



 <p>GIG CYMRU NHS WALES</p> <p>Iechyd Cyhoeddus Cymru Public Health Wales</p>	<p>Name of Meeting People and Organisational Development Committee</p> <p>Date of Meeting 21 October 2024</p> <p>Agenda item: 7.1</p>
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Policy Approval Report

Section 1 - Policy Information

Policy / Procedure Title	Carer's Policy
Policy Lead	Claire Sullivan and Janet Mellowship
Lead Executive	Neil Lewis
PHW / All Wales?	PHW
Date of last Review	New policy
Is the current policy / procedure within review date?	Yes
Approving Body /Group	Business Executive Team
Version Number	1

Section 2: Recommendation

That the People and Organisational Development Committee:

- Consider the Carer's Policy, (Appendix 1) and the Equalities Impact Assessment (Embedded below)
- **Note** that the Leadership Team considered and endorsed the Policy to the Committee on 15.10.24
- **Approve** the Carer's Policy



Section 3 – Details of the Review:

Background:

Reason for review

This is a new policy, which has been developed following Board support of the We Care Network’s Board Ask in November 2023. Members of the We Care Network and managers across the organisation had consistently requested a policy which pulled together all the relevant policies, procedures and other sources of support for our colleagues who are carers.

Description/Assessment

This policy has been developed to support employees with caring responsibilities.

This policy recognises the increasing number of the challenges faced by working carers in balancing their professional and personal responsibilities.

The introduction of the Carer’s Leave Act 2023, effective from April 2024, mandates certain entitlements for carers, and this policy includes the detail of this new legislation, and specifically how the unpaid leave entitlement is to be taken, and recorded.

Key Elements of the Document

1. **Policy Statement:** The policy supports PHW's commitment to being an inclusive employer, focused on the wellbeing of its employees. It aims to create a positive working environment by offering flexible working arrangements and various forms of leave to colleagues with caring responsibilities. This approach is intended to enhance morale, retain valuable colleagues, comply with legislation and improve organisational performance.
2. **Scope and Applicability:** The policy applies to all PHW colleagues, including those on secondment. It provides guidance to managers on how to support colleagues with caring responsibilities and informs everyone about the available options to balance work and care.
3. **Legal Compliance:** The policy ensures compliance with relevant legislation,



	<p>particularly the Carer’s Leave Act 2023, which entitles employees to unpaid leave for caring responsibilities. It also aligns with the Equality Act 2010 and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, ensuring that carers are not discriminated against and have equal opportunities for career development.</p> <p>4. Support Mechanisms: The Policy outlines various support options for carers, including flexible working arrangements, paid emergency leave, and an unpaid carer’s leave of up to five days per year. It also signposts to the We Care network, and encourages the use of a Workplace Passport to document and communicate support needs.</p> <p>5. Managerial Responsibilities: Managers are expected to foster an understanding and supportive approach for carers. This includes encouraging colleagues to disclose their carer status, and providing necessary support. The policy brings together all the relevant organisational policies, procedures and legislative requirements.</p> <p>6. Process and Procedures: The policy details the procedures for taking carer’s leave, recording carer status on the Electronic Staff Record (ESR) system, and using the Workplace Passport.</p>
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Consultation

Has this Policy / Procedure been through the appropriate 28 day consultation process?	Yes
Date range of consultation:	23 rd July - 20 th August 2024
Please provide details of any feedback received and outline what changes if any were made to the document as a result:	Addition of paragraphs relating to Policy Commitment, Introduction, Scope, Welsh Language, Advice and Guidance, Records Management, Equality, Welsh Language and Impact Assessment, Review and Feedback and the moving of some parts of the document, and updating the contents list.



Had this policy / procedure been considered by any other groups?	Yes, the We Care Network, all Staff Diversity Groups, Staff Side Committee, Leadership Team and the Local Partnership Forum
If so, please provide detail of any comments / feedback or amendments made to the documents as a result of this	<p>The We Care Network members fed back extensively during the policy development phase, contributing to both its structure and content.</p> <p>We received feed relating to a change of language to reflect the requirement to balance the needs between the individual and the organisation. This change was put in place with the advice of the Asst WOD.</p> <p>Made clear the signposting to the application for the purchase of additional annual leave at the request of one of our staffside unions.</p>
(Add detail)	

Section 4: Impact Assessments

Equality and Health Impact Assessment	<p>Issue identified in regard to low disclosure rates of colleagues with caring responsibilities.</p> <p>Further strengthened the EQHIA following a request made at LPF on 17 September 2024. Updated version embedded here.</p>
Welsh Language Impact	The Policy will be translated to Welsh and available bilingually.
Risk and Assurance	<p>Corporate Risk Register – link to Datix Ref 1596 – the organisation may not have the capacity or resources necessary to deliver the Long Term Strategy – retaining colleagues with caring responsibilities will help to avoid this risk</p> <p>Strategic Risk Register 4 – There is a risk that PHW will fail to sufficiently support and protect the health, wellbeing, welfare and resilience of our staff. This will be caused by constant need to balance the needs of the staff against the needs of the population, resulting in an inability to recruit and retain staff to deliver strategic and operational objectives – AP 4.4 – the policy</p>



	supports flexible, innovative and effective working patterns and conditions.
Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act	<p>The policy contributes to this by ensuring that Public Health Wales (PHW) colleagues who are carers are supported in balancing their professional responsibilities with their caring duties. This not only enhances their well-being and work performance but also promotes a culture of quality within PHW. When colleagues are well-supported and able to manage their personal responsibilities, they are likely to be more engaged and deliver higher quality care and services, aligning with the Duty of Quality's objectives.</p> <p>The Duty of Candour emphasizes transparency, openness, and honesty when things go wrong in care. The policy's commitment to treating colleagues with dignity, trust, and respect and to supporting them through flexible working arrangements reflects these principles. By developing a work environment where colleagues feel valued and supported, PHW encourages openness and honesty. The policy also ensures that managers are informed, and able to handle disclosures of caring responsibilities sensitively, maintaining a transparent and supportive work culture, which is essential to upholding the Duty of Candour.</p>
Financial implications	No financial implications are anticipated
People implications	the policy will support Carers in the workplace therefore helping to reduce turnover as the organisation will retain valued colleagues.
Socio Economic Duty	<p>The policy addresses economic disadvantage by offering support and flexibility to colleagues with caring responsibilities, which can mitigate the financial pressures that often accompany such roles.</p> <p>Flexible working options, including part-time working, job sharing, adjusted hours and Work How it Works Best allow carers to continue their employment whilst acknowledging and accommodating their needs, and where possible avoiding the need to take unpaid leave. Additionally, this helps to prevent situations where carers might have to leave their employment, or reduce their hours, which would negatively impact their income.</p> <p>In the main (not all cases) carers are in the lower bands so we recognise there's financial</p>



	<p>implications. It also often prevents people from being able to pursue career options in the same way others without caring responsibilities might and therefore they suffer a detriment</p> <p>By supporting our colleagues with caring responsibilities to stay in PHW, the policy benefits not only the individuals, but also the organisation, by preventing financial loss through turnover, retraining and the loss of skilled workers.</p>
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Section5 - Implementation

Please complete the table below for this section, include any relevant actions required for implementation of this policy / procedure:

- How it will be implemented - If it requires resource, training or there are changes to current practice an implementation plan (template available on policy webpages) will be required to accompany the document giving clear timelines.
- If resources are required these should have been agreed prior to presentation to the Committee/Group.
- Info re any barriers to implementation and associated risk – explain how this will be mitigated.

Implementation plan (with timescales)		
Next steps	Timescale	Responsible officer(s)
Approval by PODCOM	Oct 2024	Chair of PODCOM
Translation of documents into Welsh	Oct 2024	We Care Co-Chairs Welsh Language Team
Organisational launch with news item	Oct/Nov 2024	We Care Co-Chairs Comms Team

Section 6 – Dissemination

The primary source for dissemination of the Carer’s Policy within the organisation, will be via the intranet site.