

Jane Hutt AS/MS
Gweinidog Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol a'r Prif Chwip
Minister for Social Justice and Chief Whip



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Jenny Rathbone MS
Chair, Equality and Social Justice
Committee

16 June 2023

Dear Jenny,

Following the Committee's inquiry into women's experiences in the Criminal Justice System, I am writing to you to provide an update on recent progress which has been made regarding access to alternative Opioid Substitution Therapy (Buvidal) in HMP Styal and HMP Eastwood Park.

The Welsh Government supported the national implementation of Buvidal in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and this support also extends to the Criminal Justice System here in Wales. Buvidal is a slow-release injectable form of buprenorphine (seven day and one month), replacing the need for daily supervised consumption. Wales was the first UK nation to implement this treatment option and now over 1,400 service users across Wales are benefitting from this.

As Buvidal is not commonly available within the English treatment system, we are also financially supporting Welsh women who serve custodial sentences in England, until such time as NHS England make this treatment available.

Following discussions with health teams in both HMP Styal and HMP Eastwood Park, I am pleased to confirm we have recently issued grant letters to both establishments to provide funding for Welsh women to access Buvidal. This means there is no longer a barrier for Welsh women, serving sentences in either establishment, accessing Buvidal in the same way as men serving sentences in Wales.

It is exceptional for Welsh Government to fund healthcare in England and this funding further supports our commitment to ensure women who are serving custodial sentences are being given access to the help and support they need. This financial support will allow ongoing treatment to be given until NHS England, who have responsibility for treatment in these settings, fund Buvidal.

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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.

Once again, I would like to thank the Committee for their ongoing support, recognising the importance of ensuring that Welsh women who find themselves involved with the Criminal Justice System are able to access the support they require.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Hutt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke above the first letter of "Jane".

Jane Hutt AS/MS
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