

Bevan Commission Witness Statement: In Place of Fear - Forging a Sustainable Recovery (Better Future) for Health and Care in Wales

Covid-19 has fundamentally changed the way we live, work and play – the way we see the world around us and importantly the way we think, plan and operate. We have yet to realise the full impact this will have, but what we do know is that we will live with the fall out for many years to come.

The social, physical and mental health challenges, particularly of the more deprived, will be unprecedented as we try to also deal with the economic situation. But deal with it we must, starting now by embedding new ideas, taking advantage of technology, capturing innovation and capitalising on the opportunity to change and make this better in the future – this is both a challenge and an opportunity which we must take advantage of.

Bevan Statement – ‘In Place of Fear’ ----- The origins and principles of the NHS originated in Wales, by the people of Wales and led by Aneurin Bevan, just after our last major crisis, WWII. Aneurin Bevan set out in ‘In Place of Fear’ the original ethos and principles on which our NHS was built and which for many took away the fear of those unable to pay for healthcare. We now face a new ‘fear’, Covid-19; one that affects everyone but yet again, those less well off and in the poorest communities are affected most significantly.

Once more Wales must demonstrate brave, bold, compassionate and courageous leadership to secure the health and wealth of everyone in Wales; the health and wellbeing of both our current and future generations – not either or. The Bevan Commission believes that this must be based upon the same moral and ethical principles set out by Aneurin Bevan over 70 years ago, underpinned more recently by prudent principles, to secure and sustain a fair, safe, thriving and vibrant Wales.

The Bevan Commission encourages everyone – people, politicians and professionals to join together to once again put fear aside – this time the fear of Covid-19 - to create the Wales we want – a healthy, wealthy and vibrant Wales, based upon the moral determinants of health in which inequality has no part to play.

To achieve this, many things will need to change; the services and support received in the past, our expectations and our behaviours. We will need to reflect, refocus and learn from the lessons of Covid-19 actively building upon the considerable opportunities for change that this presents. Real radical change across the system, not just more of the same, acknowledging the difficult economic challenges ahead.

Everyone will need to play their part in transforming the health and care system into one that will once again be revered worldwide. This will only be achieved if we work together, putting our differences aside, making difficult decisions and sometimes compromises, in order to make the things that matter most work best for everyone.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

1 AN INTEGRATED, NATIONAL HEALTH AND CARE SERVICE

Covid-19 clearly demonstrated the gaps and the inequity between the NHS and the social care system. Failings of this kind should be avoided in a future Welsh health and care system. To achieve this we propose a more equitable and integrated National Health and Care Service, where health, wellbeing and social care are managed more effectively together at a local level, on an equal footing and held to account by local people.

Underpinned by Prudent Healthcare and applying the four Prudent Principles and a value based approach will achieve high quality and sustainable care (whether health or social care) addressing people's needs, which is safe, consistent, without harm or waste, in a meaningful, prudent and compassionate way. Different means to sustain and fund this service will need to be fully explored with the people of Wales.

2 EQUALLY HEALTHY AND WEALTHY (WELL) WALES: A SOCIAL POPULATION MODEL FOR HEALTH AND WELL BEING

The economics of wellbeing through access to fair employment, housing and social connections is fundamental to a healthy and wealthy Wales. This is reinforced through the Bevan Commission's Prudent Social Model of Health and the Wellbeing of Future Generations principles and not just the traditional and medical model of healthcare. A population 'place based' social model recognises the importance of preserving physical and mental wellbeing using the assets held within local towns, villages and communities where people live, work and play. This was seen clearly in Covid where local people, services and support played a key role in sustaining and supporting those in need such as the elderly, BAME and wider disadvantaged communities, who were most isolated and disconnected from society. Such disadvantage should not be allowed to fester. Our moral compass must look for solutions, such as taxation and other means, to redress this to ensure an equally well Wales.

This includes a health and care system where everyone is expected to play a part in taking responsibility for their own physical and mental wellbeing and that of others. It should ensure support is fairly focused around people with greatest needs, addressing health inequalities and the moral and social determinants of health – ***'to improve health requires improvement in every area other than health --- When society is flourishing health tends to flourish'***.

3 HIGH QUALITY LEADERSHIP, THINKING AND SYSTEMS

Covid-19 has further reinforced the need for strong leadership and innovative thinking to ensure high quality systems and services for everyone, irrespective of where you live or what you do. Inequality of access to consistently high quality care is unacceptable.

Leaders across public services play an essential role in achieving this and must be supported and held to account. It will be important to help people think and work differently and in a more transformational way, building upon the more radical changes we have seen in the last year. Health and care staff account for 75% of the total budget and they, along with patient voices, must be fully engaged to help co design deliver services for now and for the

future. Developing and supporting our future leaders to be prepared, skilled and able to transform systems, will be crucial. The 'same old leadership' styles will not be appropriate. We must find different and more dynamic ways, learning from leaders outside of health and care and internationally, to make Wales once again the leader in the field.

4 SUSTAINABLE HEALTH AND CLIMATE SAFE SOLUTIONS

We should not take people or our resources for granted. We must bring sustainable solutions to the forefront of how we live, work and play in Wales, consistent with the Wellbeing of Future Generations principles and the wider context of Wellbeing Economics. Sustainability goes beyond economic and environmental impact and includes aspects such as return to work, fair employment and income support. Global and One Health reinforces the interdependence of human health with wider environment and social determinants of health. Now more than ever resources are, and will continue to be, extremely limited therefore we must find sustainable solutions for the future beyond Covid-19.

Reducing waste is not only prudent – it is essential for the future, as highlighted by Sir David Attenborough. It makes sense whether considering time, equipment, drugs, food, energy or other resources. It also helps create better healthy environments to live in. Everyone should be encouraged to take responsibility to use resources, skills and time effectively. Health and care systems, professionals and the public should all focus upon reducing waste of all kinds, with responsibility for their own carbon footprint. Everyone should be held to account for this, consistent with developments such as Healthcare Without Harm, Sustainability in Healthcare and the Well Being and Future Generations Act.

5 DRIVE AND EMBED TRANSFORMATION, INNOVATION, ADOPTION AND SPREAD

Embedding innovation and transformation will be core to the future sustainability and viability of the system and services. This is a core driving force to ensure Wales is able to flex, adapt and be fit for the future. To realize this and to secure sustainable recovery plans will need to be accelerated. A step change is needed to sustain health, reduce demand and transform services within an environment which supports and encourages everyone to play a part in finding innovative solutions together. Healthier Wales recognised the role that health and care services, universities, industry, patients, people and professionals all play.

Greater focus is needed on maintaining health and wellbeing and 'what matters to people' not 'what's the matter with people'. Listening to people and their ideas, supporting people's needs not the 'systems' and helping people help themselves not just treating ill health will be imperative.

Leaders, professionals and organisations must think and act differently and be prepared and supported to do so. Existing resources and ways of working should be reviewed with Transformation and Innovation Funds used to try out, test and adopt new solutions, models, technology or ways of working, not to prop up traditional models of care and overspend. A national and local system wide transformation fund should generate and support new ideas working across boundaries, professionals and organisations to find better solutions and to support their adoption. Everyone must accept responsibility and be held to account for the Adoption and Spread of innovation systematically across Wales.