

**Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb hwn i ymgynghoriad y [Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg](#) ar [Flaenoriaethau'r Chweched Senedd](#)**

**This response was submitted to the [Children, Young People and Education Committee](#) consultation on [Sixth Senedd Priorities](#)**

**CYPE SP 18**

**Ymateb gan: Nesta Lloyd-Jones, Cyfarwyddwr Cynorthwyol, Confederasiwn GIG Cymru**

**Response from: Nesta Lloyd-Jones, Assistant Director, Welsh NHS Confederation**

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Beth yn eich barn chi yw'r prif flaenoriaethau neu'r materion y dylai'r Pwyllgor eu hystyried yn ystod y Chweched Senedd? Os oes modd, nodwch eich barn o ran sut y gallai'r Pwyllgor fynd i'r afael â hyn.

What do you consider to be the main priorities or issues that the Committee should consider during the Sixth Senedd? Where possible, please set out your view about how the Committee could address them.

**Thema 1: Addysg oedran ysgol | Theme 1: School-age education**

**Thema 2: Addysg bellach ac addysg uwch | Theme 2: Further and higher education**

We would recommend the Committee continues the work of the Fifth Senedd's Children, Young People and Education Committee and explore the ongoing impact of the pandemic on higher and further education.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a substantial impact on the sector and on students themselves, as evidenced during the predecessor Committee's inquiry into the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on children and young people in Wales. It is important to understand the HE/FE sector's current situation and what more can be done to help it recover.

Excellent care and a sustainable health and care workforce in the future depends on high-quality education and training provision. Providing high-quality apprenticeships, undergraduate education and postgraduate training should remain a priority. Ensuring the sector can deliver this education is crucial in providing a



sustainable health and care workforce which can meet the future needs of the people of Wales.

### **Thema 3: Iechyd a lles, gan gynnwys gofal cymdeithasol (i'r graddau y maent yn ymwneud â phlant a phobl ifanc) | Theme 3: Health and well-being, including social care (as they relate to children and young people)**

#### Impact of the pandemic

We recommend that one of the priorities for the Committee should be to again consider the impact the pandemic has had on children and young people. As Unicef recently highlighted "Children are not the face of this pandemic. But they risk being among its biggest victims, as children's lives are nonetheless being changed in profound ways. All children, of all ages, and in all countries, are being affected, in particular by the socio-economic impacts and, in some cases, by mitigation measures that may inadvertently do more harm than good".

While the Committee in the Fifth Senedd considered the impact of COVID-19 on children and young people in 2020, there is more research being published which evidences the significant legacy that the pandemic will have on children and young people's lives.

We would recommend engagement with the Health and Social Care Committee to understand the impact on health and care services due to the pandemic and consider any barriers to access across children and adult services. This would allow for inquiries which range across the entire breadth of health, including mental health, provision.

A focus should be placed on low level and early interventions to help children and young people support their wellbeing. The Welsh NHS Confederation and the Arts Council of Wales, as part of our Memorandum of Understanding, has brought together examples of how the arts are playing an important role in helping people deal with the challenges faced during the pandemic.

#### Health inequalities

We are calling for an inquiry across all Senedd Committees on tackling wider health inequalities in Wales. Health inequality is the result of many and varied factors. While COVID-19 has revealed and exacerbated pre-existing health inequalities, there have been many detailed and well-evidenced reports on health inequalities in recent years. In just the past year, many reports have called for system-wide action on health inequalities including the Welsh Health Equity Status Report initiative, Placing health equity at the heart of the COVID-19 sustainable response and recovery (Public Health Wales and Welsh Government), The Marmot Review 10 Years On (Institute of Health Equity and the Health Foundation) and the most recent Unequal pandemic,



fairer recovery (the Health Foundation). Every one of these reaffirms the need for coherent, coordinated activity across all delivery partners and in COVID-19 recovery, there is an opportunity to create a healthier, more resilient society, by addressing the root causes of poor health and invest in people and their communities – their jobs, housing, education and communities.

Health inequalities arise as a result of the social and economic inequalities that shape the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, learn, work and age. For too long, we have looked to the health service to address these challenges in isolation, but the NHS alone simply doesn't have the levers to make the changes we know are vital to creating the conditions necessary for good health and wellbeing. Meaningful progress will require coherent, strategic efforts across all sectors – using their available resources, expertise and relationships – to close the gap. It will also be important that we are able to understand and measure our collective progress to ensure that we achieve the outcomes that matter most.

In April 2021, the Welsh NHS Confederation's Health and Wellbeing Alliance published a short paper, Making the difference: Tackling health inequalities in Wales. In this paper, we suggest initial steps that the new Welsh Government should take in their first year to respond urgently to health inequalities and make the greatest possible impact by coordinating renewed commitment from all partners.

Through having a cross-Committee Senedd inquiry it will enable all Committees to consider what action each Welsh Government department is doing to tackle the root causes of health inequalities.

#### Young Unpaid Carers

We recommend the Committee work with the Health and Social Care Committee on an inquiry into unpaid carers, focusing on the impact of COVID-19 on young carers and support they require.

Respite care, information and support services are key to unpaid carers maintaining their own health and wellbeing and ensuring they have an equal opportunity to stay well and active alongside their caring responsibilities. Access to these services is just as important for the person being cared for as they can be negatively impacted by a deterioration in a carer's health. The result of this could be greater demand on unplanned and emergency NHS and social care services. NHS services are well-placed to support Local Authorities to provide high quality and accessible information and advice to unpaid carers.

## **Thema 4: Plant a phobl Ifanc | Theme 4: Children and young people**

