

Children receiving care and support in Wales, 2016-17 (Experimental statistics)

31 October 2017
SFR 168/2017

This annual release summarises information on assessments and care and support provided to children aged under 18 by local authorities in Wales. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 changes the way people's needs are assessed and the way services are delivered, introducing new duties on local authority social services in relation to assessment and provision of care and support.

This is the first year of collection and this release is the first in this series of statistical outputs reporting on data derived from the [Children Receiving Care and Support aggregate](#) return. See the [Key Quality Information](#) section for more information about the data. Information on children's social services has been published previously in the Referrals, Assessments and Social Services for Children in Wales series of statistical outputs however results are not comparable due to changes to definitions in legislation and measurement. Data will be used to monitor policies under the Act, including the new assessment and eligibility model, to support delivery, inform policy improvement and assess impact.



There were 38,841 assessments^{1,2,3} of need for care and support undertaken for children during the year.

8,488 (23 per cent) led to a care and support plan^{2,3,4}

(1) Based on data provided by 21 authorities. Merthyr Tydfil was unable to provide information on the number of assessments undertaken in the year.

(2) Includes children in the secure estate.

(3) If a child has need for care and support and is also a young carer, the child may have an assessment of their need for care and support, and an assessment of their need for support as a young carer.

(4) Based on data provided by 20 authorities. Denbighshire and

Merthyr Tydfil were unable to provide information on the number of assessments that led to a care plan.

Other key results for the period 6 April 2016 to 31 March 2017:

- 709 assessments of need for support for young carers were undertaken, which led to the provision of 423 support plans for young carers.
- 29,063 care and support plans and support plans were reviewed, of which 26,300 (90 per cent) were within timescales agreed by children and professionals.

About this release

The release presents the key findings from the Children receiving care and support data collected for the first time in 2016-17 following implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act on 6 April 2016.

The release provides information on the activity of local authority social services in relation to assessment and meeting care and support needs of children.

Data tables are also available on [StatsWales](#).

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Accuracy

These statistics are published as experimental statistics reflecting the scale of change happening in social services and system changes for the first year of data collection. Following the first year, the collection process and publication will be reviewed. More information on the designation of these statistics can be found in the [correspondence between the Welsh Government and the Office for Statistical Regulation](#).

The Welsh Government worked with local authorities to collect statistics on the activities of adult social services through the Adults receiving care and support data return. Statisticians within the Welsh Government review the data and query any anomalies with local authorities between submissions to ensure coherence of the data received, and before tables are published. Data adhere to the national standards and guidance, thus ensuring coherence within and across organisations. Local authorities are expected to comply with the guidance notes for completion that accompany the data collection form.

The figures in this release reflect the final position of the 2016-17 data year, and are correct as at 31 March 2017. 2016-17 is the first year of collecting and reporting on data derived from the [Children receiving care and support aggregate](#) return following implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act.

During the year, some issues were raised about the quality of the data and not all local authorities provided complete returns; in most of these cases changes to systems and reporting processes had not yet been fully implemented. Extensive quality assurance was undertaken with local authorities and where issues were due to the need for more clarity around some specific data requirements greater agreement was reached in interpretation as the year progressed. One local authority was unable to provide any figures as a result of technical problems following implementation of the new Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS) computer system.

Assessments

Information, Advice and Assistance

Under Section 128 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, local authorities are required to secure the provision of a service for providing people with information and advice relating to care and support, and assistance in accessing care and support.

During the year 2016-17, 28,550* children (or families) received advice and/or assistance from the Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) Service in relation to the child's own care and support or that of their friend/family member/person they care for/advocate for.

*based on 20 authorities

Assessments

Where it appears that a child may have needs for care and support, in addition to, or instead of, the care and support provided by the child's family, that child has a right to an assessment of those needs. Similarly, if it appears to the local authority that a young carer may have needs for support, a local authority must assess whether the young carer has needs for support (or is likely to do so in the future) and if they do, what those needs are or are likely to be.

The assessment process will often start when a person accesses the IAA service, but should not be restricted to being accessible through this service alone. If an assessment determines a person's identified needs are eligible to be met by the provision of care and support from the local authority, a care and support plan (or support plan for young carers) is developed and agreed.

Table 1: Number of assessments undertaken during the year

Data item	Number
Number of assessments of need for care and support undertaken during the year (a)(b)(c)	38,841
Of those, the number that led to a care and support plan (d)	8,488
Number of assessments of need for support for young carers undertaken during the year (c)	709
Of those, the number that led to a support plan	423

Source: Children receiving care and support aggregate

- (a) Based on data provided by 21 authorities. Merthyr Tydfil were unable to provide information on the number of assessments undertaken in the year.
- (b) Includes children in the secure estate.
- (c) If a child has need for care and support and is also a young carer, the child may have an assessment of their need for care and support, and an assessment of their need for support as a young carer.
- (d) Based on data provided by 20 authorities. Denbighshire and Merthyr Tydfil were unable to provide information on the number of assessments that led to a care plan.

There were 38,841* assessments for care and support undertaken during the year. Of the 20 authorities which were able to provide data, 8,488** (23 per cent) led to a care and support plan.

* Data based on 21 local authorities

** Data based on 20 authorities

Secure estate

Local authorities also have a duty on to assess and meet the care and support needs of children in the secure estate not just upon discharge but while they are in custody. For children, the duty falls on the child's Welsh home local authority whether they are placed in the secure estate in England or Wales.

Secure estate facilities for children are defined as prisons, approved premises, youth detention accommodation or bail accommodation. 39* assessments of need for care and support for children were undertaken during the year whilst in the secure estate. Of those assessments, 24* (62 per cent) led to a care and support plan.

*based on 21 authorities

Repeat-assessments

A child deemed ineligible for care and support following an assessment may request another assessment; if there has not been a significant change in the child's or family's needs or circumstances then this is counted as a repeat assessment for the purposes of this release.

Table 2: Number of repeat assessments undertaken during the year (a)(b)

Data item	Number
Number of requests for repeat assessment of need for care and support and need for support made by a child, young carer or person with parental responsibility during the year	758
Of those, the number of repeat assessments undertaken	266
Of those, the number of repeat assessments that led to a care and support plan or support plan	112

Source: Children receiving care and support aggregate

(a) Based on data provided by 18 authorities. Ceredigion, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Merthyr Tydfil were unable to provide information on requests for repeat assessments.

(b) Includes children in the secure estate.

There were 758 requests for repeat assessments of need for care and support and need for support made by a child, young carer or person with parental responsibility, of which 266 were repeat assessments and of those repeat assessments 112 led to a care and support plan.

Reviews of care and support plans or support plans for young carers

Where a local authority is required to meet care and support needs it must prepare a care and support plan for the adult concerned, or a support plan for the carer concerned. Local authorities must review care and support plans, under Part 4 and Part 6 of the Act, to understand whether the provision of that care and support is meeting the identified needs of the individual and consider if their needs have changed.

Care and support plans must contain a clear date, which should be agreed by the practitioner and the child and/or family, by which the plan will be reviewed. In the case of a child, the date of review

should be within set timescales for looked after children and children on the child protection register; and otherwise should not exceed 6 months.

Care and support

Table 3: Number of care and support plans and support plans reviewed during the year (a)(b)

Data item	Number
Number of care and support plans and support plans that were reviewed during the year	29,063
Of those, the number of plans that were reviewed within agreed timescales	26,300

Source: Children receiving care and support aggregate

(a) Based on data provided by 18 authorities. Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Merthyr Tydfil were unable to provide information on the number of care and support plans and support plans that were reviewed during the year.

(b) Includes children in the secure estate and young carers.

There were 29,063 care and support plans reviewed during the year, of which 26,300 (91 per cent) were reviewed within agree timescales.

Child protection register

Table 4: Children on the child protection register at 31 March 2017(a)

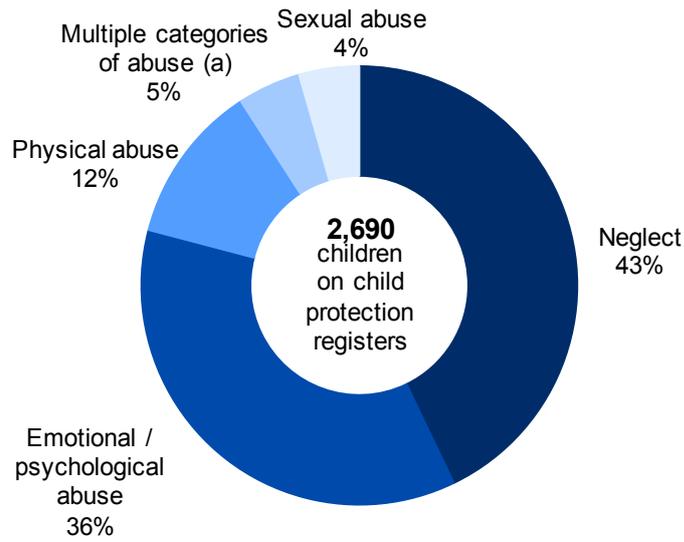
Category of abuse	Aged Under 1	Aged 1 - 4	Aged 5 - 9	Aged 10 - 15	Aged 16 - 18	Total
Neglect	144	364	311	286	48	1,153
Emotional / psychological abuse	79	280	296	289	30	974
Physical abuse	46	86	94	79	12	317
Sexual abuse	5	10	31	65	9	120
Neglect and physical abuse	11	30	31	18	6	96
Neglect and sexual abuse	0	3	5	8	2	18
Physical abuse and sexual abuse	1	1	0	4	3	9
Neglect, physical abuse and sexual abuse	0	1	0	1	1	3
Total	286	775	768	750	111	2,690

Source: Children receiving care and support aggregate

(a) Based on data provided by 21 authorities. Merthyr Tydfil were unable to provide information on the number of children on the child protection register.

For children on the child protection register, neglect and emotional/psychological abuse were the largest categories of abuse for each of the age groups. When looking at all ages, these categories accounted for 79 per cent of the total categories of abuse. Of the 120 children on the protection register due to sexual abuse, 15 (13 per cent) were under the age of 5.

Chart 2: Percentage of children on child protection registers, at 31 March 2017, by category of abuse



Source: Children receiving care and support aggregate

(a) Multiple categories include: Neglect and physical abuse; Neglect and sexual abuse; Physical abuse and sexual abuse; Neglect, physical abuse and sexual abuse.

Glossary

Adaptations: Permanent or fixed alterations to make homes more suitable for the occupants, that the local authority has an obligation to review on an annual basis and involve the authority in an ongoing financial commitment to maintain.

Adult: A person who is aged 18 or over.

Adult care home: Local authority residential care homes (local authority run establishment providing accommodation together with personal care as defined in the Care Act 2000) and independent sector care homes under contract (privately run establishment providing accommodation together with personal care).

Adult care home with nursing: Local authority funded nursing care homes (local authority funded establishment providing accommodation together with personal and nursing care as defined in the Care Act 2000) and independent sector care homes under contract providing nursing care (privately run establishment providing accommodation together with personal and nursing care).

Adult placement: Accommodation and support provided to one, two or, exceptionally, three adults placed with the agreement of an Adult Placement Scheme.

Advocacy: Assistance (by way of representation or otherwise) to persons for purposes relating to their care and support.

Assessment: A product of the conversation between the individual or family and the practitioner designed to identify how to meet care and support needs.

Care and support: Care, support and both care and support.

Care and support plan (or support plan for young carers): A description of a person's care and support needs and how these will be met.

Carer: A person who provides or intends to provide care for an adult or disabled child. A young carer refers to a child who is a carer.

Child: A person who is aged under 18.

Child protection register: A record of all children in the area for whom there are unresolved child protection issues and who are currently the subject of an inter-agency protection plan.

Co-operative: An organisation or arrangement conforming sufficiently to the following principles for co-operatives: is autonomous, has voluntary membership, has the purpose of meeting common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations, is jointly owned, and is democratically controlled.

Day care: Attendance at a day centre for care and/or meals.

Direct Payment: Monetary payments made by local councils directly to individuals for the purchase of social services.

Domiciliary care: Practical services that assist the person to function as independently as possible and/or continue to live in their home. This does not include reablement services that take place in a person's own home.

Equipment: Items of equipment that the authority has an obligation to review on an annual basis and involve the authority in an ongoing financial commitment to maintain or service the equipment.

Flat rate charge: A charge made by local authorities for the provision or arrangement of preventative services or assistance. Flat rate charges would typically be for care and support which are tasks which a person would normally have to do as a part of everyday life, such as preparing meals or laundry. In some cases it might be the only care and support a person receives and they may not have a care and support plan.

Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA): Information and advice relating to care and support, and assistance in accessing care and support, provided by the IAA service. Information is quality data that provides support to a person to help them make an informed choice about their well-being. Advice is a way of working co-productively with a person to explore the options available. Assistance, if needed, will follow the provision of information and advice, and involves another person taking action with the enquirer to access care and support, or a carer to access support.

Looked after child: A child who is in the care of the local authority or who is provided with accommodation by the local authority social services department for a continuous period of more than 24 hours.

Maximum weekly charge: The maximum weekly charge a local authority may charge a person in receipt of non-residential care and support for all of the non-residential care and support they receive. Currently this charge is £60 per week.

Preventative services: Services can be universally provided to help people avoid developing needs for care and support; targeted at individuals who have an increased risk of developing care and support needs; and aimed at minimising the effect of an existing care and support need on a service user. It is for each local authority to decide what they consider a preventative service. A care and support plan is not required when providing a service considered as preventative.

Re-assessment: During a review, if it becomes apparent that there has been a significant change in the individual's or family's needs or circumstances the person may have a re-assessment and the care and support plan may need to be updated to ensure the services detailed in the plan are meeting the person's needs and outcomes.

Reablement: Intended to restore and re-able a person to achieve skills and abilities they previously had in order to support them to return to maximum independence in their own home.

Recreational, leisure and lifelong learning opportunities: Any form of service provision or support which is provided or arranged by the local authority social services department to enable people to achieve their personal well-being outcomes as defined in their care and support plan.

Repeat assessment: If following an assessment, an individual is deemed ineligible for care and support but then requests another assessment, where there has not been a significant change in the individual's or family's needs or circumstances, this should be counted as a repeat assessment for the purposes of this return.

Respite care: Care provided by the local authority to provide relief to the carer(s) and person being cared for.

Review: A process by which the practitioner and the individual and/or family consider how effective the care and support plan has been in supporting the person to meet their identified well-being outcomes.

Secure estate: Secure estate facilities refers to prisons, approved premises, youth detention accommodation or bail accommodation.

Sheltered accommodation: Sheltered housing schemes, which may have a warden, and provide 24-hour emergency help through an alarm system.

Social enterprise: An organisation whose activities are wholly or mainly activities which a person might reasonably consider to be activities carried on for the benefit of society ("its social objects"), and which generates most of its income through business or trade, reinvests most of its profits in its social objects, is independent of any public authority, and is owned, controlled and managed in a way that is consistent with its social objects.

Supported accommodation: 24-hour care for people in their own home for which they have their own tenancy agreement.

Telecare: Continuous, automatic remote monitoring of real life emergencies and lifestyle changes over time in order to manage risks associated with independent living.

Third sector organisation: An organisation which a person might reasonably consider to exist wholly or mainly to provide benefits for society.

User led service: An organisation run by the people whom the organisation represents or provides a service to.

Notes

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act came into effect on 6 April 2016. It is the new legal framework that brings together and modernises social services law in Wales. The Act changes the way people's needs are assessed and the way services are delivered.

From 6 April 2016, local authorities are expected to collect and return data on the activities of children's social services based on new reporting requirements developed in line with the implementation of Act. This release examines key findings for 2016-17 and is intended to monitor the introduction of the new assessment and eligibility model to support delivery and assess its impact.

Key quality information

This section provides a summary of information on this output against five dimensions of quality: Relevance, Accuracy, Timeliness and Punctuality, Accessibility and Clarity, and Comparability and Coherence.

Relevance

The statistics are used both within and outside the Welsh Government to monitor children's social services trends and as a baseline for further analysis of the underlying data. More specifically they will provide a summary of activity in relation to new legal duties introduced in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act. Some of the key users are:

- Ministers and the Members Research Service in the National Assembly for Wales;
- The Department for Health and Social Services in the Welsh Government;
- Other areas of the Welsh Government;
- Local authorities;
- The third sector (e.g. charities);
- The research community;
- Students, academics and universities;
- Individual citizens and private companies.

The statistics may also be useful for other UK governments

- The Northern Ireland Executive's Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
- The Scottish Government, Analytical Services Division
- The Department for Education in England.

These statistics are used in a variety of ways. Some examples of these uses include:

- Advice to Ministers;
- To inform the social services policy decision-making process in Wales;
- Local authority analysis;
- To inform the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales;
- To model the financial consequences of changes in the population or the care system
- To assist in research on children receiving care and support.

Symbols and rounding conventions

All the figures are rounded to the nearest 5 for confidentiality. Where figures have been rounded there may be an apparent discrepancy between the sum of the constituent items and the total.

The following symbols are used in the tables:

- the data item is not exactly zero, but is less than half the final digit shown.
- . the data item is not applicable.
- .. the data item is not available.
- * the data item is disclosive or not sufficiently robust for publication.

Occasionally, revisions can occur due to errors in our statistical processes or when a data supplier notifies the Welsh Government that they have submitted incorrect information. In these cases, a judgement is made as to whether the change is significant enough to publish a revised statistical release. Where changes are not deemed to be significant, figures will be corrected if they appear in future releases. However minor amendments to the figures may be reflected in the StatsWales tables prior to the next release.

Timeliness and punctuality

The Data Collection team within the Welsh Government collected data, for the year 2016-17 from implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act i.e. from 6th April 2016 to 31st March 2017, between May and July 2017. Data in this release refers to final 2016-17 data. Once submitted data has been validated, this release is drafted and published as soon as possible. This release was published in October 2017, meeting the planned date of publication.

Accessibility and clarity

This statistical first release is pre-announced and then published on the Statistics and Research section of the Welsh Government website. It is accompanied by more detailed tables on [StatsWales](#), a free to use service that allows visitors to view, manipulate, create and download data.

Comparability and coherence

2016-17 is the first year of collecting and reporting on data derived from the [Children receiving care and support aggregate](#) return. This statistical release provides figures at the Wales level, with some information about individual local authorities. Further information for local authorities is available on [StatsWales](#). To ensure that the national data are comparable and consistent, local authorities are expected to comply with the guidance notes for completion that accompany the data collection form. When comparing figures for different local authorities, relevant factors such as the size of the local authority population should be taken into account. [Local authority population estimates](#) by age can be found on StatsWales.

Data has been published previously on social services for children based on the previous Performance Management – Children’s services (PM1) data collection. Results are not comparable due to changes in legislation and to definitions and reporting requirements.

Statistics collected in each United Kingdom country may differ and the detailed guidance available from each country's website should be consulted before using these statistics as comparative measures. Further information on comparability is available at the web page [UK Comparability of Children's Social Services Statistics](#).

A similar statistical release for England can be accessed on the [Department for Education website](#).

Children's Social Work Statistics for Scotland can be accessed on the [Scottish Government website](#).

Child protection statistics for Northern Ireland can be accessed on the [Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety website](#).

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators ("national indicators") that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016.

Information on indicators and associated technical information - [How do you measure a nation's progress? - National Indicators](#)

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

Further information

Further information is available in other Personal Social Services statistical releases on the [Welsh Government website](#).

Information on the costs to local authorities of services provided for looked after children are produced by the Welsh Government from local authority financial returns. Detailed figures are available on [StatsWales](#).

Further details

The document is available at:

<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/children-receiving-care-support/?lang=en>

Data at local authority level is available on [StatsWales](#).

[Codes of practice and statutory guidance issued under the Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act](#).

Further information is available in other Social Services statistical releases on the Welsh Government web site including [Adults receiving care and support in Wales](#).

Information on the costs to local authorities of services provided for children are produced by the Welsh Government from local authority financial returns. Detailed figures are available on [StatsWales](#).

Next update

October 2018 (Provisional)

We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to stats.pss@gov.wales.

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