

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

13 October 2021

Dear Ministers

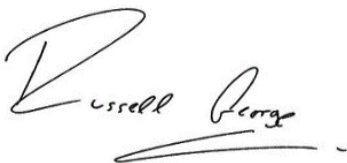
**Follow up questions after general scrutiny session on 23 September 2021**

Thank you for attending our meeting on Thursday 23 September and responding to our questions.

Following the evidence session, Members agreed write to you with follow-up questions on the issues outlined in the annex to this letter.

We would be grateful for a response by Friday 5 November.

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 general scrutiny session on 23 September 2021

Following the [general scrutiny session with the Minister for Health and Social Services, the Deputy Minister for Social Services and the Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing](#) on 23 September 2021, we would welcome further information on the matters listed below. We would be grateful to receive your response by Friday 5 November.

### Winter preparation plans

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1. During the evidence session, Dr Andrew Goodall informed us that whilst all local health boards have winter preparation plans in place, Welsh Government were "*having to challenge some of those plans*". The First Minister confirmed in a Written Statement on 8 October that the Welsh Government's winter plan for the NHS will be published later this month. Could you confirm when all local health boards will have robust winter plans in place, how you will ensure that there is a sufficiently joined-up approach to winter planning across Wales, and what further assurance the Welsh Government can provide that the health and care system in Wales is prepared for the coming winter.

### Increasing National Insurance contributions and energy costs

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2. How are the planned rise in employer National Insurance contributions and increasing energy costs being taken into account in financial planning by the Welsh Government and the NHS in Wales? Do you anticipate any impact on the funding available for service delivery?

### Ministerial responsibilities

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3. We are grateful for the information you provided during the evidence session on the high level division of responsibilities between you and your Deputy Ministers, and the confirmation that you will be working closely together where your responsibilities overlap. However, we note that this information is not currently reflected in the information on the [Welsh Government's website](#), which lists the same portfolio responsibilities for each of you. We would therefore appreciate further clarification from you on this point.

### Public health and preventative activity

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4. In response to a question from Mike Hedges about urgent and emergency care you stated that you would be "*putting a lot more effort into public health in the next few years.*" Can you please provide further detail about the focus Welsh Government will be giving to public health and prevention, and how this will be demonstrated in the forthcoming draft budget.

## Hospital discharge

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5. In response to my question on capacity, you said there were *"1,000 people in hospital beds at the moment who are ready for discharge, and there is no capacity within the care system to absorb them."* Can you please provide details of any specific action the Welsh Government is taking to improve timely and appropriate hospital discharge.

## Other matters

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Additionally, during the meeting, the Deputy Ministers and senior officials agreed to provide further information on the following points:

6. How any social care needs of people who have or are recovering from long COVID are being considered, assessed and met by local health boards and regional partnership boards.
7. Data on the proportion of GP consultations held face to face and remotely, including any variance between health boards and between practices across Wales.
8. Details on the number of children, young people and adults accessing primary and specialist mental health services, and waiting times for assessment and therapeutic intervention.
9. Confirmation of whether any local authority in Wales is currently spending less than its standard spending assessment on social care.