

Coronavirus: Joint Statement by ADSS Cymru and WLGA

Friday, 20 March 2020

The Association of Directors of Social Services Cymru (Wales) and the Welsh Local Government Association have praised the continued dedication and professionalism of social care workers caring for the most at-risk citizens; and are emphasising the need to ensure virus testing and personal protective equipment (PPE) are issued to frontline care workers.

President of ADSS Cymru, Sue Cooper said:

"Our social care staff are working tirelessly to provide vital care and protection to thousands of citizens in Wales who are at greatest risk of being impacted by Covid-19, in extremely challenging and fast-changing circumstances and we commend their continued commitment.

"We want to assure all citizens who receive care and support – be it at home, or in residential settings – and the families and friends of those who are relying on our services, that we are doing all we can to keep people safe and well-cared for. We know that this is a troubling time for many families who cannot be together for protective reasons, and our staff are doing their utmost to ensure people receive the best care we can give.

"Across all local authorities, we have emergency management processes in place and are working together with other services, including health and housing, to plan mitigating actions to overcome the challenges our services are facing.

"Nonetheless, it is vital that our frontline staff do receive testing, in the same way that healthcare staff are being tested, to enable them to carry on providing services. It is also essential that they have access to personal protective equipment (PPE) to ensure we can continue to deliver services safely, to keep people safe and well in our communities and reduce the impact as much as we can on frontline NHS services. We therefore strongly urge that virus testing and provision of PPE is extended to frontline social care staff."

Councillor Huw David (Bridgend), WLGA Spokesperson for Health and Social Care said:

"We know many people will be feeling concerned at the moment. Councils are working hard alongside partners in the public, third and private sectors to maintain social care services for those who need them. Demand on these services will rapidly increase as they will be used more and more to ease the pressure on the NHS in responding to the outbreak. If there are any former social care staff who would be willing to return to work to help in these efforts, I would appeal to them to get in touch with their local authority.

"Social care staff are undertaking a critical role at this time, like others in the health and care sector. They are keeping older people and children and young people safe, and providing a range of care and support to others, and I would like to thank them for the work that they have done and will be doing. We need to ensure that they are safe and well enough to work, which means they need to be able to protect themselves with personal protective equipment (PPE) as appropriate. We are calling for an extension of the testing regime as soon as possible to include social care staff so that people who are well enough to work can do so."

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