

Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Plan 2014 – 2018



With thanks to all those who have contributed to the development of this strategy

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Royal College of General Practitioners Wales
Royal College of Nursing Wales
RNIB Cymru
Sight Cymru
South East Wales Transport Alliance
Wales Council of the Blind
Welsh Government
Welsh Local Government Association
Welsh Rehabilitation Officers Forum

Note on the structure of this document

This publication sets out the Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group's aims and objectives in relation to the UK Vision Strategy's three outcome areas. It also includes the objectives from the Welsh Government's Eye Health Care Delivery Plan for Wales that relate to the Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group's aims. Finally, it lists the actions that Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group members will be undertaking this year to start to take forward our objectives. These will be reviewed at the end of 2014, and an updated action plan developed for year two of the plan. This will be available from the UK Vision Strategy website – www.vision2020uk.org.uk/ukvisionstrategy/ – or on request.

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Foreword

Sight loss is high on the agenda in Wales and as a result Wales has established a strong reputation in the development and provision of eye health care services; however, the demands for eye care services will continue to increase as people are living longer. This presents challenges for health, social care and other partners when planning and coordinating the delivery of services.



It is essential that we take a collaborative approach to the challenges ahead and the Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group has already made great progress in its first four years, bringing together partners from across the public, private and third sector. This refreshed Implementation Plan for 2014 to 2019 builds on its success.

People need to know where they can access services, care and support in their local area and be assured that in Wales there are shared objectives for how we as a nation can improve eye health and better meet the needs of people with sight loss.

I am delighted to see the aims of the revised Wales Vision Strategy complement the Welsh Government's Together for Health: Eye Health Care Delivery Plan and NHS Wales' Policy and I welcome this important work.

Dr Ruth Hussey OBE

Introduction

There are 100,000 people in Wales living with sight loss and over the next 25 years the number of people with sight loss is expected to double.

Over 50 per cent of sight loss is avoidable and it is reassuring that since the first Wales Vision Strategy was published in 2000 the Welsh Government has published its own Eye Health Care Delivery Plan and made eye health a public health priority. The NHS, Health boards and wider society all have a pivotal role to play in preventing avoidable sight loss through improving eye health and ensuring access to services.

Similarly, given the growing percentage of the population living with sight loss, improving access to support and ensuring blind and partially sighted people have access to the same opportunities as their sighted peers is of critical importance.

The Wales Vision Strategy brings together organisations with an interest in eye health and sight loss to agree a set of shared aims and identify how these can be achieved over the next four years.

Background

The UK Vision Strategy was launched in 2008 in response to a World Health Assembly Resolution of 2003 which urged the development and implementation of plans to tackle vision impairment (now known as Vision 2020 plans). Each of the four UK countries then developed their own implementation plans, setting out how partners in that country would work together to deliver on the UK Vision Strategy priorities.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group was formed to develop and deliver an implementation plan for 2010-14. Considerable progress has been achieved towards the objectives in the plan – from the development of clinical pathways for the treatment of glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration and unscheduled care, to the introduction of “talking buses” by a number of bus companies in Wales.

The UK Vision Strategy was reviewed in 2013, resulting in a refreshed set of outcomes being agreed and published. The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group consequently undertook a consultation exercise to agree a new implementation plan for 2014-18, with a series of workshops held to bring key stakeholders together and agree priorities.

One of the most significant developments in eye care in Wales in recent years has been the publication of the Welsh Government's five-year strategy for eye health: the Eye Health Care Delivery Plan for Wales. Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group members were involved in influencing the content of the Plan and are involved in monitoring and supporting its implementation. There are significant overlaps between the priorities in the Welsh Government Plan and the aims of the Wales Vision Strategy. The new Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Plan reflects this, with the relevant Welsh Government actions included alongside those developed by Wales Vision Strategy members.

Our three outcome areas

Outcome One – Everyone in Wales looks after their eyes and their sight

In the next four years, we will work to:

- raise awareness and understanding of eye health, particularly focusing on people most at risk of eye disease and also among health and social care practitioners.
- ensure the early detection of sight loss and prevention where possible.

Outcome Two – Everyone with an eye condition receives timely treatment and, if permanent sight loss occurs, early and appropriate services and support are available and accessible to all

In the next four years, we will work to:

- improve the co-ordination, integration, reach and effectiveness of eye health and eye care services.
- ensure that, where permanent sight loss occurs, emotional support, habilitation or rehabilitation will be provided in a timely fashion, enabling people to retain or regain their independence.

Outcome Three – A society in which people with sight loss can fully participate

In the next four years we will work to:

- improve attitudes, awareness and actions within education, employment and other services.
- ensure that children and young people with sight loss can take their place in society.
- achieve improved compliance with equality legislation.

Outcome One – Everyone in Wales looks after their eyes and their sight

In the next four years, we will work to:

- raise awareness and understanding of eye health, particularly focusing on people most at risk of eye disease and also among health and social care practitioners.
- ensure the early detection of sight loss and prevention where possible.

Our aim

That eye health is a recognised public health priority, underpinned by robust research and sound data collection. The impact on eye health and sight should become an integrated feature of major public health and education drives, such as those which tackle smoking, diet or obesity.

Relevant objectives in the Welsh Government’s Eye Health Care Delivery Plan

Ensure eye health statistics and demographics are routinely included in NHS Needs Assessments and reports of Directors of Public Health for each Health Board.

- Actively seek opportunities to link eye health issues to other health awareness campaigns such as diabetes, smoking and falls.
- Identify specialised Public Health support to advice on eye care issues.
- Collect, report and monitor capacity and demand for eye care services.

Our aim

That public and professional understanding of eye health is increased through ongoing, cross-sector, evidence-based education campaigns that concentrate specifically on eye health. These should emphasise the role of routine sight tests to identify the need for vision correction, including glasses and contact lenses, and to identify the early signs of disease and ensure appropriate referral. There should also be training and development programmes for health and social care and education practitioners, prioritising those working with groups at higher risk of sight loss.

Relevant objectives in the Welsh Government's Eye Health Care Delivery Plan

- Develop an eye health promotion and public education strategy for the general public, at risk groups and children.
- Work with teachers, school nurses, optometrists and health visitors to educate children and parents about the importance of sight tests.
- Increase awareness of eye health amongst primary and community care professionals.
- Ensure the over 50s Health Check includes a flag for sight tests.
- Work with Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales to ensure the importance of good quality eye care is promoted in residential care.
- Work with the Wales Optometric Postgraduate Education Centre to provide training for GPs, pharmacists and practice nurses on eye care in Wales.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Increase awareness of GOS and WECS through the delivery of training to GPs, pharmacists and pharmacist technicians.
 - **Target: year one – deliver training to 500 people**
- Seek the inclusion of eye health information in the Personal Child Health Record (“red book”) given to new parents.
 - **Target: year one – develop content**
- Promote eye health education as part of GPs ongoing Continuous Professional Development.
 - **Target: year one – disseminate information to all GP practices in Wales via the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) newsletter and contribute to the development of the RCGP’s clinical priority for eye health project in Wales**
- Deliver annual awareness-raising activities as part of National Eye Health Week, to promote the importance of eye health and the need for regular sight tests for all.
 - **Target: year one – to work with at least five new partner organisations, and to reach at least 20,000 people**

- Work in partnership with the RCGP, the UK Vision Strategy and other relevant partners, as part of the RCGP's commitment to making eye health a clinical priority, to increase awareness amongst GPs regarding preventing avoidable sight loss and supporting blind and partially sighted people.
 - **Target: year one – to contribute to the development of an action plan for the RCGP's clinical priority for eye health project in Wales**
- Promote paediatric eye health as part of wider public awareness campaigns e.g. World Orthoptic Day, National Eye Health Week, Nystagmus Awareness Day etc.
 - **Target: year one – run a series of local events with orthoptists to promote the various awareness raising campaigns**

Our aim

That there is increased uptake of sight tests and, for those who are eligible, Eye Health Examination Wales (EHEW) and Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Service Wales (DRSSW) services.

Relevant objectives in the Welsh Government's Eye Health Care Delivery Plan

- Develop an eye health promotion and public education strategy for the general public, at risk groups and children.
- Encourage all optometrists are accredited to provide EHEW.
- Provide training to increase awareness amongst primary and community care professionals of the eligibility and referral pathways for EHEW and DRSSW.
- Audit uptake of EHEW by high risk groups.
- Work with Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) and other stakeholders to investigate the provision of eye care in residential care and ensure regular sight tests are included in individual personal care plans for residents.
- Ensure access to NHS optical vouchers for spectacles and/or contact lenses for people on low incomes.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Ensure GPs are aware of eligibility and referral pathways for EHEW and DRSSW.
 - **Target: year one – disseminate information to all GP practices in Wales via the RCGP newsletter**

Our aim

That potential sight problems among children and young people are identified and addressed. Plans should include increasing implementation and awareness of the National Screening Committee programmes that follow existing best practice, particularly for those at higher risk of sight loss.

Relevant objectives in the Welsh Government's Eye Health Care Delivery Plan

- Work with teachers, school nurses, optometrists and health visitors to educate children and parents about the importance of sight tests.
- Develop national, external, quality assurance for vision screening in mainstream schools including monitoring of uptake and outcomes and standards of training for nurses and assistants.
- Work to improve the quality of children's screening – including reviewing training, equipment and monitoring in light of national standards.
- Develop a service to ensure children in special schools are offered an annual sight test in school.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Seek the inclusion of eye health information in the Personal Child Health Record ("red book") given to new parents.
 - **Target: year one – develop content**

Our aim

That potential sight loss is identified and addressed for all individuals with health conditions and disabilities where there is a known connection to sight loss, and that there is increased awareness among healthcare practitioners, including eye health practitioners, of that correlation and the services available.

Relevant objectives in the Welsh Government's Eye Health Care Delivery Plan

- Develop a service to ensure children in special schools are offered an annual sight test in school.
- Encourage all optometrists are accredited to provide EHEW.
- Provide training to increase awareness amongst primary and community care professionals of the eligibility and referral pathways for EHEW and DRSSW.
- Audit uptake of EHEW by high risk groups.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Explore piloting the development of a GP “enhanced” scheme.
 - **Target: year one – produce a toolkit**
- Explore the current delivery of the eye health component within the annual health checks for those with additional needs.
 - **Target: to progress in year two**
- Work with Health Board staff on the implementation of stroke pathways that ensure appropriate access to vision screening.
 - **Target: year one – continue to engage with Health boards**
- Provide sight loss awareness training for staff working with stroke patients.
 - **Target: year one – run two sessions, training a total of 20 staff**
- Work with organisations that support people with learning disability and complex needs to ensure better access to eye care services.
 - **Target: year one – produce information materials for Learning Disability Wales to distribute through their networks**
- Work to increase awareness amongst health and social care professionals about deafblindness, and the services and support available to those who are deafblind.
 - **Targets: year one – survey all local authorities to map compliance with current guidance on service provision for people who are deafblind; attend team meetings of health and social care professionals to raise awareness of deafblindness**

Our aim

That potential sight loss is identified and addressed for all individuals of ethnicities where sight loss is a known correlate and that there is increased awareness among healthcare practitioners, including eye health practitioners, of that correlation and the services available.

Relevant objectives in the Welsh Government's Eye Health Care Delivery Plan

- Encourage all optometrists are accredited to provide EHEW.
- Provide training to increase awareness amongst primary and community care professionals of the eligibility and referral pathways for EHEW and DRSSW.
- Audit uptake of EHEW by high risk groups.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Disseminate the findings of a pilot project on improving the uptake of EHEW in BME communities.
 - **Target: year one – develop and action a dissemination plan with the project advisory group**

Our aim

That there is investment in further research to reduce sight loss through the development of interventions for conditions that are currently untreatable and also to build an evidence base for effective rehabilitation and support services.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Explore the potential for academic research into the effectiveness of rehabilitation for people with sight loss.
 - **Target: year one – obtain funding to undertake research**
- Develop a more robust evidence base for the impact of the Eye Clinic Liaison Service and raise awareness of the importance of the service.
 - **Target: year one – collate quarterly evidence reports for each Health Board area, and send to Health Board and other key stakeholders; complete research on Social Return on Investment for ECLO services; conduct a patient experience survey; undertake an analysis of face-to-face versus telephone ECLO support**

Outcome Two – Everyone with an eye condition receives timely treatment and, if permanent sight loss occurs, early and appropriate services and support are available and accessible to all

In the next four years, we will work to:

- improve the co-ordination, integration, reach and effectiveness of eye health and eye care services.
- ensure that, where permanent sight loss occurs, emotional support, habilitation or rehabilitation will be provided in a timely fashion, enabling people to retain or regain their independence.

Our aim

That there is improved access to eye health care and treatment.

Relevant objectives in the Welsh Government's Eye Health Care Delivery Plan

- Work to develop electronic referrals and electronic patient records for eye care.
- Work to increase the provision of services in the primary and community setting, where clinically appropriate.
- Review and develop EHEW annually and develop a dry eye pathway.
- Review EHEW and primary care Focus on Ophthalmology (FOO) pathways in light of referral audit findings to develop an agreed list of appropriate and inappropriate referrals.
- Revise targets for ophthalmology to incorporate measures for all patients (new and follow-up) that are based on clinical need and risk of irreversible sight loss.
- Develop systems to improve routine data collection for demand, capacity, activity and backlog in Hospital Eye Service (HES).

- Audit referrals from primary care to secondary care.
- Collect, report and monitor capacity and demand for eye care services.
- Establish Ophthalmic Diagnostic and Treatment Centres (ODTCs) for glaucoma.
- Ensure there is a transparent process for considering and implementing NICE guidance that involves ophthalmologists and patients.
- Ensure all referrals to secondary care receive a response.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Explore the potential for direct referral pathways from optometry to secondary care.
 - **Target: year one – work to develop new pathways**
- Raise awareness of the importance of timely access to eye health treatment and work with Welsh Government and Health boards to seek solutions to capacity issues within Ophthalmology.
 - **Target: year one – publish report into current capacity issues within ophthalmology**
- Disseminate the findings of the Cwm Taf Community Engagement Project, which evaluated the effectiveness of the Ophthalmic Diagnostic and Treatment Centre at Ysbyty Cwm Rhondda.
 - **Target: year one – develop and deliver plan to disseminate findings to key stakeholders**

Our aim

That there is improved access to sight loss services, including low vision services, and that more integrated services are developed which provide seamless pathways through health, social care, private and voluntary sectors. A broad range of support provision should be available at all times, centred on the individual and making the best use of community and hospital resources.

Relevant objectives in the Welsh Government's Eye Health Care Delivery Plan

- Ensure that everyone entitled to certification as sight impaired is certified.
- Work with pharmacists to review adherence with glaucoma medication including in a care home setting.
- Ensure effective referrals to social services from the hospital eye service where the individual would benefit from an assessment by a rehabilitation officer and where appropriate a rehabilitation programme.

- Ensure effective referrals to Low Vision Service Wales (LVSW) and third sector from the hospital eye service.
- Promote LVSW and improve uptake.
- Provide multi-disciplinary training for LVSW practitioners, rehabilitation workers, social workers and voluntary sector staff on referral pathways.
- Work with LVSW to ensure effective referrals to social services and the third sector.
- Improving referrals between the LVSW, social services and the third sector.
- Work with CSSIW to ensure those with sensory impairment living in residential care are identified and supported.
- Incorporate sensory impairment into the implementation of the Social Services and Well-being Bill.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Work in partnership with the Royal College of Ophthalmologists, Vision 2020 UK and relevant eye care partners in Wales to deliver a series of peer-led workshops to ophthalmologists and clinic staff, highlighting the benefits of certification and registration.
 - **Target: year one – work with partners to plan and deliver workshops**
- Work together to improve referrals from optometry to the third sector.
 - **Target: year one – RNIB Cymru and Optometry Wales to explore how to raise optometrists awareness of third sector services**
- Provide hospital-based eye clinic liaison services, supported through a range of partners including Health boards and third sector organisations.
 - **Target: year one – support 2,835 people**
- Pilot a community-based ECLO service.
 - **Target: year one – ECLO to be in post by September**
- Provide an advice, information and signposting service, including a home visiting service to those newly diagnosed and a telephone service to proactively contact clients on an annual basis.
 - **Target: year one – 5,748 people supported**
- Provide people with sight impairments with an impartial signposting service to the full range of support available.
 - **Target: year one – develop an online portal to provide information and signposting**

Our aim

That there is reliable, accessible and relevant information on eye conditions, eye care, sight loss services, support networks and legal entitlements, which is easily available in a range of formats and languages, to enable people to understand their options, select services and make informed decisions. In the case of children this should be extended to parents and guardians and, where the individual would find it helpful, those who support them.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Support the development of the All Wales Social Care Citizen Portal (Dewis), working with a range of specialist organisations to ensure it provides effective information, advice and signposting.
 - **Target: year one – development of portal**
- Review the availability of material on eye conditions to ensure it is available in formats suitable for people with learning disabilities and, if necessary, challenge providers to publish accessible formats.
 - **Target: to progress in year two**
- Provide an advice, information and signposting service, including a home visiting service to those newly diagnosed and a telephone service to proactively contact clients on an annual basis.
 - **Target: year one – 5,748 people supported**
- Provide hospital-based eye clinic liaison services, supported through a range of partners including Health boards and third sector organisations.
 - **Target: year one – support 2,835 people**
- Provide people with sight impairments with an impartial signposting service to the full range of support available.
 - **Target: year one – develop an online portal to provide information and signposting**
- Support and monitor the implementation of the All Wales Standards for Communication and Information for People with Sensory Loss in the NHS.
 - **Target: year one – produce an information pack for blind and partially sighted people about the Standards and what to expect; support blind and partially sighted people to feedback their experiences, to be included in the NHS and Centre for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR) annual report on the Standards**

- Provide advice and support to blind and partially sighted children and their families, to maximise their confidence and independence and assist them to access the range of statutory and other services that may be required.
 - **Target: year one – hold two stakeholder group meetings; produce information for parents on sources of support**
- Provide blind and partially sighted people with advice, information and support on accessing welfare benefits.
 - **Target: year one – support 500 people**
- Work with Action on Hearing Loss Cymru on their sensory loss inclusion project for service providers.
 - **Target: year one – contribute to the development of the project through their stakeholder reference group**
- Campaign for improved accessibility of local authority information, including exploring the potential for the equivalent of the All Wales Standards for Communication and Information for People with Sensory Loss in the NHS.
 - **Target: year one – work with Action on Hearing Loss Cymru to explore the scope of their Sensory Inclusion project, and identify potential gaps where further work may be needed**

Our aim

That emotional support is an integrated part of eye care and sight loss services, whether it is offered in eye clinics, in the community, or via any other route. Services such as tailored counselling should be standard for people with sight loss and for those supporting them as soon as a potential problem is identified. Links to peer support should also be offered.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Monitor the availability of emotional support for blind and partially sighted children and young people, and campaign for improvements if necessary.
 - **Target: year one – establish a baseline of services in health, education and social services and produce a report**
- Provide hospital-based eye clinic liaison services, supported through a range of partners including Health boards and third sector organisations.
 - **Target: year one – support 2,835 people**
- Pilot a community-based ECLO service.
 - **Target: year one – ECLO to be in post by September**

- Develop a more robust evidence base for the impact of the eye clinic liaison service and raise awareness of the importance of the service.
 - **Target: year one – collate quarterly evidence reports for each Health Board area, and send to Health Board and other key stakeholders; complete research on Social Return on Investment for ECLO services; conduct a patient experience survey; undertake an analysis of face-to-face versus telephone ECLO support**
- Encourage and support local societies to establish models of telephone befriending in the areas where a service does not already exist.
 - **Target: year one – work with one local society to promote, support or establish a befriending scheme**
- Provide a counselling and emotional support service.
 - **Target: year one – support 100 people**

Our aim

That evidence-based treatments and support services are developed, based on robust research to improve outcomes and give better value. This will be supported by initiatives such as the UK Sight Loss and Vision Priority Setting Partnership.

Relevant objectives in the Welsh Government's Eye Health Care Delivery Plan

- Ensure there is a transparent process for considering and implementing National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance that involves ophthalmologists and patients.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Explore the potential for academic research into the effectiveness of rehabilitation for people with sight loss.
 - **Target: year one – obtain funding to undertake research**
- Develop a more robust evidence base for the impact of the eye clinic liaison service and raise awareness of the importance of the service.
 - **Target: year one – collate quarterly evidence reports for each Health Board area, and send to Health Board and other key stakeholders; complete research on Social Return on Investment for ECLO services; conduct a patient experience survey; undertake an analysis of face-to-face versus telephone ECLO support**

- Gather and disseminate evidence on the impact of digital inclusion/ exclusion on blind and partially sighted people.
 - **Target: year one – publish an outcome report on increased wellbeing and use of technology**

Our aim

That habilitation or rehabilitation is available as soon as necessary and reflects the needs of the individual, builds confidence and skills and is agreed by the person (and/ or their carer). Services should cover the skills needed for daily living, communication and mobility, and also focus on prevention of secondary impacts of sight loss, such as falls, depression and social isolation.

Relevant objectives in the Welsh Government's Eye Health Care Delivery Plan

- Ensure effective referrals to social services from the hospital eye service where the individual would benefit from an assessment by a rehabilitation officer and where appropriate a rehabilitation programme.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Influence the development of regulations under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill, so that eligibility criteria recognise the impact of sight loss on a person's life and the importance of rehab/ reablement/ confidence building.
 - **Target: year one – feed in to Welsh Government working groups and consultations on the regulations, producing briefings for/ meeting with Assembly Members (AMs) as required**
- Raise awareness of the importance of timely access to rehabilitation services.
 - **Target: year one – publicise findings of survey of local authority provision of rehab, including briefings to AMs and local councils; produce a campaign pack for blind and partially sighted people to enable them to contact their local authority on this issue**
- Provide independent living skills and confidence building training.
 - **Target: year one – 300 people**
- Continue to explore a reporting mechanism for benchmarking rehabilitation services across Wales.
 - **Target: year one – establish what data is currently recorded within each local authority**

Our aim

That timely assessments are provided, which consider all aspects of a person's life and communication needs, including those related to education and employment. These assessments should be followed up at regular intervals. Services, support, community equipment, housing adaptations or a personal budget should be provided if needed, to enable people to have choice and control over their lives.

Relevant objectives in the Welsh Government's Eye Health Care Delivery Plan

- Ensure effective referrals to social services from the hospital eye service where the individual would benefit from an assessment by a rehabilitation officer and where appropriate a rehabilitation programme.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Influence the development of regulations under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill, so that blind and partially sighted people receive timely assessments from suitably qualified people and that the eligibility criteria recognise the impact of sight loss on a person's life.
 - **Target: year one – feed in to Welsh Government working groups and consultations on the regulations, producing briefings for/ meeting with AMs as required**
- Raise awareness of the importance of timely access to rehabilitation services.
 - **Target: year one – publicise findings of survey of local authority provision of rehab, including briefings to AMs and local councils; produce a campaign pack for blind and partially sighted people to enable them to contact their local authority on this issue**
- Work to ensure social care professionals have a greater awareness of deafblindness and the services and support available to deafblind people.
 - **Targets: year one – survey all local authorities to map compliance with current guidance on service provision for people who are deafblind; attend team meetings of health and social care professionals to raise awareness of deafblindness**

Our aim

That there is increased understanding of the impact of sight loss among health and social care and education and employment practitioners through training and development programmes.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Provide sight loss awareness training for specialist workers and professionals.
 - **Target: year one – run four sessions and reach 100 specialists/ professionals**
- Provide deafblind awareness training to professionals.
 - **Targets: year one – offer deafblind awareness training to local authority social services teams**
- Support and monitor the implementation of the All Wales Standards for Communication and Information for People with Sensory Loss in the NHS.
 - **Target: year one – produce an information pack for blind and partially sighted people about the Standards and what to expect; support blind and partially sighted people to feedback their experiences, to be included in the NHS CEHR annual report on the Standards**
- Work with Action on Hearing Loss Cymru on their sensory loss inclusion project for service providers.
 - **Target: year one – contribute to the development of the project through their stakeholder reference group**
- Work in partnership with the Royal College of General Practitioners, the UK Vision Strategy and other relevant partners, as part of the RCGP's commitment to making eye health a clinical priority, to increase awareness amongst GPs about preventing avoidable sight loss and supporting blind and partially sighted people.
 - **Target: year one – to contribute to the development of an action plan for the RCGP's clinical priority for eye health project in Wales**
- Raise awareness amongst Careers Services and Disability Employment Advisors of the needs of people with sight loss and the support services available to them.
 - **Targets: year one – distribute information to all Job Centres and Careers Wales centres**

Our aim

That people with sight loss and their family and carers are involved in the development, design and delivery of services to ensure that these meet the needs of people with sight loss.

Relevant objectives in the Welsh Government's Eye Health Care Delivery Plan

- Develop and systemise the use of patient outcome and experience measures in primary care, secondary care and social services.
- Ensure there is a transparent process for considering and implementing National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance that involves ophthalmologists and patients.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Assist service users with gaining places on decision-making bodies and fora through awareness-raising and training.
 - **Targets: year one: recruit and provide training to an average of one volunteer per month, and develop a web-based communication tool**

Outcome Three – A society in which people with sight loss can fully participate

In the next four years we will work to:

- improve attitudes, awareness and actions within education, employment and other services.
- ensure that children and young people with sight impairment can take their place in society.
- achieve improved compliance with equality legislation.

Our aim

That people with sight loss of all ages have equal access to education and vocational training, including training and other materials in accessible formats. Children and young people should be assured full access to the academic and habilitation (mobility and independence skills) curricula and equality of opportunity. Children should have the opportunity to build their emotional wellbeing and confidence in their abilities through full participation, including social activities, and maximise their independence through their pre-school and school years. Children with sight loss and additional or complex disabilities should receive the best possible education and care in the environment that is best suited to their needs. There should be clear pathways to support children (and their families) on transition between primary and secondary education, and when starting school for the first time.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Provide advice and support to blind and partially sighted children and their families, to maximise their confidence and independence and assist them to access the range of statutory and other services that may be required.
 - **Target: year one – hold two stakeholder group meetings; produce information for parents on sources of support**
- Develop an independent living skills course for young people.
 - **Target: year one – consult with young people about course content**

- Promote the adoption of the Vision2020UK Pathway for Children and Young People by the relevant statutory bodies.
 - **Target: year one – share information across sight loss organisations and devise communication to statutory bodies**
- Challenge local authorities who are failing to provide accessible learning environments and accessible learning materials for blind and partially sighted children.
 - **Target: year one – monitor enquiries and advocate for children/ challenge local authorities where appropriate; promote the Visual Impairment Pathway**
- Campaign for all blind and partially sighted children to have access to habilitation/ rehabilitation training and specialist support from a qualified teacher of learners with a visual impairment.
 - **Target: year one – produce campaign report on provision of QTVI support in Wales**
- Monitor the availability of emotional support for blind and partially sighted children and young people, and campaign for improvements if necessary.
 - **Target: year one – establish a baseline of services in health, education and social services and produce a report**
- Continue to seek support for the development of the “Beyond Vision” project, which would enable blind and partially sighted people to access further and higher education, training and employment skills, as well as mobility training and daily living skills, at a purpose-built residential centre in Wales.
 - **Target: year one – support Neath Port Talbot college in funding applications**
- Work to raise awareness amongst education providers and policy makers of the importance of specialist support, accessible materials and equipment/ technology, with steps being taken to improve performance.
 - **Target: year one – influence the development of new SEN legislation in Wales**
- Develop and deliver an added value habilitation service to enhance and support statutory provision for children and young people in Wales.
 - **Target: year one – mapping service levels across Wales; recruiting trainee staff**

Our aim

That there is a clear and smooth transition pathway from children's and young people's services to adult services, thus ensuring young people are enabled to fulfil their potential and build their confidence and emotional wellbeing; and that rights to benefits and support are not lost during the transition.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Provide support for people making the transition from school to further and higher education and employment.
 - **Target: year one- provide one-to-one support to 14-25 year olds as required**
- Publish an online guide for young people and their families on statutory and non-statutory support available on transition to adult services.
 - **Target: year one – write an online guide**
- Work with young people and statutory services to ensure that transition planning takes into account the needs and aspirations of the individual.
 - **Target: year one – individualised support provided as required**

Our aim

That all blind and partially sighted people can access services to support them into work, or to retain their employment following sight loss. This should include support for employers and the promotion of Access to Work and equivalent schemes which help supply assistive technology and support mechanisms.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Provide support to blind and partially sighted people who want to develop their employability skills and apply for work.
 - **Target: year one – maintain a specialist employment service offering both job clubs and one-to-one support**
- Provide support to people in work to maintain their employment and adjust to new ways of working following sight loss.
 - **Target: year one – maintain a specialist employment service offering one-to-one support to individuals and employers**

- Raise awareness amongst Careers Services and Disability Employment Advisors of the needs of people with sight loss and the support services available to them.
 - **Target: year one – distribute information to all Job Centres and Careers Wales centres**
- Raise awareness amongst both employers and job seekers of how Access to Work and other Government schemes can help support them.
 - **Target: year one – employer engagement work with companies across Wales**
- Secure supported work experience opportunities for young blind and partially sighted people.
 - **Target: year one – support the delivery of the Future In-Sight project**
- Provide mobility training and support to enable blind and partially sighted people to get to and from work, and to navigate around the workplace.
 - **Target: year one – support young people through the Future In-Sight project**
- Gather case studies of good and bad practice to raise standards of assessment and support for people with sight loss in employment.
 - **Target: year one – complete report**
- Improve awareness amongst employers and potential employees of the Access to Work scheme through training and communications.
 - **Targets: year one – send “Roundup” employment special to top 300 companies in Wales; raise awareness of Access to Work through network of members**
- Promote the adoption of the Framework for Action on Independent Living and monitor and influence its implementation.
 - **Target: year one – submit paper on behalf of Next Steps group to Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty**

Our aim

That blind and partially sighted people are able to claim all of the welfare benefits that they are entitled to.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Provide blind and partially sighted people with advice, information and support on accessing welfare benefits.
 - **Target: year one – support 500 people**
- Engage with the continued development of the Welsh Government Tackling Poverty Action Plan, including the Advice Services Review.
 - **Target: year one – attend meetings of the Independent Advice Services Forum, to feed in issues relating to sight loss**
- Signpost people with sight loss to relevant agencies.
 - **Target: year one – develop an online portal to provide information and signposting**

Our aim

That people with sight loss have access to information in the formats of their choice.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Support and monitor the implementation of the All Wales Standards for Communication and Information for People with Sensory Loss in the NHS.
 - **Targets: year one – produce an information pack for blind and partially sighted people about the Standards and what to expect; support blind and partially sighted people to feedback their experiences, to be included in the NHS CEHR annual report on the Standards**
- Continue to raise awareness amongst people with sight loss of their right to accessible information under the Equalities Act 2010.
 - **Targets: year one – promote through Roundup magazine, and work with individuals, groups and societies**

- Work with Action on Hearing Loss Cymru on their sensory loss inclusion project for service providers.
 - **Target: year one – work with Action on Hearing Loss Cymru on the development and implementation of their project**
- Campaign for improved accessibility of local authority information, including exploring the potential for the equivalent of the All Wales Standards for Communication and Information for People with Sensory Loss in the NHS.
 - **Target: year one – work with Action on Hearing Loss Cymru to explore the scope of their Sensory Inclusion project, and identify potential gaps where further work may be needed**
- Lobby councils to understand the need for accessible information and ensure that it reaches into all services offered by the councils and their contracted providers.
 - **Target: year one – develop report on accessible information to publish April 2015**
- Encourage sharing the accessible information requirements of citizens across all departments, not just within social services.
 - **Target: to progress in year two**
- Promote the adoption of the Framework for Action on Independent Living and monitor and influence its implementation.
 - **Target: year one – submit paper on behalf of Next Steps group to Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty**

Our aim

That training in the use of new technologies is available, affordable and ongoing.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Support blind and partially sighted people to get online and use digital technology.
 - **Target: year one – support 725 individuals**
- Provide support to deafblind people to use new technology.
 - **Targets: year one – offer all DeafBlind Cymru members the opportunity to learn about new tablet technology; deliver talks on accessible technology at all DeafBlind Cymru peer support and social groups; provide 20 members with one-to-one digital inclusion support; produce a series of blogposts on using new technology**

- Gather and disseminate evidence on the impact of digital inclusion/ exclusion on blind and partially sighted people.
 - **Target: year one – produce report on links between wellbeing and use of technology**

Our aim

That leisure activities are fully accessible to everyone with sight loss, including sport, exercise, hobbies and the visual and performing arts.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Work with local authorities, and nationally with the Arts Council for Wales and Visit Wales, to raise awareness of the needs of blind and partially sighted people and seek improvements in the accessibility of leisure, sports and arts venues.
 - **Target: year one – work with Disability Sports Wales, Visit Wales and Disability Wales to explore scope of project**
- Work with Disability Sport Wales to look at the barriers faced by people with sight loss participating in sport and leisure activities.
 - **Target: to progress in year two**
- Carry out a follow-up to the 2002 Arts in Wales and Vision Impairment survey.
 - **Targets: to progress in year two**
- Engage with, and offer training to, local sports officers in Bridgend.
 - **Target: year one – provide specialist training to sports development team and community coaches**

Our aim

That public services, such as health, housing and council services, are fully accessible to people with sight loss.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Promote the adoption of RNIB Cymru's Visibly Better standards, particularly amongst developers working for health and local authorities.
 - **Target: year one – identify opportunities to work with health boards, including through engagement with their work on the All Wales Standards for Communication and Information for People with Sensory Loss in the NHS**

- Work with the Older People's Commissioner for Wales to ensure accessibility for people with sight loss is included in their review of care home provision.
 - **Target: year one – engage with staff working on the review, to provide them with the necessary evidence base**
- Work with CSSIW to ensure the needs of people with sight loss are included in their monitoring and inspection processes.
 - **Targets: year one – sensory loss to be included in CSSIW inspections and inspectors to be trained**
- Support and monitor the implementation of the All Wales Standards for Communication and Information for People with Sensory Loss in the NHS.
 - **Targets: year one – produce an information pack for blind and partially sighted people about the Standards and what to expect; support blind and partially sighted people to feedback their experiences, to be included in the NHS CEHR annual report on the Standards**
- Campaign for improved accessibility of local authority information, including exploring the potential for the equivalent of the All Wales Standards for Communication and Information for People with Sensory Loss in the NHS.
 - **Target: year one – work with Action on Hearing Loss Cymru to explore the scope of their Sensory Inclusion project, and identify potential gaps where further work may be needed**
- Influence councils to understand the need for accessible information and ensure that it reaches into all services offered by the councils and their contracted providers.
 - **Target: year one – develop report on accessible information to publish April 2015**
- Encourage sharing the accessible information requirements of individual citizens across all departments, not just within social services.
 - **Target: to progress in year two**
- Work with Action on Hearing Loss Cymru on their sensory loss inclusion project for service providers.
 - **Target: year one – work with Action on Hearing Loss Cymru on the development and implementation of their project**
- Promote the adoption of the Framework for Action on Independent Living and monitor and influence its implementation.
 - **Target: year one – submit paper on behalf of Next Steps group to Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty**

Our aim

That people with sight loss are able to move around freely, safely and independently, through the implementation of inclusive design principles and by involving people with sight loss and sight loss organisations from the beginning of new developments.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Contribute to the development of new planning legislation in Wales, to maximise its potential to improve accessibility for blind and partially sight people.
 - **Target: year one – respond to Active Travel guidance and Planning Bill consultations, with specific aims to strengthen guidance on shared spaces and keep Design Access Statements (or appropriate equivalent)**
- Promote the adoption of RNIB Cymru’s Visibly Better standards, particularly amongst developers working for health and local authorities.
 - **Target: year one – identify opportunities to work with health boards, including through engagement with their work on the All Wales Standards for Communication and Information for People with Sensory Loss in the NHS**
- Work with the Access Association in Wales to promote sharing of best practice in inclusive design.
 - **Target: year one – submit articles and case studies to Access Association**
- Explore initiatives to demystify Equality Impact Assessments and develop mechanisms for involving blind and partially sighted people in local consultations.
 - **Target: year one – develop relationships with local authority access and equality officers and elected members who are equality champions**
- Support blind and partially sighted people to work with local Access Groups, and provide training on engaging with/ challenging decision-making in relation to planning, design and the built environment.
 - **Target: year one – continue roll-out of campaign supporter network training across Wales**

- Work with Disability Wales to support their Planning for Inclusive Design toolkit.
 - **Target: year one – work with Disability Wales to improve the accessibility of their toolkit**
- Work with local authorities to ensure they involve blind and partially sighted people in new developments, and that their consultation mechanisms are accessible.
 - **Target: year one – influence the development of Planning Bill and Active Travel Act guidance**
- Engage with architects and urban designers to raise awareness of the access requirements of blind and partially sighted people.
 - **Target: year one – plan and organise a conference, to take place April 2015**
- Promote the adoption of the Framework for Action on Independent Living and monitor and influence its implementation.
 - **Target: year one – submit paper on behalf of Next Steps group to Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty**
- Support blind and partially sighted people to campaign for more accessible street environments and buildings.
 - **Targets: year one – develop a series of toolkits for local campaigners; influence the development of Planning Bill and Active Travel Act guidance**
- Assist service users in gaining places on decision-making bodies and fora through awareness raising and participation training.
 - **Targets: year one – recruit and provide training to an average of one volunteer per month, and develop a web-based communication tool**
- Support the development of guidance in relation to the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.
 - **Target: year one – respond to consultation on the guidance**

Our aim

That public transport is fully accessible to people with sight loss, including booking and ticketing facilities and transport interchanges as well as the provision of real time information technology such as audio/visual information systems on buses.

The Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group will

- Work with local authorities to ensure that the needs and views of blind and partially sighted passengers are taken into account.
 - **Target: year one – work with Welsh Government on the development of a new toolkit for local authorities**
- Campaign for the introduction of more buses with on board audio visual announcements across Wales.
 - **Targets: year one – promote best practice to bus operators and plan activities to raise public support**
- Campaign for the implementation of the EU bus driver training regulations.
 - **Target: year one – influence and seek support from Welsh Government’s Bus Advisory Group**
- Work with the People First skills council to influence the development of driver training.
 - **Target: year one – scope potential for future work**
- Campaign for the safety risks of silent vehicles to be recognised in the development of hybrid vehicles.
 - **Target: year one – scope potential for future work**
- Work with Traveline Cymru, local authorities and transport providers to promote accessible, accurate and timely transport information.
 - **Targets: year one – meet with Traveline and evaluate current accessibility of information**
- Support blind and partially sighted people to campaign for more accessible community and public transport.
 - **Targets: year one – organise series of Swap with Me events; develop actions for campaign supporters network**
- Promote the adoption of the Framework for Action on Independent Living and monitor and influence its implementation.
 - **Target: year one – submit paper on behalf of Next Steps group to Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty**

Glossary of abbreviations

CSSIW

Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

DRSSW

Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Service Wales

ECLO

Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (staff who support eye clinic patients to access the emotional support and practical help they need following sight loss)

EHEW

Eye Health Examination Wales (an extended eye examination provided by optometrists to those at higher risk of sight loss)

FOO

Focus on Ophthalmology (a workstream commissioned by Welsh Government which developed new clinical pathways for particular eye conditions)

GOS

General Ophthalmic Services (the contract under which optometrists provide free sight tests to children, older people and those on low incomes).

HES

Hospital Eye Service

LVSU

Low Vision Service Wales (a service provided by optometrists to advise people with sight impairments about how to manage their eye condition and provide suitable daily living aids such as lights and magnifiers).

NICE

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence.

ODTC

Ophthalmic Diagnostic and Treatment Centre.

QTVI

Qualified Teachers of children with Visual Impairment

RCGP

Royal College of General Practitioners

SEN

Special Educational Needs

WECS

Wales Eye Care Service (umbrella term for the Low Vision Service Wales, Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Service Wales, Primary Eye Care Acute Referral Scheme and Eye Health Examination Wales).

Members of Wales Vision Strategy Implementation Group

Access Design Solutions UK Ltd

British and Irish Orthoptic Society

Bus Users UK

DeafBlind Cymru

Guide Dogs Cymru

Optometry Wales

Royal College of Nursing Wales

RNIB Cymru

Sight Cymru

Wales Council of the Blind

Welsh Government

Welsh Local Government Association

Welsh Rehabilitation Officers Forum

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