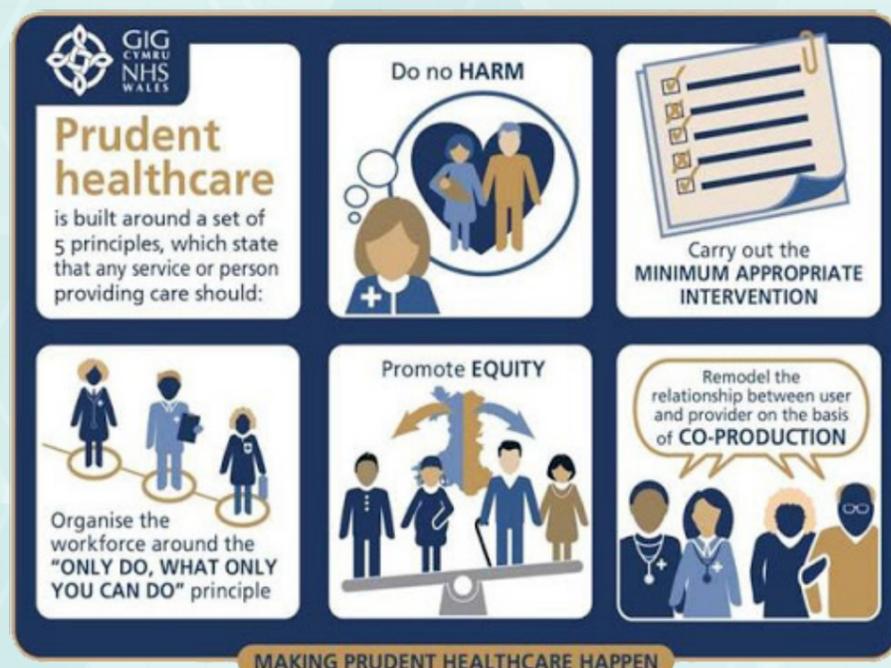


Prudent Healthcare

A Level Health and Social Care

The idea of 'prudent healthcare' was developed by the Bevan Commission in 2013 as a response to the challenge of how to improve healthcare during times of austerity. It has since become a major health strategy for the Welsh Government. The strategy aims to deliver health care which fits the needs and circumstances of service users and that avoids ineffective care that does not benefit the patient. It requires healthcare professionals and the government to use resources efficiently to prevent waste and harm. Prudent healthcare principles are key to providing sustainable health services for Wales' future and are integral parts of the Welsh Government's strategy to improve the health and well-being of the nation.



Prudent healthcare is at the heart of *A Healthier Wales*, the Welsh Government's long-term plan for health and care. It also informs much of today's health and care policy and discussion in Wales.

The principles of prudent healthcare are:

- Achieve health and well-being with the public, patients and professionals as equal partners through co-production.
- Care for those with the greatest health needs first, making the most effective use of all skills and resources.
- Do only what is needed, no more, no less; and do no harm.
- Reduce inappropriate variation using evidence-based practices consistently and transparently.

Prudent Healthcare is focused on THREE ACTIONS:

ACTION 1: Appropriate tests, treatments, and medications.

ACTION 2: Changing the model of outpatients.

ACTION 3: Working together to improve healthcare.

ACTION 1 - Appropriate tests, treatments, and medications

This ensures that people who use NHS services in Wales receive care and services that are not only focused on ensuring the best immediate outcomes, but also contribute to their long-term health and well-being. Scientific research has indicated that many people undergo tests and receive treatments and medications which have little clinical benefits. By doing little good, these can lead to physical or psychological harm. Spending on treatments of little value restricts the health service's ability to invest in new, cutting-edge and evidence-based practices. The British Medical Journal's 'Too Much Medicine' campaign documents evidence of over-medication, over-diagnosis and over-testing. The Welsh NHS is at the forefront of an international movement to ensure every test, procedure and medication makes a positive contribution to people's health and secures the principle of doing no harm. A programme will be developed to reduce the rate of inappropriate antibiotic prescriptions in Wales. The Prudent Prescribing Implementation Group will ensure that the NHS and the public are contributing to the global fight against antimicrobial resistance; and will lead a review looking at what changes can be made to the repeat prescription system across Wales in order to reduce unnecessary and inappropriate prescriptions.

ACTION 2 - Changing the model of outpatients.

Approximately 3.1 million outpatient appointments were provided by the NHS in Wales last year – more than the population of Wales itself. A third of these were related to just three specialties - trauma and orthopaedics, ophthalmology and general surgery. However, not all outpatient appointments had a useful clinical purpose, and many could have been carried out in other healthcare settings that were closer to people's homes. A national project will be set up to radically change the outpatient model, ensuring that it is easier to access specialist advice to support decision-making in primary care. Some services will be delivered in the community.

ACTION 3 - Working together to improve healthcare

The NHS in Wales will move to a system that tackles the underlying causes of disease and prevents ill health instead of one which just treats the symptoms of disease. The NHS will work in partnership with public sector organisations, the third sector and the industry. This will promote co-production and person-centred care that will concentrate on achieving the best outcomes for the individual based on their wishes.

- The 1000 Lives Improvement programme will create a national public service task force.
- The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 introduced new regional partnership boards to integrate health and social services and collaborate with statutory and third sector organisations.