**Developing Social Workers**

A key message in the policy document [Sustainable Social Services for Wales: A Framework for Action](http://www.ccwales.org.uk/edrms/98873/) *(Welsh Government, 2011)* is the need for professional, competent, confident and safe managers and workers to provide excellent, front line social services. In 2011, the Care Council for Wales consulted on proposals for a Continuing Professional Education and Learning Framework (CPEL) to support the new national career pathways for social workers in Wales. The CPEL Framework describes the minimum arrangements for the continuing education and learning of social workers after initial qualification in order to progress on the career pathway.

* Consolidation Programme- for Newly Qualified SW
* Experienced Practitioner Programme - for Social Workers (Year 3 +)
* Senior Practitioner Programme - for Senior Social Workers
* Consultant Social Worker Programme - for Consultant SW

**What’s Changed?**

As a result a new Consolidation training programme has been developed by a partnership of twelve Local Authorities (Porth Agored), working in collaboration with the University of Wales, Trinity Saint David to provide a qualification for newly qualified Social Workers. The emphasis of the programme is to consolidate the learning from the degree and further develop any skills or knowledge in their specialist area of work. The aim is that the qualification will normally be completed before the first re-registration with the Care Council for Wales. The other CPEL programmes Experienced Practitioner Programme (EPP) and Senior Practitioner Programme (SPP) have been developed by Cardiff University working in collaboration with Swansea, Bangor and Glyndwr universities and have been available to Social Workers since September 2014, with the Consultant Social Work Programme (CSWP) offered from September 2015.

**What difference has it made?**

The Consolidation Programme provides opportunity for newly qualified Social Workers to reflect on their current practice, identify areas for development and target appropriate training to further develop their skills and address any learning needs. As a result it is hoped that Social Workers will increase their skills and knowledge and become more confident in their area of work. Social Workers who have completed the programme refer to how it has helped them re-focus on theory and research in their day-to-day work and as a result, hopefully service users will benefit from a more confident and knowledgeable Social Worker.