

eForum



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Carwyn Jones
First Minister



Review of residential care is here

“What the sector needs is support not care home bashing”

The review of residential care by the Older People’s Commissioner is finally underway.

Care homes across Wales have received a message to say they should prepare themselves for a visit from a team of the Commissioner’s so-called Rapporteurs.

They will ring out of the blue at 9am on the day of the visit and arrive an hour or two later.

Care Forum Wales Senior Policy Advisor Mary Wimbury said: “Care homes are no doubt wondering how such people fit in with the statutory inspectors from the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) who perform unannounced inspections and the assessors from local authorities and Health Boards who commission most care home placements in Wales.

“Quite apart from the pressure such visits put on care home managers and their staff and the time they deflect from providing and improving care, we must question whether in this time of austerity three separate but parallel inspection systems is the best use of public money.

“No-one would question that care homes need to be

inspected to ensure standards are adhered to, but this plethora of inspection, assessment and review may generate more heat than light and obscure a fundamental debate about what we want for the care of our older people in Wales.

“The terms of reference are too narrow and do not take account of the way social care is funded or commissioned which has an enormous impact on the care provided.

“Care Forum Wales therefore feels that the review by the Older People’s Commissioner is a missed opportunity.

“We are also disappointed that the Commissioner’s Advisory Panel does not contain anybody who has recently lived in, managed in or owned a care home to give the process the benefit of their expert knowledge.

“The big picture is that the whole care system is fundamentally in difficulty, it is almost certainly the most challenging time that people have known in the sector.

“The review will showcase some fantastic practice in Wales and inevitably there will be those areas for improvement. We hope the report will not focus on negativity but sharing of good practice and encouragement to learn from it.”

High five from First Minister

"Care Forum Wales was launched on St David's day in 1993 and from those early days it has led the way in putting service users at the heart of its work"

Carwyn Jones
First Minister

Care Forum Wales has been praised by First Minister Carwyn Jones for putting vulnerable people at the heart of its work.

According to Mr Jones, Care Forum Wales is making an invaluable contribution to improving standards in social care.

Mr Jones was speaking at a meeting of the Five Nations group which represents independent care providers from the four home countries and Eire.

The conference in Cardiff was hosted by Care Forum Wales which was a founder member of the group.

The historic visit was the first time a head of government had attended a meeting of the Five Nations.

Mr Jones said: "Care Forum Wales was launched on St David's day in 1993 and from those early days it has led the way in putting service users at the heart of its work.

"In Wales we pride ourselves as being a Nation of 'Firsts'. The NHS was born in Wales, we appointed the first Commissioners for Children and Older People; and published the first Strategy for Older People in the UK.

"By building a strong working relationship



with the Welsh Government over the last 10 years, Care Forum Wales has provided significant support to that agenda and our commitment to continuous improvement in care provision in Wales.

"It is a credit to organisations like Care Forum Wales that they are able to build relationships on so many levels to work to secure the best possible future for older people in Wales. Their work is invaluable to us in the Welsh Government in helping to ensure that we hear the voices of older people.

"Take for example, the work Care Forum Wales has done with the Welsh Government over the past few years in producing a dignity in care tool kit for front line staff.

"Care Forum Wales has also, of course, established The Academy of Care Practitioners, a professional association for vocationally qualified social care workers.



"It is hoped that this Wales-led initiative, which is supported by the Five Nations group, will be rolled out in other parts of the UK."

Mario Kreft MBE, the Chair of Care Forum Wales, was delighted and honoured the First Minister had taken time out of his busy schedule to attend the Five Nations conference.

Mario said: "I think he appreciates that Care Forum Wales is taking its responsibility within the Five Nations, as a leading voice for change and as a force for good within in social care.

From left, Tadhg Daly - Chief Executive at Nursing Homes Ireland, Bridget Warr - Chief Executive UKHCA, Robin Sidebottom - Vice Chair, Scottish Care, Christine Thompson - Chair of IHCP (Independent Health and Care Providers), First Minister Carwyn Jones, Mario Kreft MBE Chair of Care Forum Wales, Nigel Newman - Senior Business Development Manager at Boots UK, Des Kelly - Executive Director National Care Forum and Martin Green - Chief Executive of ECCA.

New law will transform social care in Wales

The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Bill will transform how social care is delivered in Wales.

For one thing, the Bill - the largest and most complex law ever considered by the National Assembly - will eliminate postcode lotteries by creating national eligibility criteria.

It is a big step forward in the right direction but, according to Care Forum Wales, there are other changes coming through that may not be so positive. Senior Policy Advisor Mary Wimbury said: "We're very optimistic that the Welsh Government will listen to the concerns expressed during the consultation on their Inspection and Regulation White Paper.

"We very much believe that the introduction of registration fees would be counter-productive. The extra cost will have to come from the public purse, which funds the vast majority of social care in Wales. This would put an already strained system under more unnecessary pressure.

"The introduction of registration fees would be another opportunity to generate a new industry and bureaucracy.

"In England they're charging £100 per bed which would be a terrible burden

when things are tough enough as they are.

"We had fees in Wales, but they were quite rightly dropped.

"Care Forum Wales is very strongly of the view that what we now need to move to the position where the regulator actually is regulating against measurable standards.

"The subjective use of language in the inspection reports is unhelpful. We don't think that it's terribly helpful to people's quality of life to talk about whether the wall paper is professionally hung which has appeared recently in a report.

"There was another occasion where there was criticism about cat hair on a resident and a cat on the stairs.

"These are the sorts of things that you would find in your own home and I think that the sort of quality that we should be considering from the regulators is measurable quality not subjective.

"I think therefore the obvious thing for regulators is to make sure that care providers are compliant. Where they're not, they should take course and action. That is entirely proper.

"In terms of the quality of life aspects and customer / resident satisfaction, that really should be down to people

themselves and the Commissioners.

"It seems bizarre to me that the regime takes no account of the available resources caused by chronic underfunding.

"There are 2760 hours in a year and the inspectors typically are coming in for a few hours, 3-4 hours maybe, or maybe a day, looking at what they see and only allowing factual changes.

"As a result, they are judge and jury and then putting on the internet something that people increasingly not seeing as representative.

"It may be the truth but not the whole truth. Nobody is suggesting that they're putting forward things they're not seeing but we all watch referees in sport and know there are two sides to it."

"We very much believe that the introduction of registration fees is counter-productive"

"I think the time is right to organise a proper debate about the future of regulation"

Five Nations join forces to oppose 15-minute visits

A major campaign is being organised to oppose 15-minute home care visits to vulnerable elderly and disabled people.

The drive is being organised by the Five Nations group, which represents care organisations from across the UK and Eire, who believe the visits deprive people of their dignity and put many of them at risk.

They welcomed a Government review into the practice which they described as intolerable and stressed there was an urgent need for action.

The issue was top of the agenda at the Five Nations conference in Cardiff which, hosted by Care Forum Wales which is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.

Mario Kreft MBE, the Chair of Care Forum Wales and a founder member of the Five Nations group, said: "It's a growing phenomenon and it's putting intolerable pressure on the system.

"It's unacceptable for somebody to have access simply to such a short period of time for support, and it makes it impossible for the provider to give the appropriate service. Everybody loses out.

"This is going to be a major

campaign to people first and make sure that people are treated fairly."

The Five Nations group was also concerned that people living in care homes often lost access to free primary care like physiotherapy and dentistry.

Mario added: "The availability of primary care seems to be an issue right across the UK.

"It appears that appears that people lose the right the primary care they received when they were living at home - and that the authorities believe the care homes should be picking up the tab.

"Denying people access to vital services is tantamount to denying them their basic human rights."

"We don't think that's right so we're actually going to conduct a piece of work to quantify that and we think it's a very serious issue for all of the nations."

"It is an issue all of the members will be bringing to the attention to the appropriate people in government, and obviously in our case the Older People's Commissioner."

"We're very concerned around appropriate commissioning for domiciliary care services"

Mario Kreft

Chair, Care Forum Wales

Glittering night for stars of social care

It was a night when the stars of social care shone brightly.

The unsung heroes and heroines of the sector were recognised for their skill and dedication at the 11th annual Wales Care Awards.

The glittering ceremony at City Hall in Cardiff was hosted by the glamorous BBC presenter, Lucy Owen, with entertainment being provided by the talented mezzo soprano, Sioned Terry.

Among those honoured were a trio of courageous women staff who fought through thick smoke to rescue an elderly nursing home resident from a freak fire have received a top award.

Registered nurse Tessie Thomas and care assistants Pat Scanlon and Shelley Jones brought the pensioner, in his 80s, to safety and helped evacuate other residents at the College Fields home in Barry, near Cardiff, one night earlier this year.

Their bravery was recognised when they shared the gold "Social Care Health and Safety Award" sponsored by Public Health Wales.

Fire chiefs had praised the "exemplary" manner in which the staff reacted when the blaze occurred, saying they went "over and above their role."

Meanwhile, two staff members who bravely waded through icy waist-deep water to ensure elderly residents were safe when flash flooding hit a care home in St Asaph, North Wales, were also rewarded for their courage.

The Old Deanery was one of 400 properties affected when torrential rain caused the River Elwy in St Asaph to burst its banks early on November 27 last year.

But thanks to the efforts of home manager Lisa Bowen and senior care assistant Jane Heath-Coleman, all 21 residents, ranging in age from their seventies to 98, stayed safe and dry.

Lisa said: "I am absolutely over the moon about it and never expected to be even nominated for it."

Modestly Jane added: "What we did that night was a joint effort by all the staff involved and I like to think we accepted the award on behalf of the whole team."

The prestigious Spirit of Care Award, sponsored by Barchester Healthcare, went to a former apprentice electrician who brought flair and dedication to the Atlantic View care home in Cardiff.

Phil Disson, 25, also won a silver award in the Exceptional Newcomer category sponsored by Coleg Cambria.

He was nominated for the way he is valued and respected by residents, their relatives and his fellow staff at Atlantic View, where he personally takes care of 19 elderly occupants on one of the home's three floors.

A colleague said: "It's easy to see why he is so loved and valued by residents, their families and his colleagues because the residents' faces light up when he is with them."

One of the main highlights of the evening was the Dignity in Care Award, once again sponsored by the Welsh Government.

This year four people were deemed worthy of the award so there was a gold apiece for Ben Perkins and Neil Roberts, from Pembrokeshire, along with Sophanit Francis, from Carmarthenshire, and Janet Atherton, from Gwynedd.

Ben Perkins, 32, is care coordinator at Care in Hand, one of the largest domiciliary care and nursing providers in Pembrokeshire, based at Pentlepoir, Saundersfoot.

A recurring theme from those who have seen him in his caring role is how he rises "above and beyond the call of duty."

On top of the Dignity award, Ben, of Llanddewi Velfrey, Narberth, won silver in the End of Life



From top:

Lisa Bowen and Jane Heath-Coleman.

Tessie Thomas, Pat Scanlon and Shelley Jones

Phil Disson

Closing date for the 2014 Wales Care Awards is March 31

For more details go to www.careforumwales.co.uk



From top:

Stoned Terry.

From left, Lesley Griffiths AM Minister for Local Government with Olivia Thomas and David Jones, Principal Coleg Cambria.

BBC presenter Lucy Owen

Care Award sponsored by Barclays Corporate at the prestigious Wales Care Awards.

After his double success Ben said : "I'm absolutely elated. It was such a memorable evening."

Neil Roberts, from Haverfordwest, went along to an awards ceremony "just to make up the numbers" and returned home stunned having won two golds.

The awards were ample justification for a complete change of career for the 50-year-old former factory worker. As well as the Dignity award, he also received gold in the category for Supported Living or Small Group Community Living Care Practitioner category, by Pendine Park Teaching Care Centre.

Father-of-two Neil, a support worker employed by Elliots Hill Care Ltd, worked for 27 years as an engineer for Fenton Factors Ltd in the town but when the business closed he joined his brother at the local cheese factory.

With his mother and two sisters having been nurses it was perhaps natural that he should turn to the care sector, and that switch five years ago is one he has not regretted for one moment.

A delighted Neil said: "Care workers generally get a bad press due to a very small minority of 'bad pennies' so it's nice for all the good work being done to be recognised," he added.

Sophanit Francis came all the way

from Thailand to work in Wales 26 years ago.

She is well known amongst colleagues at the Towy Castle Care Home in Carmarthen for her dedication to duty and the dignity and respect with which she treats residents.

In addition to the Dignity award, she was presented with a silver award in the Outstanding Service category, sponsored by Hallmark Care Homes.

Sophanit currently undertakes a dual role as a duty shift manager and special needs manager.

She said: "At the presentation evening it was a big surprise for me to win two of the awards. But it has made me very pleased and proud.

"I had a lovely evening at Cardiff City Hall, where I was accompanied by my daughter Mary."

Janet Atherton has devoted 30 years of her life to caring for a man left with brain damage after a major accident.

Back in 1980 Janet Atherton invited Steve Linford to come and live with herself and her family and he has since become a fully integrated member of her family, sharing much of their life including many holidays to exotic foreign destinations.

It is this selfless approach to providing the highest level of care to a vulnerable person that landed 75-year-old Janet, of Abersoch in Gwynedd, a place in the final of the Wales Care Awards.

As well as the Dignity award, Janet

received a bronze award in the Promoting Fulfilled Lives category, sponsored by Boots Care Services.

She said: "The bronze award was good enough but to win Dignity in Care too was just gobsmacking!"

Gwenda Thomas, the Deputy Minister for Social Services, paid tribute to the excellent practice personified by the finalists.

She said: "It is wonderful to have this opportunity to share in your success and help you to celebrate all that is good about care provision in Wales.

"I appreciate these can be challenging and demanding roles and that you do not always get the recognition that you deserve.

"This is why evenings like these, where we can get together to show just how good social care in Wales is; where we can publicly thank all of you who deliver that care; and raise the profile of the excellent work you do for the other three hundred and sixty four days of the year, are so important."

Mario Kreft MBE, the Chair of Care Forum Wales, said the standard of entries for the Wales Care Awards was extremely high.

He added: ""This awards ceremony is our opportunity to pay tribute and to celebrate the talent and commitment that is improving the quality of life for thousands and thousands of people throughout Wales.

"We take our hats off to them."

Closing date for the 2014 Wales Care Awards is March 31

For more details go to www.careforumwales.co.uk

Roll of honour



Care experts honoured for lifetime achievements

Two major figures in the world of social care were joint winners of the Craig Thomas Lifetime Achievement Award.

Mike Parsons, the founder and former chief executive of Barchester Healthcare, and Gordon Cole, recently retired policy adviser to Care Forum Wales, shared the honour at the Wales Care Awards.

Mike, a giant of the UK health sector, said: "I've always been very supportive of the Welsh Care Awards, so this award meant a lot to me.

Although he has stepped down as chief executive last year, Mike Parsons remains a non-



Gordon Cole with his wife Beryl

executive director of Barchester which he created over 20 years ago and built it to a company providing top quality services for over 10,000 residents, supported by a staff of over 17,000, on more than 200 sites, 16 of them in Wales.

Mike read economics at Sussex and Oxford Universities and became a management consultant. He subsequently took an MBA at London Business School and the Diploma in International Management at Hautes Etudes Commerciales, Paris and the Graduate School of Business Administration on Wall Street.

He was a founding director of a top London advertising agency which he and his partners sold to Saatchi & Saatchi in 1985. He worked at Saatchi for five years and was Chief Operating Officer of the international network.

But it was trying to find a home for Auntie Ivy and Auntie Lily some 20 years ago which changed his life. "I think that's why Mario and I get on so well, he had a similar experience which motivated him years ago trying to find a home for his grandmother!" said Mike.

Meanwhile, Gordon has probably done more to improve health and social care standards than any other individual.

After 50 years working with the NHS, private and voluntary sectors and local government, Gordon, 69, has reluctantly retired but will still help in the voluntary sector.

"It was quite a surprise to receive the award. I was involved in setting it up 11 years ago and I'm delighted it became such a success.

"It was originally intended to recognise the people who carry out the jobs others don't want to do, and do it so well. And it was to redress some of the bad Press which the sector receives," he said.

Gordon, who lives in Frenchay village in South Gloucs, was approached by Care Forum Wales (CFW) in 1995 because it was interested in work he was doing in his home area of Bristol and Avon on improving care standards in care homes and at that time it wanted to develop quality assurance and try to make

it simple and accessible, and relevant, to residents, their relatives and those working in the homes.

Mario Kreft said: "Mike is quite simply a giant in our sector – but more than that a thoroughly decent man. "What Mike did more than 20 years ago was to show true vision, he led the way in developing the care sector, he took a concept and with his formidable background with the likes of Saatchi, he developed a respected international brand.

"We have worked hard in Wales to bring together the care sector under one united banner and Mike has always supported us in this because he sees the value of having a single voice and of putting quality and people first.

"Few, if any, possess Gordon's knowledge and experience in the health and social welfare sectors or have been so influential in improving care standards, particularly here in Wales.

"Even fewer have devoted their lives to helping others and done it with such unself righteous good humour."



Mike Parsons

Hidden Talents honoured at social care Oscars



Bryn Terfel

A project which brings music to nearly 90 people with learning disabilities in North Wales has won the very first award of its kind from the Bryn Terfel Foundation.

Thanks to an ex-head teacher and the William Mathias Music Centre youngsters and adults with learning disabilities have become Hidden Talents (Doniau Cudd) and get free music sessions every week alongside trained musicians.

Their last big performance was at the prestigious North Wales International Music Festival in St Asaph Cathedral.

Hidden Talents received the Bryn Terfel Foundation award for promoting the arts in social care.

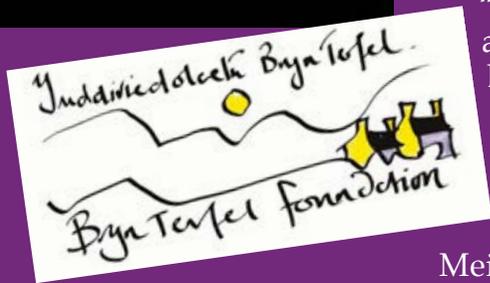
The award, made for the first time, came at the Wales Care Awards where it was accepted by musician Arfon Wyn and Meinir Llwyd Roberts, the director of the William Mathias Centre.

Meinir said: "Arfon came to us 10 years ago with his vision. He had been headmaster at a special school and felt that once they left the school environment there was a very limited opportunity to participate in music..

"We were thrilled to receive the award, especially an award with Bryn Terfel's name on it!

"Arfon added: "Winning the award was an amazing surprise and well worth making the trip to Cardiff for."

Meinir said: "When the group performs they have a marked effect on the people watching. They performed at Cardiff City Hall in June, at the Senedd in 2011."



Arfon Wyn and
Meinir Llwyd
Roberts

Help us find our unsung heroes and heroines

A new search has been launched to find the unsung heroes and heroines of Wales.

Entries are being sought for the 2014 Wales Care Awards, to honour the skill and devotion of people who work in social care looking after vulnerable children and adults.

The awards were introduced 12 years ago by Care Forum Wales to inspire excellence in the care sector.

This year's glittering event will take place in the magnificent surroundings of City Hall in Cardiff, on Friday, October 24

The deadline for nominations is March 31.

Anyone involved in the care industry can nominate an individual or a team for an award. So whether you'd like to nominate an outstanding nurse, think your catering team are unsung heroes or you have a hard-working manager whose efforts deserve recognition, this is a chance to have your say.

The awards ceremony, sponsored by Barclays Bank, is open to all who wish to

attend.

The Awards will be presented in three categories – gold, silver and bronze – and are an important part of raising the profile of care workers and educating the public about the vital work we do.

Attending the ceremony is also an occasion to mingle with fellow care sector staff, compare best practice and, of course, to have some well-deserved fun. So come along and enjoy the evening – this is your time to shine.

Mario Kreft MBE, the Chair of Care Forum Wales, said: "We are now accepting entries for the 2014 Awards and we are looking forward to another fantastic occasion during which the dedicated men and women who work in social care can enjoy their well-deserved moment in the sun."

Further information, including nomination forms can be found on www.careforumwales.co.uk or you can call 01978 752500 or email enquiries@careforumwales.co.uk

Prospects team strikes gold



The Mayor and Mayoress of Wrexham, Cllr and Mrs David Bithell present the award to Steve Elliott, left, and Chris Edwards

A pioneering social care provider has become the first in Wales to receive the Investors in People Gold Standard for its work with children and young people.

Wrexham-based Prospects for Young People broke new ground when they were established to support children and young people from difficult backgrounds.

Prospects, run by Steve Elliott and Chris Edwards, operate 11 homes, run a special school, provide a network of foster parents, employ 150 staff and have worked with hundreds of youngsters from across the UK.

They were congratulated by the Mayor of Wrexham, Councillor David Bithell, for the way they care for children and young people

in small, family-sized homes and for the way they train, develop and involve their staff.

Steve, a Council Member of Care Forum Wales and Chair of the Looked After Children Network, said: "To achieve IIP status you have to satisfy 39 indicators and for Gold the figure is 165 – we satisfied 189 and we're delighted with that because we believe it's important to invest in developing your staff to deliver the best outcomes for the young people we work with."

Chris added: "We're really proud we've achieved this, especially in our 20th year because we're trying to provide the best service that we can for the children and young people in our care and for their families."

Hospices windfall thanks to care heroes



From left, Rachel Kemp, Nurse Manager, Ty Hafan Fundraising General Manager, Lynne Carter, and Nurse Manager, Alex Kelleher.

Three children's hospice charity has been given a major boost by some of the most caring people in Wales.

The Ty Hafan Hospice in Cardiff, Ty Gobaith in the Conwy Valley and Hope House near Oswestry, received £1,000 each.

The money raised by a raffle and an auction at the Wales Care Awards which celebrate the skill and dedication of the unsung heroes of social care.

The money for Ty Gobaith and Hope House was presented by Clive Nadin, the owner of the Abbey Dale Care Home in Colwyn Bay and the CFW representative in Conwy, and Kim Ombler, the co-owner of Quality Care Nursing Home, in Brynsiencyn, on Anglesey, and the North Wales Chair of CFW.

The two hospices run by the same charity provide care and support to life-limited children,

young people and their families from Shropshire, Cheshire, North and Mid Wales.

Clive said: "A children's hospice certainly puts everything else into perspective - we really don't know how lucky we are.

Kim added: "It's a very worthy cause. They rely on donations from the public so the proceeds of the raffle have found a very good home.

"Many people might be surprised to learn that the hospice is a very happy place and a wonderful caring environment with brilliant staff.

"It is a much-needed facility. It is really important for parents that the right support and facilities are available if their children become ill."

The hospices' Fundraising Manager, Sarah Kearsley-Wooller, was delighted that Care Forum Wales chose to support the work of Ty

Gobaith and Hope House.

She said: "These generous donations will make a significant difference to our work and on behalf of the children and families who will benefit, a heartfelt thank you.

The money was presented to Ty Hafan by Care Forum Wales' new lead nurse, Alex Kelleher, and her predecessor, Rachel Kemp.

Alex said: "I'm absolutely delighted to have been able to come along with Rachel and present this money raised at our award ceremony in October.

"I am so pleased that we have already decided that money raised at this year's event will also be donated to the same cause."

Rachel added: "Living and working in South Wales I am fully aware of the wonderful work Ty Hafan does with life-limited children. I'm proud we raised this wonderful sum of money and that it is supporting such a fabulous cause."

Ty Hafan's Lowri ap Robert, said: "We are incredibly grateful to Care Forum Wales and the Wales Care Awards for their efforts in raising vital funds for Ty Hafan.

"It costs more than £3.5m to run our services each year and we rely heavily on the support of the public to continue offering comfort, care and support to life-limited children and their families from across Wales."

The hospice currently cares for more than 250 life-limited children and has supported nearly 600 families since opening its doors in 1999.

Care Forum Wales Chair Mario Kreft MBE said: "It is a wonderful amount of money that we raised and I'd like to thank everyone who contributed as well as those who donated the raffle and auction prizes."



Ann Williams Head of Care at Ty Gobaith with Clive Nadin and Kim Ombler, right, from Care Forum Wales.

"A children's hospice certainly puts everything else into perspective - we really don't know how lucky we are"

Malcolm and Alex take on new roles



"These pieces of legislation will have a major impact on social care and the work we do on a daily basis so it's important we get it absolutely right."

Malcolm Perrett
Vice Chair Care
Forum Wales

Ensuring Care Forum Wales has a positive influence on the Social Care Well-being Bill is one of the biggest challenges currently facing the organisation. That's the view of Malcolm Perrett who has taken over as the Forum's new Vice Chair after being a member of the council for more than three years. But Malcolm, who has more than seven years' experience in domiciliary care in Cardiff and Newport and also runs a company specialising in servicing the sector's training needs, says there are also many challenges facing those working in care in difficult economic times.

He said: "While we, as experts in the field of care, must influence the Welsh Government with regard to the Social Care and Well-being Bill, we must also ensure we consult politicians on the Registration Regulation Bill too.

"It is central to the direction of the care sector that we keep those working in care homes, nursing homes and independent health and social care providers, fully informed of the strategic paths we have chosen.

Also joining the board of Care Forum Wales is Alex Kelleher, who has taken over from Rachel Kemp, as the Forum's Lead Nurse.

Alex, who trained at St Bart's Hospital London, has been a nurse for 39 years and worked in the care home sector for the past 19 years as a nurse and Torfaen care home manager.

For the last seven years Alex, who lives at Abersychan, near Pontypridd, has been the director of nursing for the Summerhill Group which has nine care homes and a domiciliary care agency also in the Torfaen area.

Alex says her role as Lead Nurse is to support individual care home managers ensuring Care Forum Wales' strategic planning and standards are maintained.

She said: "The pressure that comes with funding issues and the effect that has on the ability to give good care means, sadly, we have lost some good people who have left the sector.

"With that in mind I see it as an important part of my role that I support smaller care and nursing homes so that managers, nurses and staff do not feel isolated."



I am finding managers are becoming increasingly disillusioned due to the interference of the CSSIW.

Alex Kelleher
Lead Nurse Care
Forum Wales

Extra benefits for members



Mary Wimbury

We have launched a fantastic benefits package for members.

Care Forum Wales Extra could help members recoup the equivalent their membership fee many times over thanks to great discounts for a host of goods and services.

The package has been put together for us by a specialist company, Parliament Hill.

Senior Policy Advisor Mary Wimbury said: "There are a whole range of benefits from high street shops, to energy, insurance, and it's discount, and in the same way, it's using buying power.

"By working with Parliament Hill, we will benefit from the collective buying power of many membership organisations, some with as many as 40,000 members.

"Everybody wants the best value they can get and Care Forum Wales Extra will help in making the resources go further.

"All members of Care Forum Wales qualify automatically and it is very easy to sign up to the scheme.

"It's absolutely free to join so you've nothing to lose and everything to gain.

"People on similar schemes are literally saving thousands of pounds per annum and I think members will save their membership fee many times over without changing their shopping habits.

"This is yet another excellent reason to join Care Forum Wales."

Consult the people who really matter - the residents

"Which one of us would like to see our home misrepresented on the internet without being able to respond."

"Just like TripAdvisor there should be an appeals mechanism for reports"

The views of care home residents should be sought - before inspection reports are made public.

Care Forum Wales is calling for a radical change in the way inspection reports are compiled and published on the internet.

Chair Mario Kreft MBE believes that residents should, as a mark of respect, be consulted on the contents of inspection reports about the places they call home.

Mario was responding to a paper on advocacy, Voice, Choice and Control, produced by the Commissioner for Older People, Sarah Rochira.

He said: "The Commissioner has put forward this very important paper to give people in care settings a voice and access to advocacy services which we're entirely supportive about.

"But we think there's a bit of the jigsaw missing and that bit is really about the voice of somebody living in a care home.

"By definition where they live is their home and it is their choice to be in that home.

"We think it's only proper, fair and appropriate that there should be a legal mechanism whereby residents and their families, particularly those residents who do have capacity, are at the very least consulted prior to inspection reports from the Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales being made public on the internet.

"The current situation is far from ideal and we find it very unsatisfactory in a number of cases, where the inspection reports portray an appearance of somebody's home without the person whose home it is having any real say in

that report.

"It is indeed also the case that as an organisation, we're very much of the view that providers should have the ability to respond.

"The current system does not allow an effective appeals process - which is unjust and unfair when subjective views can be published as fact without the opportunity to publish the counter argument.

"Just like TripAdvisor there should be an appeals mechanism for reports. At the moment there's no meaningful appeals mechanism for providers to put their explanation on the internet."

"Some members are telling us that residents can't recognise their home from the descriptions in some of these reports.

"Which one of us would like to see our home misrepresented on the internet without being able to respond.

"I think that most fair-minded, reasonable people in Wales will agree this is only fair. The right of reply is fundamental in any fair system - or at least it should be.

Mario Kreft MBE
Chair, Care
Forum Wales

