

Making older people's rights a reality will make Wales the best place in the world to grow old

Speaking at an event to celebrate the work and impact of the outgoing Older People's Commissioner, Sarah Rochira, the First Minister, Carwyn Jones and Social Care Minister, Huw Irranca-Davies, announced the Welsh Government will be working with older people to take forward a programme of work that will support everyone to live healthy, prosperous and rewarding lives. Early work will involve supporting all older people to have voice and control over their health and social care, with a focus on commissioning, safeguarding and advocacy.

This will include:

- Revising the guidance relating to escalating concerns on care homes to ensure that older people are not put at risk due to the closure of the place where they live and call home. Where a closure is unavoidable, the guidance will ensure the care home is closed in a way that upholds the rights of residents;
- Improving the quality, consistency and availability of Independent advocacy services, that give a voice to people who feel their views are being ignored;
- Integrating the rights of older people into the process the Welsh Government uses to assess the impact its policies have on groups of people;
- Working with older people to deliver a new programme of work that will address barriers to ageing well.

The First Minister has also confirmed that to further demonstrate the Welsh Government's commitment to older people, from today the Minister for Children and Social Care will become the Minister for Children, Older People and Social Care.

Wales has a long history of working with and for older people from the introduction of the first Strategy for Older People in Wales in 2003, to establishing the world's first Older People's Commissioner in 2008.

The First Minister, Carwyn Jones said:

"We are all living longer and healthier lives. I want Wales to be a nation that recognises and values the contribution made by older people to creating vibrant and supportive communities.

"During her term, Sarah Rochira has sharpened our focus on ensuring all older people can enjoy a life that has value, meaning and purpose. I agree with the her, that we must embed the well-being

of older people into the heart of public services. To achieve this, we will be taking forward a programme of work that will make rights real for older people."

Minister for Children, Older People and Social Care, Huw Irranca-Davies said:

"Prosperity for All, our national strategy to take Wales forward, commits us to supporting everyone to live healthy, prosperous and rewarding lives. The work I will lead will ensure we deliver these commitments to older people right across Wales.

"I would like to thank Sarah for all of her hard work and the constructive relationship we have enjoyed during her term as Older peoples commissioner. I know it has made a real difference to the lives of older people whatever their circumstance and will continue to do so for many years to come."