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23 November 2021

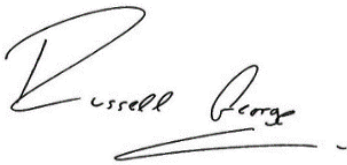
Dear Alexandra and Sue

Follow up questions after evidence session on 4 November 2021 on *A healthier Wales: our workforce strategy for health and social care*

Thank you for attending our meeting on Thursday 4 November 2021 and responding to our questions. Following the session, Members agreed to write to you with a number of follow up questions, as outlined in the annex to this letter.

We would be grateful for a response by **Thursday 16 December**.

Yours sincerely



Russell George MS
Chair, Health and Social Care Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg. We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Annex: follow up questions after evidence session on 4 November 2021

Following the evidence session with Health Education and Improvement Wales ("HEIW") and Social Care Wales ("SCW") on 4 November 2021, we would welcome further information on the matters listed below. We would be grateful to receive your response by Thursday 16 December.

Education and training

1. We discussed with you the impact of the pandemic on clinical placements and the ability of healthcare students to gain sufficient skills in clinical practice. Where access to clinical placements may have been restricted by the pandemic, for example in respect of dentistry, do we have assurance that newly-qualified practitioners have been able to gain the skills and experience to practice safely?
2. What are your views on the role of non-medical prescribing, for example by pharmacists or allied health professionals, and what plans do you have in place to support this?
3. How will the workforce strategy or the associated implementation plans support the development of extended skills and advanced practice roles across professional groups, and ensure that health and care professionals are able to work at the 'top of their licence'?

Digital training and preparedness

4. During the session we discussed with you the strategy theme of 'Building a digitally ready workforce'. Please provide further details of what assessments have been made of the additional investment in training (financial and staff time) that may be required to ensure that the health and social care workforce is prepared and able to adopt new technologies and harness innovation.

Equality and inclusion

5. How does the workforce strategy and associated implementation planning take adequate account of the whole workforce across health and social care, including not just frontline practitioners but also ancillary staff and managers?
6. Evidence from the General Medical Council highlights that the exam pass rate for BAME trainees is 15 per cent lower than for white trainees across all medical specialties in Wales. Please outline what role HEIW and SCW have in tackling barriers experienced by students from ethnic minority backgrounds, and in particular what action is being taken to understand and address the attainment gap.
7. During the session you mentioned that there were gaps in the equality and diversity monitoring data that you hold on the health and social care workforce, for example in

respect of ethnic background and disability status. You acknowledged that there was a need to “push on completion of data so that we’ve got more accurate numbers”. Please outline what actions will be taken to improve the completeness and robustness of this data.

8. Please outline how the strategy, and associated implementation plans, recognise and will address the lack of diversity in some areas, for example social work, especially in senior management positions.

Welsh language and bilingual services

9. What processes are in place across health and care services to identify where Welsh language skills gaps are, and ensure that this information is systematically available to HEIW and SCW?
10. During the session, we discussed with you the availability of bilingual and Welsh medium nursing training and social work NVQs, including placements. Please provide details of the number of such training places and their distribution across Wales. We would also welcome information on the uptake of these training places, and how the level of demand for Welsh medium/bilingual training places is assessed.
11. Some stakeholders have raised concerns that the funding of care does not take into account the cost of providing bilingual or Welsh language services, including increasing Welsh language skills in the workforce. What are your views on how this should be addressed?

Data

12. In your evidence paper you refer to a new data collection system for social care that gathers data from statutory, private and voluntary providers. Please outline how the system will take account of the contribution of unpaid carers.

Other issues

During the session, you agreed to share the following with the Committee:

13. A briefing paper on the We Care recruitment campaign.
14. Details of the national resources made available through the strategy to support health and social care staff wellbeing.