

Regions for health case study: Turning Welsh legislation for sustainable development into everyday practice

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In 1998, Wales became one of the first nations in the world to have a legal requirement in relation to sustainable development. The introduction of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 bolstered previous schemes, by providing an enabling framework for thinking and working differently, and embedding a Health in All Policies approach. With seven well-being goals which aim to make Wales a healthier place, where the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales is improved, the Act impacts on public bodies, including local authorities, to make sure that when making their decisions they take into account the impact they could have on people's well-being, that they involve citizens, and they look to the future as well as focusing on the now. Wales also became one of the first nations in the world to establish a legislative link to the international SDGs.

A new report gives practical examples and case studies demonstrating how organizations can respond to the legislation. Informed by a review of the international evidence, the report makes five key recommendations for practical implementation of sustainable development principles.

Although the report reflects the Welsh public sector context, the findings can act as a go-to guide for any organization seeking to address global issues such as climate change, biodiversity and de-carbonization, as well as to implement the globally agreed Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The report is positive about the Welsh legislative approach; suggesting it could make a significant and long-lasting difference to the people living in Wales, with the potential to set an example globally.

The presentation will provide examples on how this is translating into practical action for the Welsh NHS system change including collective action on a de-carbonization pathway and how staff and the wider public are being motivated and engaged to 'Be The Change'. to create a network of champions will be given.