



Yn cefnogi pobl
â cholled golwg
Supporting people
with sight loss

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National Assembly for Wales / Cynulliad Cenedlaethol
Cymru
[Health and Social Care Committee / Y Pwyllgor Iechyd a
Gofal Cymdeithasol](#)

[The Care and Support \(Eligibility\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2015](#)
[/ Rheoliadau Gofal a Chymorth \(Cymhwysra\) \(Cymru\) 2015](#)
Evidence from RNIB Cymru – CSR AI 01 / Tystiolaeth gan RNIB Cymru – CSR AI 01

Health and Social Care Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Pierhead Street
Cardiff
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SeneddHealth@assembly.wales

16 June 2015 (sent by email)

Dear Chair,

Re. Access to preventative services

At the evidence session on the eligibility regulations held by the Committee on June 11, you asked what evidence there was that preventative services available in the community are not able to meet current demand. We wanted to highlight the evidence that RNIB Cymru has gathered about the availability of specialist rehabilitation services for people with sight loss, which provide one example of a service that fits the definition of a preventative service, yet appears to be struggling to meet demand.

In October 2013, RNIB Cymru sent a survey to the Heads of Adult Services in each local authority in Wales to assess the current provision of social services for blind and partially sighted people. This information was collated and analysed to write RNIB Cymru's A postcode lottery? report, published in 2014.

Royal National Institute of Blind People

Noddwr Ei Mawrhydi Y Frenhines • **Llywydd Y Fonesig** Gail Ronson DBE

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In particular, the survey asked of those adults newly registered as blind or partially sighted with each local authority, how long they waited between referral to and beginning a rehabilitation programme. The survey found that in at least five local authority areas, people were waiting over 24 weeks. This is consistent with the experiences that RNIB Cymru hear from our members, and is of serious concern: rehabilitation support is vital for people with sight loss, in order to maximise their independence and quality of life after their sight has deteriorated. Not having access to such support can leave people at risk of isolation and falls, and lead to their needs escalating.

RNIB Cymru are seriously concerned that despite investment in rehabilitation services over the past decade, these long waits indicate that services in Wales are struggling to meet demand, and are not capable of providing adequate support to the blind and partially sighted people who need them today, let alone the much greater numbers expected to need them in the future.

Successful implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act relies on the availability of such services – yet we remain unconvinced that this is achievable without a change of culture and shift in investment into preventative services.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Sands
Public Affairs Manager

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