



# The front door to adult social care:

## Characteristics of effective practice



# Introduction

An effective front door service needs to be promoted well to encourage take-up and to enable earlier intervention and prevention. It needs to be accessible for people to access the right type of information and receive advice and assistance at a time and in a place that suits them. It should be person-centred, involving the individual in considering any solutions. The service should have a broad range of solutions at its fingertips, using preventative approaches where appropriate. To know whether the service is achieving these aims, the service should review its effectiveness and performance on a regular basis. Performance management data helps to inform future service promotion.



This infographic shows the characteristics of an effective front door to social care. It includes the key elements of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (**the Act**), as well as good practice we have found during the course of our study. [The study report can be found on our website.](#)





The service is well promoted, which helps people know what they are entitled to

- ✓ The Council ensures that all those who might benefit from their services are told what's available.
- ✓ The Council tells carers from the outset what they are entitled to receive.
- ✓ Promotional methods reflect the needs of older people, time-poor people, those suffering with sensory loss and individuals with additional communication needs.
- ✓ Promotional material is available in a wide range of accessible formats and platforms, in both Welsh and English as well as in other relevant languages where needed.
- ✓ Partners have a good awareness of what the Council does and what's available.





## Effective promotion encourages take-up

- ✓ The Council recognises that prevention through earlier intervention is key and promotional work encourages people to get in touch.
- ✓ The Council proactively encourages people to seek support before problems escalate.
- ✓ Carers and service users understand what they are entitled to under the Act and seek support accordingly.
- ✓ There is no social stigma around engaging with the front door to social care and asking for help.



## Ease of access

- ✓ The Council has mapped out the service's processes from the citizen's perspective.
- ✓ Information, Advice and Assistance are available online, face to face and by phone.
- ✓ Face to face locations and opening hours reflect people's travelling needs and are fully accessible.
- ✓ Advocacy is proactively and genuinely offered to those who may need it as early as possible, and arrangements for provision of advocacy are effective.
- ✓ The service caters for all client groups' language and communication needs.



## Person-centred Information, Advice and Assistance

- ✓ By listening to people's wishes, IAA operators quickly identify the most appropriate route for them – either by providing information and advice, signposting to a preventative service or beginning an assessment of needs.
- ✓ An assessment of needs is not limited to those who receive preventative services.
- ✓ Proportionate assessments help build up a picture of a person's strengths and needs. Where appropriate, data is shared effectively to ensure a person-centred approach rather than a service-focused approach.
- ✓ Individuals who may be at risk are quickly identified – IAA operators are skilled at identifying safeguarding triggers and always act on this.
- ✓ Likewise, individuals who may need specialist help are quickly identified and are assessed for services without delay.
- ✓ The IAA service is quick and responsive and has short end-to-end processes.
- ✓ The service makes available a broad range of up-to-date and accurate information on a wide range of preventative solutions.
- ✓ The service makes available the right information, in the right place, at the right time.
- ✓ The service responds to a wide range of requests and identifies what matters most to individuals.



## Thinking outside the social care box

- ✓ The service uses a broad range of solutions, to secure the best possible outcome for people. In addition to the provision of information and advice, this involves considering social care and non-social-care interventions for service users and carers.
- ✓ The Council makes available an appropriate range of preventative interventions relative to the needs of the local population. This includes a wide range of practical support services, housing and housing-based services as well as community-based facilities.
- ✓ The Council has a thorough understanding of the availability of these alternative services and their effectiveness, including their cost and hours of operation, the accessibility of the service or facility.
- ✓ The Council has an effective ongoing relationship with third-sector and community bodies who provide these services.
- ✓ The Council has an extensive directory of preventative services which is regularly reviewed, kept up to date and accurate.
- ✓ IAA operators use this directory of preventative services and knowledge is shared.





## Effectiveness is reviewed and performance monitored

- ✓ All elements of the front door are reviewed to ensure that the IAA service is doing what is intended and making a positive impact on people.
- ✓ There is effective collaboration with other sectors to address any potential gaps in preventative services.
- ✓ The Council monitors activity to ensure services are available and accessible to all people and all communities within its area.
- ✓ Regular reviews of preventative services inform the Council's commissioning strategy.
- ✓ The proportion of those who are coming through the front door and go on to receive a care and support plan is decreasing, demonstrating that prevention and early intervention are working.
- ✓ The Council knows the outcome of referrals they make to preventative community-based services or facilities.
- ✓ The Council follows up referrals to ensure people's needs are met and to gain an insight in how it can improve future services.
- ✓ The Council benchmarks its performance.
- ✓ The Council monitors where referrals have come from and works with partners to widen take-up and coverage. This helps to inform future promotion of the front door





## Underpinned by the right culture

Finally, it is important that the Authority's approach is underpinned by genuine cultural change.



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