

**Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc  
ac Addysg**

**Children, Young People  
and Education Committee**

Eluned Morgan MS,  
Minister for Health and Social Services  
Julie Morgan MS,  
Deputy Minister for Social Services  
Lynne Neagle MS  
Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing

Dyddiad | Date 27 October

Pwnc | Subject: Follow up from 7 October evidence session

Dear Eluned, Julie and Lynne

Thank you for giving evidence to the Committee on 7 October. Following this session, we agreed to write to seek further information on some areas. I've also outlined the information you agreed to provide during the session.

**Child Health Strategy**

During the evidence session, when asked whether there were any plans to publish a Child Health Strategy, the Minister for Health and Social Services stated that this was "unlikely" partly because "once you start down that route we'll be having them for everything." We are not convinced by this argument. As the health needs of children and young people can be quite distinct from adults we believe there is a clear argument for a Child Health Strategy. Not having a child health plan makes scrutiny of the Welsh Government more challenging for the Senedd, stakeholders and the public.

We have considered your response to us within the context of Welsh Ministers' duties to give 'due regard' to Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It refers to the right of children 'to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health'.

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We therefore believe the Welsh Government should reconsider its decision on a child health plan. We ask that you provide us with a copy of the Child Right's Impact Assessment on this decision. This will enable us to further consider whether the lack of a child-specific plan complies with your duties under section 1 of the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011.

### **Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales**

The implementation of commitments set out in the Healthy Weight Healthy Wales delivery plan were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which meant delays in achieving the 2020 deliverables. During the session, the Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing said that there will be a "renewed focus" on this programme. Can you confirm that the programme is back on track and that the proposals set out in the revised delivery plan for 2021-22, and beyond, will be achieved?

### **Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Inpatient Service (Mother and Baby Unit)**

While we welcome the opening of the interim Mother and Baby Unit 'Uned Gobaith' in Swansea Bay University Health Board, we are aware that this is still only 'an interim solution'. Can you provide clarity on the plans for a more permanent unit? We are also very concerned that women and babies in North Wales still need to travel significant distances to access specialist inpatient support. We note the statement from the Deputy Minister that work is continuing to ensure that provision is made available for mothers who live in North Wales. Can you provide us with more details on the options and timeframe for this?

### **Care leavers**

Can the Deputy Minister for Social Services provide more information on the oral evidence provided to us about discussions she has had with the Minister for Climate Change on ensuring there is adequate and sustainable accommodation for young people leaving care?

### **Youth Justice**

During the session, we asked about the discussions with the UK Government about youth justice. It was disappointing that the response was this was primarily an area for the Minister for Social Justice when this should be a shared responsibility across Ministerial portfolios. We think that it is important that there is a cross-government approach to this issue in line with the principles of the Youth Justice Blueprint and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, particularly as:

- it is an area where many devolved public services play vital and dovetailing roles, and
- the children and young people who have contact with the youth justice system can be some of the most vulnerable in society, and are therefore disproportionately exposed to a range of other disadvantages that fall within your and many other ministers' portfolios.

## Mental Health budgets

During the evidence session, the Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing said there would be “different approach to budget planning” this year. Can you clarify if this will lead to changes in how the spending on services mental health services for children and young people is presented in the budget?

## Ty Lliard

Due to the on-going concerns about the Unit, we would like to ask for regular updates on any issues at the Unit, and the actions being taken to address these issues.

## Additional information you agreed to provide

During the meeting you agreed to provide the Committee with the following:

- The individual Health Board ‘deep dive’ reports that the Essential Services Steering Group has undertaken into specific areas to identify the extent to which essential services had been maintained during the pandemic;
- a note including data on take up of the range of vaccination programmes for children and young people; and
- provide further detail on the progress being made to improve children’s health across a range of public health issues, including childhood obesity, preventative dental health, smoking in young people, physical fitness and illegal drug use.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Jayne Bryant MS

Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.