# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 – implementation update** |
| **DATE** | **1st of April 2016** |
| **BY** | **Mark Drakeford, Minister for Health and Social Services** |

I write to advise members that the statutory framework to enable implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 from 6 April 2016 is now fully in place. I also take the opportunity to provide a general update on the readiness to implement and the continuing steps which the Welsh Government is taking to support this process.

Preparation of the workforce for implementing the Act has been led by the Care Council for Wales. It has developed a learning hub to act as a repository for information and training material about the Act. The hub is currently running at 1,000 hits a day. It provides a one-stop-shop for access to the regulations, codes of practice and statutory guidance underpinning the Act Members can access the hub at <http://www.ccwales.org.uk/getting-in-on-the-act-hub/>

The Care Council’s national learning and development strategy has been supported by £1 million of Welsh Government funding. Over 7,000 priority staff from across Wales are expected to have been reached this month alongside continuing development of new training materials for roll-out. Now thoughts are turning to planning for next year, supported by a further £1 million of Welsh Government funding in 2016-17. An evaluation of this year’s training plan is already underway to help learn lessons for the future and shape 2016-17 activity.

We could not have progressed so far in this journey without the wholehearted support of the sector, in particular our collaboration partners: the Welsh Local Government Association and Social Services Improvement Agency; the Welsh NHS Confederation; the Association of Directors of Social Services Cymru; Care Forum Wales and the Health and Social Care Alliance. Each have, and will continue to, play a crucial role in making the ambitions of the Act a reality.

From an early stage, we identified that our drive to transform social services in Wales needed collective, engaged and collaborative leadership. To that end, Gwenda Thomas AM, when Deputy Minister for Social Services, set up the National Social Services Leadership Alliance, and has continued to lead it. I would like to thank her for this, for all of the support she has offered me, and for the leadership she has given to the sector, during this crucial period. Under her guidance the Alliance, consisting of the National Partnership Forum, Leadership Group, and Citizen Panel, has provided an invaluable contribution to developing our legislative proposals and bringing them to the point of implementation.

New national leadership arrangements that build on the best aspects of the current arrangements whilst also dovetailing with the new regional planning mechanisms to be established under the 2014 Act have now been put in place

The new National Partnership Board, to be in operation from May 2016, will draw together a cross-section of citizens as leaders, local government representatives, NHS representatives and those representing wider stakeholder groups for the first time in one board to support and advise Ministers as we collectively reform and improve care and support in Wales.