

CYPE(5)-19-20 - Paper to note 1

Vaughan Gething AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: MA/VG/2019/20

Lynne Neagle MS
Chair, Children, Young People and Education
Committee Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

13 July 2020

Dear Lynne,

During my attendance at committee on 5 May 2020, I confirmed that the Welsh Government had commissioned the NHS Delivery Unit (DU) to lead on a rapid review of unexpected youth deaths during the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in Wales from January to May 2020. I agreed to write to the Committee once the report had been received and there had been an opportunity to consider its conclusions.

To inform the DU review, a further Child Death Review (CDR) was undertaken by the CDR team and Professor Ann John of Swansea University. This concluded that its findings from the recent deaths of under 18s by possible suicide in 2020, were similar to those identified in the [Thematic Review of Deaths of Children and Young People through probable suicide 2013-2017](#).

Between January 2020 and May 2020, the CDR identified a small number of possible suicide deaths among under 18s. The review team believed the exercise was an accurate reflection of all possible and probable suicides among under 18s. Whilst the actual number is similar to the total for a complete 12 month period for possible and probable suicides, they concluded it remains too soon to tell whether this represents an increase of statistical significance. However, it is, of course, a signal of a potential issue and one that we must explore and monitor carefully.

Between January and May 2020 a similar small number of probable suicides were identified among those people aged 18-25. The review concluded that further analysis with local services is required to attain greater confidence in the probable suicide deaths among this age group within this period. Health Boards have confirmed that they will participate in this more detailed analysis over the next few months and I have asked for this to be undertaken.

The Delivery Unit review has provided a number of further recommendations for action. These include continuing to monitor the situation for young people as we go through the pandemic period and improving data collection, particularly for those unexpected deaths within the 18-25 age group.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

In response to these findings, I have instructed detailed monitoring of the situation to continue, at least through to the end of 2020. I will provide a further update at an appropriate time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'V' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'g'.

Vaughan Gething AS/MS

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