**Consultation on Period Dignity Strategic Action Plan**

Response on behalf of **Learning Disability Wales.**

Learning Disability Wales is a national charity representing the learning disability sector in Wales. We work with people with a learning disability and their families, Welsh Government, local authorities, disabled people’s organisations and the voluntary sector to create a better Wales for all people with a learning disability.

**Name Cath M. Lewis**

**Organisation Learning Disability Wales**

**Email address** **Cath.Lewis@LDW.org.uk**

**Question 1**

Do you agree with the vision for period dignity outlined in the plan? What suggestions would you make to improve it?

Learning Disability Wales agree with the vision for period dignity outlined in the plan. We welcome the fact that the plan specifically highlights the needs of disabled people. However, the needs of people with a learning disability can be different to other disabled people and this must be highlighted eg people with a learning disability can have difficulty understanding and retaining information, may need support to develop new skills and have difficulty with communication. Some people with a learning disability also have very painful periods and find difficulty coping with what is happening to their bodies. This and the forementioned points must be referenced in the plan.

We fully support point 20 in the strategic action plan that states: “Disabled people, **including those with learning impairments**, will be supported to play a central role in recognising and defining the problems they experience and in creating resources that are effective and accessible.”

**Question 2**

How achievable is the vision within the next five years? What will prevent achievement of the vision and what may help to realise the vision?

This vision should be achievable within the next 5 years. However, this will depend on the leadership of the Welsh Government to implement the actions contained in the Strategic Governance and Leadership section of the Plan. We note that the first action is to “Hold Ministerial Period Dignity Roundtable meetings to oversee implementation of the period dignity strategic action plan and to advise on emerging issues and opportunities.”. However, we would like to see an organisation that represents people with a learning disability included in the round table discussions and not just organisations that represent people with physical impairments (eg Disability Wales).

**Question 3**

The Plan is structured by policy theme. Are there themes or specific actions missing from the plan? What are these and whose responsibility are they?

Point 20 referred to in our response to question 1 is contained within the education theme. Learning Disability Wales believes that this and other points could be included in a cross-cutting policy. Without this happening some people who are not working in education may not read this section / point.

**Question 4**

Does the Period Dignity Strategic Action plan adequately respond to the intersection between period dignity and period poverty with protected characteristics and the experience of socio economic disadvantage. If not, how can we improve this?

The plan responds well to the intersection between period dignity and period poverty with people with protected characteristics. As previously mentioned, we welcome point 20 that states that “Disabled people, **including those with learning impairments**, will be supported to play a central role in recognising and defining the problems they experience and in creating resources that are effective and accessible.” However, this is a bit vague and the action needs to be firmed up. The resources should include the development of bilingual accessible information including easy read. Easy Health in England have produced six guides on different aspects of periods. These can be accessed through the link below - <https://www.easyhealth.org.uk/resources/category/119-periods> . However, there are no good quality, bilingual easy read documents available in Wales so, after the content has been checked and agreed by a focus group of people with a learning disability, these would need to be reproduced for a Welsh audience.

**Question 5**

What more should the Welsh Government do in relation to broader health based issues such perimenopause, the menopause, endometriosis, polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD) and gynaecological cancers. Do you believe these actions should be included in the Period Dignity Strategic Action Plan or in other policy work?

We believe that broader health based issues such as perimenopause, menopause etc should be included in the Period Dignity Strategic Plan. These conditions affect women at different stages in their lives including when their periods alter and finally stop so it is therefore sensible to include them in the plan.

**Question 6**

We would like to know your views on the effects that the Period Dignity Strategic Action Planwould have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

What effects do you think there would be?  How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

We do not feel that Period Dignity Plan will have a negative effect on the Welsh Language. It is important that the Plan and actions within it are delivered in Welsh. For some people with a learning disability, their first language is Welsh and they may understand Welsh better than English. It is therefore important that the plan and actions are delivered in the language they are most comfortable with. This will include easy read Welsh for some people.

**Question 7**

Please also explain how you believe the Period Dignity Strategic Action Plancould be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Please see above

**Question 8**

We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them:

**Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.**