



WHIASU



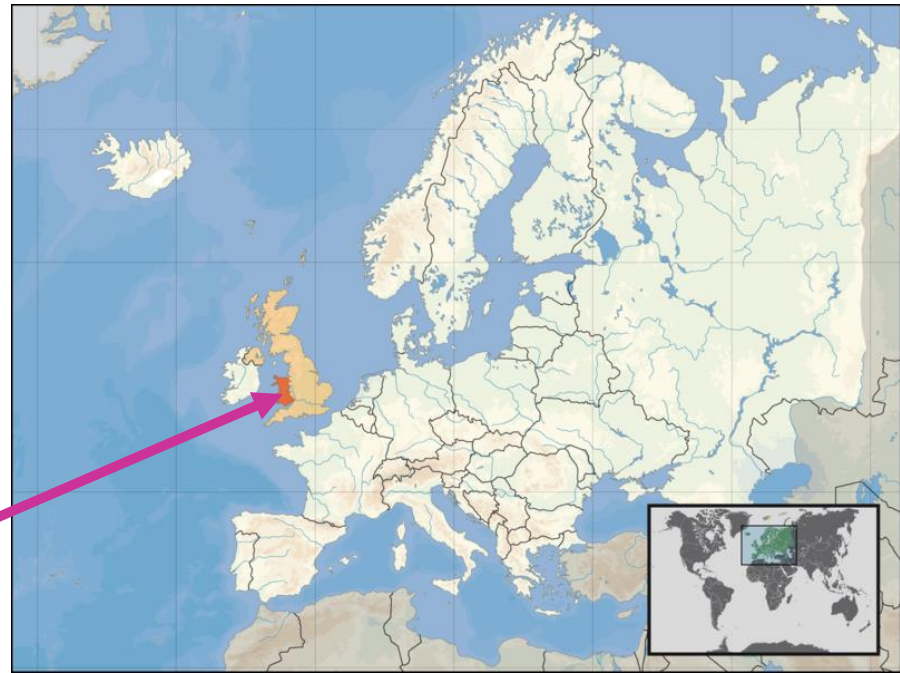
HIA IN WALES: FROM VOLUNTARY TO STATUTORY

Liz Green

Programme Director

Wales HIA Support Unit/Public Health Wales

LOCATING WALES



DEVOLVED GOVERNMENT

- Emphasis on:
 - Health and wellbeing
 - Addressing inequalities within population
 - Sustainable Development
 - Citizen centred public services
 - Partnership working
 - Integrated agenda
- Devolved Powers include: health, planning, social services and social care
- Ability to legislate for these through Assembly Bills and Acts



IMPORTANCE OF CONSIDERING HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- Wales exhibits high levels of poor health
- Increasing rates of obesity and associated illness i.e. diabetes, heart disease and respiratory diseases
- Smoking, alcohol, mental health and well-being
- Inequalities in health - deprived communities exhibit higher levels of ill health and have shorter life expectancy than more affluent communities
- Not just physical health - wider determinants of health and mental wellbeing



HIA AND HIAP IN WALES: STRATEGIC DRIVERS

- Importance of considering health and wellbeing and inequalities
- Wellbeing of the Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 - Sustainable Development focus
- Consideration of Health in All Policies (HiAP)
- ‘Prosperity for All’ (2018) - WG and Wales’ long term strategy
- Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 - includes the requirement to make regulations about the use of HIA by public bodies.



PUBLIC HEALTH (WALES) ACT 2017

Regulations to specify:

- Circumstances when HIAs will be required by public bodies (PBs)
- How HIAs are to be carried out by public bodies
- Regulations to cover the role of PHW in providing assistance to public bodies
- Range of potential areas currently being explored
- Draft regulations expected to be consulted upon later this year

The Public Health (Wales) Bill will make changes to the law in Wales to improve health and prevent avoidable health harms. These include:

A duty on the Welsh Government to produce a national strategy on preventing and reducing obesity. 

Restrictions on smoking in:

- ▶ outdoor care settings for children
- ▶ school grounds
- ▶ hospital grounds
- ▶ public playgrounds.

A national **register of retailers** of tobacco / nicotine products.

Prohibiting **handing over** tobacco / nicotine products to under-18s.

A licensing system for practitioners of **special procedures** in Wales.

- ▶ acupuncture
- ▶ body piercing
- ▶ electrolysis
- ▶ tattooing.

Prohibiting the **intimate piercing** of a person under the age of 18. 

Requiring health impact assessments to be carried out for key decisions. 

Maximising the public health role of **community pharmacies** to meet the needs of communities. 

A duty on each local authority in Wales to publish a **focal toilets strategy**. 

@wgmin_sspH
#phbill

 Welsh Government



MANY VOLUNTARY LEVERS FOR HIA...

- Planning Act (2015) and Planning Policy Wales (PPW) 2018
- Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG) (2008)
- Wales Waste Strategy and Collections, Infrastructure and Markets Waste Sector Plan (2013)
- MTAN2: Coal (2009) - open cast mining. EIAs require a broad HIA to be undertaken
- Vibrant and Viable Places: Welsh regeneration framework (2013)
- NHS Infrastructure Investment Guidance (2016)



WHY NOW? WHY SUCCESSFUL?

- Window of opportunity in Wales - political and social context
- Health and wellbeing status linked to economic development
- WFGA - Wellbeing Goals inc Health/Equality
- UN Sustainable Development Goals and SD agenda
- Success of HIA in practice at a national/local level and many benefits gained i.e. strengthened plans, community consultation/involvement; avoided unintended consequences
- Strategic advocates created i.e. BMA Cymru, Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH), Public Health Wales (PHW)



ENABLERS

- WHIASU - Independent specialist unit for HIA/P
- Training/capacity building i.e. PBs/Local PHTeams
- Application of HIA/HiAP - strategic work with Welsh Government; ‘non health’ sectors - created ‘champions’ who have benefited
- Pragmatic approach taken i.e. Rapid participatory HIA is time and resource effective and efficient
- Creation of strong partnerships with organisations/individuals
- Case studies/presentations to highlight work - raise awareness of importance of health and wellbeing and HIAs role



WHIASU PREPARATION FOR THE PH ACT - HIA

- PHW internal Strategic Task and Finish Group - implications for a wide range of teams i.e WHIASU, Environmental PH, Health Intelligence, Local Public Health Teams (LPHTs)
- PHW - lead by example and development of approach i.e. Brexit HIA
- WHIASU - advice and support to WG; preparation of resources i.e. Training Strategy with Skills and Knowledge Development Pathway and; Decision Criteria for requests for 'assistance'
- Discussions with LPHTs and PBs incl Natural Resources Wales - 18 trained internally on Rapid HIA; wish to embed across the organisation



OPPORTUNITIES

- HUGE opportunity!
- Solidify Wales reputation as world leaders in HIA and HiAP
- Translation of policy into successful and meaningful practice
- Strengthen and improve plans and policies
- Avoid unintended consequences but also maximise positives and contribution to health and wellbeing and equalities
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in practice



CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Lack of capacity in WHIASU and public health system - new model of working for HIA?
- WG HIA Statutory Regulations - circumstances are as yet to be defined; no definition of assistance...
- Implications of the Act not understood widely - only a few PBs are prepared for the HIA duty
- A whole system approach is needed with joined up working and resources (mirrors the WFGA)
- To successfully translate policy into practice takes time and planning
- Austerity/Brexit



SUMMARY

- Need the right policy context BUT can still influence the successful use of HIA
- Exploit every lever possible to 'sell' HIA/HiAP
- Utilise a 'Top Down' approach at the same time as a 'Bottom Up' one
- Community involvement, avoiding unintended consequences - selling points
- Creation of strategic and local advocates - key
- Role of dedicated specialists to support and provide advice, guidance and resources
- Demonstrate 'added value' and evaluate any success



Liz.Green@wales.nhs.uk

www.whiasu.wales.nhs.uk

Diolch yn fawr iawn!

Thank you!

