



Council
20 July 2023
Welsh Language Scheme Annual Report

Classification	Public
Purpose	For discussion
Issue	Under the Welsh Language Act 1993, the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) is required to publish an annual report on the implementation and progress of its Welsh Language Scheme. This paper introduces this year's annual report, which is attached as an annex.
Recommendation	To consider the 2022-23 Annual Report on the GOsC Welsh Language Scheme and the anticipated changes in Welsh language requirements.
Financial and resourcing implications	The costs of implementing the current Scheme are provided for in the 2022-23 budget.
Equality and diversity implications	The purpose of the Annual Report is to ensure that the GOsC fulfils its obligations to Welsh language speakers. We have updated our Equality Impact Assessment to ensure the reference to the Welsh language complies with the incoming Welsh Language Standards.
Communications implications	<p>The 2022-23 Annual Report will form the basis of the GOsC Annual Monitoring Report on the Welsh Language Scheme, to be submitted to the Welsh Language Commissioner.</p> <p>The Annual Monitoring Report will be presented in English and Welsh, published on our website and brought to the attention of Wales-based registrants. This will also form part of our external messaging on the introduction of the new Welsh Language Standards and how GOsC will be implementing these.</p>
Annex	GOsC Welsh Language Scheme Annual Report 2022-23
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Key messages from the paper:

- In June 2023, GOsC received its final compliance notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner regarding the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards, which were laid in the Senedd in 2022.
- GOsC is expected to implement all but one standard by 6 December 2023.
- GOsC is expected to implement standard 20 (the provision of an online registration process available to registrants in Welsh) by 6 December 2024.
- We have been attending regular meetings with other healthcare professional regulators on the subject of the Welsh Language Standards to discuss how we can support each other and how we are each approaching implementation.
- In the previous reporting year, we have seen the number of practices where Welsh is spoken drop from 34 to 27. The number of Welsh language pages on our website has not changed, but we have seen the percentage of Welsh pages on our website drop to 4.5% which is due to an increase in the overall website number of English pages.

Background

1. The Welsh Language Act 1993 established the principle that in the conduct of public business and the administration of justice in Wales, the English and Welsh languages should be treated on a basis of equality. The Act also makes provision for the preparation and approval of Welsh language schemes that set out the measures an organisation will take to put into effect the principle of equality of language with regard to Welsh and English. The GOsC Welsh Language Scheme was introduced on 1 August 2011.
2. Under the Welsh Language Act, the GOsC is required to actively monitor the implementation and progress of its Welsh Language Scheme and to provide an annual report to the GOsC Council and to the Welsh Language Commissioner. This year's report will be the 12th to be submitted.
3. The format of the annual monitoring report and the data reported are as specified by the Welsh Language Commissioner. This format will change on 6 December 2023 when the Welsh Language Standards are due to be implemented and the Welsh Language Scheme ceases to exist.

Discussion

4. The GOsC Welsh Language Scheme Annual Report 2022-23 is attached as an Annex.

Update on new Welsh Language Standards

5. On 13 December 2022 we received a draft compliance notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner setting out the standards GOsC would be expected to comply with, and offering us the opportunity to respond to the notice before 22 March 2023. This consultation period allowed us to submit requests for any reasonable adjustments to the standards to which we would need to comply, or to request any extension to the timeline for implementation for any of the standards.
6. On 17 March 2023 we responded to the Welsh Language Commissioner with the following requests:
 - a. That we are allowed 12 months to implement standard 2 which refers to Welsh language translations of correspondence to several individuals, and as such would impact on our monthly ebulletin.
 - b. That we are allowed 12 months to implement standard 6, which refers to the Welsh language version of an automated telephone system. We outlined that we do not have a Welsh speaker in GOsC and would benefit from additional time to source one to record the telephone message.
 - c. That we are allowed 12-18 months to implement standard 20, which refers to a Welsh language version of our online registration system. We explained that we are in the process of procuring a new IT database system and only once we have implemented this system, would we be able to address this standard.
7. On 6 June 2023 we received our final compliance notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner. The notice provides 6 December 2023 as the deadline for implementation for all standards, excluding standard 20 for which the deadline is 6 December 2024.
8. From our conversations with other regulators, we know the response we received from the Commissioner regarding our requests for extensions for standards 2 and 6 aligns with their experience, as they have also seen some of their requests for extensions or amendments denied.
9. Staff members from each team have been tasked with reviewing the standards and supporting the implementation of these standards across the organisation.
10. We have been attending regular meetings with other healthcare professional regulators, including the General Medical Council, General Dental Council and General Chiropractic

Council, to discuss the Welsh Language Standards. We have been able to draw support and guidance from these meetings, specifically on issues such as options available for translation services to help us comply with the standards.

11. The Welsh Language Standards cover five 'schedules':

- a. Service delivery standards
- b. Policy making standards
- c. Operational standards
- d. Record keeping standards
- e. Standards that deal with supplementary matters

12. The Standards cover:

- a. If a social media post relates exclusively to Wales, then it must also be published in Welsh.
- b. If a correspondence is sent to several individuals (meaning those acting in their capacity as a resident of Wales, including students) it must also be sent in Welsh.
- c. A Welsh speaking registrant may engage with an organisation using the Welsh language, including for communications that are part of our fitness to practise processes.
- d. A Welsh speaking graduate and registrant may complete an online registration process using the Welsh language.
- e. Assessing the Welsh Language competency of staff, with a plan for improving the capacity of Welsh speakers in the future.
- f. Opportunities for employees to receive Welsh language lessons, which are available free of charge either in-person or virtually.
- g. When forming or revising policies, including as part of a consultation, the impact those policies may have on an individual's ability to use the Welsh language must be considered.

13. Regulations around appointments do not apply to Council/Governance appointments.

Overview of registrants in Wales and action under the GOsC Welsh language scheme in 2022-23

14. As at 4 July 2023, there are 158 GOsC registrants practising in Wales.
15. Currently, osteopaths have access to two Wales-based regional groups, one in north/mid-Wales and the other located in the south Wales/Cardiff area. An osteopathy training course is provided by Swansea University.
16. There is some web content in Welsh in the Cymraeg section of the main GOsC website. 4.5% of our web pages are in Welsh – a slight decrease since the previous year as the English section of our website has grown. The Cymraeg section overall had 145 page views this year, which is a 34% increase on the page views for the section last year.
17. Materials available in Welsh for the public and for osteopaths to use in their practice include:
 - The public information leaflets 'What to expect from your osteopath' and 'Standards of osteopathic care'
 - Witness guidance
 - Remote hearings guidance
 - A leaflet published jointly by the health and social care regulators 'Who regulates health and social care professionals?'
 - The Osteopathic Practice Standards (Updated version)
 - The GOsC Registration Marks
 - The 'I'm registered' and 'We're registered' posters
 - The GOsC complaints leaflets
 - Graduate Outcomes and Standards for Education and Training
 - Shared decision making resources: Visiting an osteopath leaflet/poster, practitioner reflection form, patient history form, patient goal planner
 - Patient Involvement Forum poster
18. In the past year, we issued six Registration Marks in Welsh. We also publish information in Welsh and English about resources that are available in Welsh (osteopathy.org.uk/welsh-resources). This information is available on our website and is promoted to osteopaths in Wales.
19. Osteopathic practices can state on the Register that Welsh is spoken in the practice. There are now 27 practices displaying this information. There were 34 practices displaying this information last year. The reduction represents osteopaths leaving the Register.

Recommendation: To consider the 2022-23 Annual Report on the GOsC Welsh Language Scheme and the anticipated changes in Welsh language requirements.

Annex to 14

General Osteopathic Council

Welsh Language Scheme Annual Monitoring Report 2022-23

QD indicates that the Welsh Language Commissioner requires quantitative data.

Policy impact assessment	
Number and percentage of policies (including those that were reviewed or revised) where consideration was given to the effects the policy would have on the use of the Welsh language. 1, 12.5%	QD
Example of an assessment deemed to have an impact on the use of the Welsh language and details of how the policy was amended as a result 0	
Publications	
Number of publications available to the public 14	QD
Number of publications available to the public in Welsh 14	QD
We also have Welsh versions of the Registration Marks for osteopaths to use to show the public and patients that they are registered. In the past year we issued 6 Welsh Registration Marks.	
Complaints	
Number of all complaints received about the conduct of practitioners in Wales 3	QD
Number of complaints received in Welsh about the conduct of practitioners in Wales 0	QD
Number of complaints received related to the Council's compliance with its Welsh language scheme 0	QD

<p>Website</p> <p>Percentage of the organisation’s website that is available in Welsh 4.5%</p> <p>Evidence relating to any plans to improve or increase the Welsh Language provision on the website As part of the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards we plan to improve the Welsh Language provision on our website, especially in reference to standards 20, 22, 33, and 34.</p> <p>Evidence relating to the process used to ensure that existing content, updates and new content, complies with the requirements of the Welsh language scheme (if the process is different to that reported in 2019-20) No change in process.</p>	<p>QD</p>
<p>Promotion of Welsh language services</p> <p>Information about methods used to promote the organisation’s Welsh language services and evidence of any subsequent increase in the public’s use of the services. We have a page on our website which details the Welsh Language Scheme: https://www.osteopathy.org.uk/about-us/our-work/welsh-language-scheme/ This page includes a link to a document that lists the Welsh language services we provide. In 2022-23 this page was viewed 14 times.</p> <p>We have no evidence of any subsequent increase in the public’s use of our Welsh language services during 2022-23.</p> <p>Our Register provides the functionality to search for osteopathic practices where Welsh is spoken. There are now 27 practices displaying this information.</p> <p>In 2022-23 we promoted some of our Welsh language materials and publications using our monthly email bulletin sent to osteopaths, final and penultimate year students, and our social media platforms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email bulletin: We promoted our Welsh services or publications 4 times. • Social media (Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook): We promoted our Welsh services or publications 2 times. <p>Information about methods used to assess the quality of the organisation’s Welsh language services (e.g. by assessing the experience of existing/potential service users)</p>	

Annex to 14

<p>We haven't received any complaints about our Welsh language services.</p>	
<p>Fitness to practise cases</p> <p>Number of hearings held in Wales 0</p> <p>Number of hearings where a request was made by the witness to speak Welsh 0</p> <p>Number of hearings in which evidence was presented in Welsh 0</p>	<p>QD</p> <p>QD</p> <p>QD</p>
<p>Language awareness training</p> <p>Number and percentage of the organisation's new staff (i.e. new since 1 April 2022) that received Welsh language awareness training. 4, 100% - The organisation appointed one new permanent member of staff during the reporting window.</p> <p>Number and percentage of the organisation's entire workforce that has received Welsh language awareness training since the training was introduced 27, 100%</p>	<p>QD</p> <p>QD</p>
<p>Details of the arrangements and procedures the organisation has adopted to enable it to self-regulate effectively.</p> <p>We actively monitor usage of all our information and resources, including our Welsh language content, to give us an understanding of current take-up and to inform any future developments to the information available on our website.</p> <p>We also actively monitor any suggestions/complaints put forward to us to help identify a need and where it can be addressed in our resource provision.</p>	