# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Social care additional payment aligned to the real living wage** |
| **DATE** | **10 February 2022** |
| **BY** | **Julie Morgan MS, Deputy Minister for Social Services** |

I am very pleased we have been able to fulfil our key commitment to introduce the real living wage for social care – giving tens of thousands of people a much-needed pay rise as we face one of the worst cost-of-living crises – in the first year of this new government.

We have committed £43m in the Budget to make the real living wage a reality from April. But to support our wider aim of improving the status, terms and conditions of the workforce and bringing about sustainable change in the sector, as well as supporting people as prices and costs rise, we will be making an additional payment to help all those who are eligible for the real living wage from April.

We will be investing a further £96m to do this, further underlining our commitment to all those working in the sector who have made, and continue to make, such a valuable contribution to our lives. I hope this additional payment, coupled with the real living wage, will also help us tackle some of the very real challenges providers are experiencing recruiting and retaining people with the skills needed to undertake these crucial roles.

The uplift to the real living wage will apply to registered workers in care homes and domiciliary care, in both adults and children’s services. It will also be received by Personal Assistants who are funded through a Direct Payment.

The additional payment, which will be available to all those eligible for the real living wage, will be £1,498 gross. It will mean social care workers on the basic tax rate will receive approximately £1,000 in their pay packet after deductions. It can be received as a single payment or monthly instalments. This payment, which will be made to approximately 53,000 social care workers across Wales, will be managed on our behalf by local authorities. We are grateful to the local authorities for doing so at a time of great challenge.

The additional payment will also be made to senior care staff and managers in care homes and domiciliary care. By including these social care workers, we are recognising the importance of our commitment to the further professionalisation of the sector and improved career pathways.

We have completed two previous schemes in 2020 and 2021 that made recognition payments to reward the efforts of social care staff who have provided essential care to our most vulnerable citizens during the Covid pandemic.

This additional payment is different – it is specifically aligned to the introduction of the real living wage and forms part of our commitment to future improvements in professional development for registered care staff in care homes and domiciliary care.

We want to see more people take permanent jobs in social care and start a rewarding career. For this reason, the payment will not be made to agency staff.

We also want those people who are considering leaving social care, or who have already left, to think again.

We are establishing a number of working groups with local authorities, providers and stakeholders to develop guidance on the detailed approach to implementation and will publish full details in due course. We expect the additional payment and the real living wage will be processed in people’s pay from April to June, due to the complexity of the care sector and the large number of employers involved.

I look forward to working with Plaid Cymru’s designated member on our Co-operation Agreement commitment around the future of social care. This includes setting up an expert group to support our shared ambition to create a National Care Service, free at the point of need. We will also continue to better integrate health and care and work towards parity of recognition and reward for health and care workers.

I intend to make a further statement to the Senedd next week.