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Citizen Voice Body for Health and Social Care, Wales
By email: cvbinfo@gov.wales

Ref: WG46403

23 Feb 2023

Dear colleagues,

Re: Establishment of the Citizen Voice Body for Health and Social Care, Wales

We are the UK's independent, statutory regulator of nursing and midwifery professionals. We regulate around 39,000 nursing and midwifery professionals in Wales. Our purpose is to promote and uphold the highest professional standards to protect the public and inspire confidence in the professions. Our vision is safe, effective and kind nursing and midwifery that improves everyone's health and wellbeing. Our core role is to **regulate**. To regulate well, we **support** our professionals and the public. Regulating and supporting our professionals allows us to **influence** health and social care.

Making sure that our professionals listen to and empower the public is a core aim behind our [Code](#) and [Standards](#). A strong voice for those who use health and care services complements this. A strong Citizen Voice Body (CVB) will help inform political and system decision makers, provide a visible and simple way for people to be listened to, and help to drive innovation and improvement to make care safer, more effective, and kinder.

We welcome this consultation on the initial principles behind how the CVB operates and hope that the CVB will review the proposed documents once they are finalised and embedded. We are broadly in agreement with the principles and priorities in the Code of Practice, Statutory Guidance on Representations, and Revised Guidance on Engagement and Consultation on Service Change in the NHS. Nurses and midwives must follow our [Code](#) and [Standards](#), and practise in accordance with the laws and policies of the country they work in. Beyond this, the Code of Practice should be clear that providers bear corporate responsibility for requirements in facilitating CVB visits.

It is important that the new CVB begins life as a body with clear powers to influence the health and social care environment in Wales on behalf of the public, and to guarantee maximum transparency and involvement in key decisions that affect the public.

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We're the independent regulator for nurses and midwives in the UK, and nursing associates in England. Our vision is safe, effective and kind nursing and midwifery practice that improves everyone's health and wellbeing.

Registered charity in England and Wales (1091434) and in Scotland (SC038362)

With reference the Question 6 of the consultation, we feel that the guidance on engagement and consultation on service change should be considered an obligation for NHS bodies, rather than an aspiration for best practice.

Partnership and collaboration with the new CVB will be important to our regulatory functions. Our registration work impacts the size and quality of the nursing and midwifery workforce in Wales, our work in education and standards helps to determine its quality and professional priorities, and our fitness to practise process and intelligence gathering help to flag systematic problems and improvement opportunities.

The priorities in our 2020 – 2025 [strategy](#) include commitments to building meaningful engagement and involvement with the public and being more person-centred as a regulator.

The voice of the public and people who use health and care services matters in everything we do. We know that involving people in the development of our standards, policies and ways of working helps us to regulate effectively, in pursuit of our vision of safe, kind and effective nursing and midwifery care for everyone. It also helps us to better support people affected by our work. The insight and understanding we gain from people's lived experience helps us to positively influence the health and care sector.

Given the role that listening and advocacy on behalf of the public can play in refining and improving how we regulate, support and influence, the new CVB will become a key strategic stakeholder in our work in Wales.

We want to ensure that we are involving people and communities who are less often heard, so that the widest possible range of people and interests shapes our work. There is a key role for the CVB here. We have worked hard to build a productive relationship with Healthwatch England, which has helped us to understand the impact of the work we and our professionals do on different people and communities. The CVB represents a similar opportunity in Wales. We want to continue to better understand the experiences of members of the public and their needs to help shape what we do as a regulator, and to help improve health and social care for everyone.

We look forward to the CVB beginning its work, and to further discussing how we can collaborate, ensuring safer, more effective and kinder care for all.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'SKC', enclosed within a circular scribble.

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