

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

03 October 2023

Dear Ministers

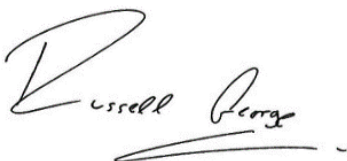
## Welsh Government Draft Budget 2024-25

In line with our usual practice, I am writing in advance of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2024-25 to request written information to inform our scrutiny.

We note the Welsh Government's intention to publish the Draft Budget on Tuesday 19 December 2023, and will be inviting you to attend an oral evidence session early in the new year. The clerk will liaise with your offices about dates.

To assist in our scrutiny, I would be grateful to receive your response to the issues outlined in the annex to this letter, and any other written information you would like to provide, by **20 December 2023**.

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: request for information from the Welsh Government to inform scrutiny of the Draft Budget 2024-25

## Prioritisation

---

1. Details of the approach taken by Welsh Government to prioritise areas of spending – across the whole budget and within health and social care, and to ‘target resources towards those at greatest need’ (in light of the ‘significant budgetary pressures’ announced by the Welsh Government in August 2023).

## Waiting times

---

2. Allocations to recover the waiting times backlog and provide treatments delayed by the pandemic.

## Mental health

---

3. A breakdown of allocations to improve mental health and wellbeing in Wales, including allocations to:
  - support implementation of the Welsh Government’s new mental health strategy;
  - improve access to mental health services and outcomes for both adults and children and young people;
  - implement the Committee’s recommendations on tackling mental health inequalities.

## Workforce

---

4. Allocations to support implementation of the 10-year strategy for the health and social care workforce and the national workforce implementation plan, including specific reference to retention and improvement of staff wellbeing.

## Primary care

---

5. How the budget will support delivery of the Welsh Government’s commitment to reform primary care, and the shift of more care out of hospitals into primary care/community settings.

## Service transformation

---

6. How this budget will balance the need to meet immediate/short-term pressures (e.g. the waiting times backlog, workforce shortages) with longer-term service transformation.

## Prevention

---

7. Whether the budget demonstrates a greater focus on prevention i.e. by showing a clear shift of resources towards prevention/early intervention. (The Welsh NHS Confederation, for example, says that without this shift the NHS is not sustainable)

## Estates and infrastructure

---

8. Capital and revenue allocations to develop, improve, and maintain NHS estates and infrastructure, including digital infrastructure.

## Health inequalities

---

9. Evidence of a cross-government approach to tackling inequalities and the wider determinants of health, and that 'population health' is a consideration across government department budgets.
10. How the impact of funding allocations on different groups/communities has been taken into account during the development of the budget proposals.

## Assessing impact/value for money

---

11. The mechanisms in place (within the health and care system and at Welsh Government level) to assess whether spending by health boards/trusts and local authorities is achieving its aims and delivering value for money. What/where does the Welsh Government consider are the main challenges in assessing outcomes/value for money.

## Health boards' financial performance

---

12. An update on the overall financial performance of health boards, including:
  - projected end of year financial position for health boards, and which have continued to fail to meet their financial duties;
  - which health boards have received additional end of year and in-year financial support, the extent of that support and the planned duration;
  - details of how the Welsh Government will support and work with health boards to bring NHS Wales back into financial balance.

## Social care

---

13. Planned allocation for social care, including:
  - Any additional funding identified for 2024-25, and how such funding will be targeted.

- How the allocations will help to ensure the ongoing viability and stability of social care services, including residential and domiciliary care.
- What support the draft budget will provide for unpaid carers, including evidence of any new support schemes and specific spend on respite care and financial support for carers.
- Measures in the draft budget that will improve the sustainability of the social care workforce, particularly domiciliary care staff shortages.
- How the draft budget will help the social care sector to respond to the increased cost of living, including specific spend to support domiciliary care workers, and unpaid carers and disabled people, and their families.
- Details of planned spend on the National Office of Care and Support including staff costs.