

Trade, health and well-being symposium

7th November 2019, Cardiff.

Roundtable Table Discussions

Influencing and engaging with future trade policy: what should we be doing in Wales?

1. What are the health and well-being priorities for Wales that need to be considered as new trade policy develops?
 - Protecting the NHS – a rise in the cost of medicines is a key concern
 - Maintaining high food standards – we have some of the safest food in the world at the moment, and maintenance of independent regulation/oversight rather than business monitoring themselves
 - EU legislation has enabled regional decision-making – it permits for there to be differences – e.g. there are some areas where Wales has gone further (e.g. statutory requirement to put food hygiene ratings on the door) could be lost if aligned with England e.g. alcohol pricing/ e-cigarettes
 - Worker rights and protections (in context of weaker trade unions) – within the UK and internationally through the way we support trade in other countries
 - Job security/ unemployment and impact on health
 - Climate change
 - Obesity
 - Inequalities ++ key issues– importance of looking at where the Welsh position is different – differential impacts for Wales of any new trade policy

- Looking at issues that need to be addressed regardless of Brexit etc. such as AI, Climate change - where are the opportunities for faster decision making
- Which things will drive a change in behaviour ? Focus on areas where changes can occur.
- Challenge to devolution – Wales could lose power over key determinants of health – could there be a “carve out” for Wales on key policy areas in any trade agreement?
- Many determinants of health are not devolved – and are highly exposed to trade
- Societal health is key – its not just about health care
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2. What networks and expertise exist in Wales that could support this agenda?

- Make use of people in Cardiff University – Welsh Governance Centre – also part of GW4 network of Universities (Bath, Exeter, Bristol) looking at international trade and readiness and preparedness of businesses (lawyers, policy experts on trade goes beyond EU expertise) – tap into this
- Constituency surgeries coming up as part of general election – as individuals can speak to MPs to voice our concern about trade and health and well-being
- We as a public health community have a closer relationship with Welsh Government than our counterparts working in England with UK Government
- PPIW (WCPP)
- Universities,
- Welsh Civil Society Forum on Brexit
- WCO, WCO, WCIA, CBI,
- FSB, chambers of commerce – (note: Healthy working Wales will have good links here)
- NHS Confed,

- Trade Unions, TUC
- IWA
- Bevan Foundation
- Commerce Cymru
- PETRA
- WHO
- Keep channels of communication open in EU
- WBFG – Future gens office
- FPH Brexit group
- We need to work together to build a critical mass/alliance
- Need to engage with Northern Ireland and Ireland –
- UK wide 4 nations approach important
- Trade Justice Movement – has Scotland and UK but not in Wales. Did try to set one up last year – timing maybe better now?
- Charles Whitmore at the Wales Civil Society Forum on Brexit is creating a briefing on trade policy for 3rd sector

3. Do we need to do more to build our capacity to engage and influence trade policy in Wales? If so what is needed?
Training, networks ...something else?

- Still not clear on what the formal platforms are for influencing – what is our route in? Lobbying AMs or other routes? Do MPs have to vote through a trade deal or is it done without parliamentary scrutiny? – training need to identify the mechanisms as this can identify where have influencing opportunities – has the Trade Bill setting out the process been passed yet? If not, can we focus on influencing that as something that can be amended?
- Yes need to build capacity as well but understanding of process and how and where we can influence

- Need more than a handful of people with insight on trade and health
- Think about process for contesting downstream as well as influencing upstream
- Networking and influence UK Government trade representative
- Need a seat at the table and Welsh voice represented at UK Gov level.
- Multi-level channels – UK 4 Nations and Welsh Gov.
- Have access to people that do have a seat at the table – identifying opportunities
- Yes – need to raise awareness and be more explicit of the effect of trade and trade agreements on health
- Need credible, strategic advocates
- Need to look at where we do not have good channels of communication
- Need to explore pitfalls associated with language in trade agreements – need to understand the language used.
- Mobilise as a Public Health community and continue conversation
- Political skills really important to develop in the Public Health workforce
- Public health needs to be seen as a resource not an adversary
- Opportunity for 4 country working –

4. Who needs to be engaged?

- Academics
- Health
- Politicians
- Business representatives
- Citizens (consumer/patients) representatives
- Convene a Welsh Forum

- Be pragmatic in approach, expand stakeholders as work progresses
- Credible strategic advocate
- WG Trade team
- Public health specialists and SP groups
- Process Mapping - unlocking routes that are going to be most productive in terms of influence.
- Environmental lobby

5. What specific tools, methods or approaches should be taken to influencing trade policy? e.g. health impact assessment, briefings, other research ?

- We should be advocating that every trade deal should be subjected to a Health Impact Assessment
- Pledges on this issue given to potential parliamentary candidates during the election period
- Language is important - use shall and must instead of should and could
- Can we get the public on board with this agenda?
- Upskill key stakeholders and convey key messages
- Social media – PR – awareness raising in general and for decision makers
- Delphi type analysis
- Simplify messages for broad appeal
- Need to have a convincing business case with health at its heart
- Human rights are key and using a human rights lens could be very useful
- Safeguarding Well-being of Future Generation Act - unique position for Wales
- A need to be realistic
- Influence “legitimate expectations” for Wales – a key lever for influencing trade agreements

- Don't work in isolation – alliance across the UK are key to this agenda
- Public Health Wales/ WHO CC Health Equity Status report – could be a platform to monitor impacts in range of policy areas
- Pre and post trade agreements comparative studies of health and employment outcomes