

Handout on principles of the Act

The Act is built on the following core principles:

- **Voice and control** – putting an individual and their needs at the centre of their care and support, with voice and control over the outcomes that will help them achieve well-being; The Act gives people a stronger voice and greater control over the support and services they receive to help them achieve well-being and the things that matter most to them – whether that's to attend a class at their local community centre or access services through the medium of Welsh or English.

As a result, care and support services will need to have an even greater focus on maximising people's independence – helping people remain or become a bigger part of their communities with the support of their family and friends.

- **Prevention and early intervention** – being able to access advice and support at an early stage, to maintain a good quality of life, and reduce or delay the need for longer term care and support; It is important that timely advice and assistance is provided to individuals to prevent things reaching a crisis point for them. Stepping in early to help people is crucial as it can reduce or delay the need longer term care and support.

The Act is designed to ensure that:

- people can ask for the help they need when they need it to prevent their situation getting worse
- carers can access support to assist them in their caring roles and maintain their own well-being

- **Well-being – supporting individuals to achieve well-being in every part of their lives;**

At the heart of the Act is people's right to well-being. While people have a responsibility for their own well-being, it's recognised that some people will need help to achieve this. The Act will change the way social services and health, as well as other care services, voluntary and community groups, work together to help and support people. It places an emphasis on ensuring people who need care and support, and carers who need support, enjoy well-being in every area of their lives. There are many interpretations of well-being. The Oxford English Dictionary defines well-being as "the state of being comfortable, healthy or happy." In supporting individuals with their well-being, it is essential to understand what this means to them.

Well-being is about more than just being healthy, it can also include:

- being safe
- having somewhere suitable to live
- being involved in decisions that impact your life
- having friends
- being part of good, strong communities
- having every chance to do well in education
- feeling good about your life
- for adults – being able to work
- for children – being able to grow up happily and successfully, and being well-looked after
- **Co-production** – involving people in the design and delivery of support and services, and recognising the knowledge and expertise they can bring.

Under the Act, individuals will be more involved in the design and delivery of their support. It means working WITH them and their family, friends and carers so their care and support is the best it can be. Involving individuals more will also help to change their relationship with services so they will no longer simply be using the services but also helping to design and deliver them. It recognises their strengths and the expertise they can bring, too. This will ensure our care and support services are designed around what matters most to individuals.

- **Multi agency** – strong partnership working between all agencies and organisations is essential to improve the well-being of individuals in need of care and support, and carers in need of support. The Act strengthens joint working arrangements between local authorities and other relevant partners, such as health, housing and the voluntary sector, to improve people's well-being and the quality of the services, while reducing duplication. This will ensure the right types of support and services to meet people's needs are available in their local communities.

This information is from "What Does the Act Mean for me? A learning and development resource for direct care and support workers on the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014" on the Care Council Learning Hub