringing forward draft regulations to enable the publication of inspection ratings from April 2025. The draft regulations will be the subject of public consultation.

**Footnote:** Section 37 of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 provides the statutory basis for inspection ratings.