

OVERVIEW OF THE NETWORK



THE AIM OF ENRICH CYMRU IS TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF RESIDENTS AND STAFF IN CARE HOMES ACROSS WALES BY DEVELOPING AND FACILITATING A NETWORK OF 'RESEARCH READY' CARE HOMES. THE NETWORK PROMOTES THE EXCHANGE OF RESEARCH IDEAS AND KNOWLEDGE, AND FOSTERS THE CO-CREATION OF RESEARCH RELEVANT TO THE CURRENT ISSUES IN THE CARE HOME SECTOR. CARE HOMES AND RESEARCHERS ACROSS WALES ARE INVITED TO JOIN THE NETWORK WHICH PROVIDES MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW AND INNOVATIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS TO BE DEVELOPED AND DELIVERED. THE ENRICH CYMRU NETWORK, WHICH OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED IN WALES IN 2018 IS PAN-WALES AND IS CLOSELY AFFILIATED WITH THE REGIONAL ENRICH NETWORKS IN ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND.

HOMES AND RESEARCHERS IN THE NETWORK ARE PROVIDED WITH REGULAR NEWSLETTERS TO SHARE THE LATEST RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENTS ACROSS A RANGE OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE STUDIES.

TOPIC AREAS INCLUDE:

ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT, DEMENTIA CARE, ORAL HEALTH, DIABETES MANAGEMENT, ADVERSE REACTION TO MEDICATIONS, THE USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGY, INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAM, NEW WAYS OF WORKING WITH PARAMEDICS, HOLISTIC WELLBEING PROGRAMS

DEVELOPMENT OF THE NETWORK



IN COMPARISON TO OTHER HEALTHCARE SETTINGS, THERE IS VERY LIMITED RESOURCE TO SUPPORT RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING WITH THE CARE HOME COMMUNITY. IT IS DOCUMENTED IN THE LITERATURE THAT IN WALES,

THERE IS NO CURRENT PROVISION FOR RESEARCH TRAINING FOR CARE HOME STAFF, AND VERY LIMITED SUPPORT FOR HOMES WISHING TO BE PART OF A RESEARCH STUDY OR COLLABORATE ON NEW RESEARCH FUNDING APPLICATIONS. THE CHALLENGES OF CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN CARE HOMES IN WALES AND THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF THE LACK OF A RESEARCH SUPPORT AND DELIVERY INFRASTRUCTURE IN WELSH CARE HOMES HAS BEEN PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED (SHEPHERD ET AL 2015). IN ORDER TO DEVELOP AND SUPPORT A CULTURE OF RESEARCH MINDEDNESS IN WELSH CARE HOMES, ENRICH CYMRU TAKES A JOINT COLLABORATIVE APPROACH WORKING DIRECTLY WITH CARE HOME STAFF, RESIDENTS AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY TO BUILD AN APPRECIATION OF THE VALUE OF RESEARCH AND THE RATIONALE BEHIND THE PROCESSES INVOLVED.

COLLABORATING WITH THE CARE HOME COMMUNITY

FROM THE INCEPTION OF THE ENRICH CYMRU NETWORK, AND UNIQUE TO WALES, THERE HAS BEEN A STRONG FOCUS ON CO-DESIGNING AND DEVELOPING THE NETWORK WITH THE CARE HOME COMMUNITY. THE CONCEPT OF A RESEARCH IN CARE HOMES NETWORK IN WALES WAS INITIALLY SCOPED OUT AND ITS DELIVERY WAS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE WORK OF THE WALES SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL CARE RESEARCH, THROUGH SCOPING WORK WITH HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PRACTITIONERS AND INTERESTED RESEARCHERS IN THIS AREA. THE NETWORK WAS SUBSEQUENTLY DEVELOPED AND STEERED BY THE INPUT OF A GROUP OF CARE HOME MANAGERS THROUGHOUT THE INITIAL DEVELOPMENT PHASE, THROUGH REGULAR FOCUS GROUPS.

SOME EXAMPLES OF PUBLIC AND PRACTITIONER INVOLVEMENT SO FAR INCLUDE:

- CARE HOME STAFF REVIEWING RESEARCH FUNDING APPLICATIONS
- CARE HOME STAFF DEVELOPING RESEARCH GRANT FUNDING APPLICATIONS AS CO-APPLICANTS
- CARE HOME COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTING TO RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT GROUPS
- CARE HOME STAFF PLAYING AN ACTIVE ROLE IN RESEARCH PRIORITY SETTING EVENTS



COLLABORATING WITH INDUSTRY



WALES HAS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONSTRATE TO THE REST OF THE UK AND GLOBALLY THAT AS A NATION, WE ARE EQUIPPED TO ENGAGE WITH INDUSTRY AND COMMERCIAL PARTNERS TO DEVELOP NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND MEDICAL DEVICES IN THE CARE HOME SECTOR. ENRICH CYMRU HAS SUCCESSFULLY SUPPORTED A DANISH TECHNOLOGY COMPANY TO CARRY OUT THE NECESSARY DEVELOPMENT WORK WITH CARE HOMES IN WALES TO PROGRESS AN INNOVATIVE PIECE OF EQUIPMENT INTO THE FINAL DEVELOPMENT PHASE. THIS TECHNOLOGY IS A NON-INVASIVE DEVICE WHICH CAN RELIABLY MONITOR BLOOD GLUCOSE LEVELS IN RESIDENTS WITH DIABETES. IN THIS PROCESS, A DESIGNATED AND RESOURCED NETWORK CAN PRO-ACTIVELY IDENTIFY AND ACCESS OPPORTUNITIES WITH INDUSTRY IN ORDER TO SUPPORT CARE HOMES TO BE INVOLVED IN THE RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT PROCESS, FACILITATED BY TRUSTED RELATIONSHIPS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE ENRICH CYMRU NETWORK.

POLICY CONTEXT

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENRICH CYMRU WORK PROGRAM IN WALES WILL SIT IN CLOSE ALIGNMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING CURRENT WELSH GOVERNMENT POLICY:

- THE SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELL-BEING (WALES) ACT 2014
- PRUDENT HEALTHCARE
- A HEALTHIER WALES SOCIAL CARE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR WALES 2018-2023
- DEMENTIA ACTION PLAN FOR WALES 2018-2022



PARTNERSHIP WORKING WITH HEALTH AND CARE RESEARCH WALES

UNIQUE TO WALES, THE NETWORK IS HOUSED IN A COLLABORATION BETWEEN TWO HCRW FUNDED RESEARCH CENTRES, THE WALES SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL CARE RESEARCH (WSSCR) AND THE CENTRE FOR AGEING AND DEMENTIA RESEARCH (CADR) AND WITHIN SWANSEA UNIVERSITY. THIS ADVANTAGEOUS POSITIONING HAS HELPED TO FACILITATE SUCCESSFUL RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT, ENABLED CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE SOCIAL CARE FIELD, AND INCREASED GRANT INCOME TO WALES.



Shepherd, V., Nuttall, J., Butler, C. C., Hood, K. (2015) Setting up a clinical trial in care homes: challenges encountered and recommendations for future research practice. BMC Research Notes Vol 8 (306) <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13104-015-1276-8>