

Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Bill / Bil Rheoleiddio ac Arolygu Gofal Cymdeithasol (Cymru)

Evidence from Age Cymru – RISC 02 / Tystiolaeth gan age Cymru – RISC 02

Firstly, on the 11th of November 2013 the Deputy Minister for Social Services committed to examining 15 minute care visits as part of the Regulation and Inspection Bill:

[146] “I recognise and agree with what has been said this morning about the importance of this issue. [...] I expect commissioning and contracting practice to be focused on the quality of care provision, and that this is managed and monitored appropriately. [...] I have asked my officials to consider this amendment in the context of the work that they are undertaking in the forthcoming regulation and inspection legislation, which the Government will bring forward before the end of this Assembly.”

(<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/documents/s21863/13%20November%202013.html?CT=2>)

However, we are unable to see how this issue is covered by the Bill as it is currently framed, and would welcome clarification from the Minister on this issue. As noted in our response to the Welsh Government’s consultation on the Regulation and Inspection White Paper, our Local Age Cymru Partners have previously reported that clients are having to make choices between going to the toilet and getting something to eat, particularly as at least 5 minutes of the call time is taken by completing admin and call monitoring. Another example was an older person having to have cold baths as there is not enough time to wait for the boiler to heat the water in a 20 minute call. We would like to see an end to 15 minute care visits as standard practice.

Question: Can the Minister clarify how the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care Bill has addressed this issue of care visits lasting less than 30 minutes, given their detrimental impact upon the quality of care provided?

Secondly, whilst we welcome the fact that the Bill as drafted includes the possibility of registering individual residential and domiciliary care staff in the future, we believe that this is a discussion that should be taking place now. These staff members are providing care for the most vulnerable older people in our society and we believe that they should be registered in the same way that staff looking after other vulnerable groups in our society (for example children). Lack of registration indicates that these vulnerable services users are not being protected in the same way as others. Registration would allow all staff to be held to account against a code of practice and provide reassurance to older people who are in receipt of care services, as well as their friends and family members. These staff provide care to older people in their place of residence, the very place where they should feel most safe and secure.

Question: Could the Minister please clarify current Welsh Government thinking about the extension of registration to these groups of staff who are engaged in providing care to extremely vulnerable older people?