

Lynne Neagle AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Iechyd Meddwl a Llesiant
Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref
Russell George MS
Chair
Health and Social Services Committee

Cc:
Equality and Social Justice Committee
Children, Young People and Education Committee
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee

07 February 2024

Dear Russell,

During my appearance at the Health and Social Services Committee on the 17th January, I agreed to supply details of the Welsh Government's substance misuse funding.

This has been the most challenging budget since devolution but I have prioritised our substance misuse investment to vital frontline services to ensure some of the most vulnerable people in our society continue to have access to services and support. However, this has required some difficult decisions.

In spite of the challenging budget, I have continued to protect our substance misuse funding and this has now, overall, risen to just over £67m. Substance Misuse Action Funding (SMAF) is provided directly to our Area Planning Boards (APBs) and this will rise by £2m in 2024/25 to £41m. This £2m increase in our funding will be allocated to the ring-fenced allocations for children and young people and complex needs funding both increasing by £1m, to £6.25m and £4.5m respectively. In addition, within the £41m we will continue to support the highly successful use of injectable buprenorphine (Buvidal) with £3m, over half of which supports criminal justice prescribers in the community. Health Boards receive funding for their substance misuse treatment services through their allocation letters and this will increase by £812k to just over £22.9m in 2024-25. Details of these funding decisions are at Annex A.

The committee asked for details of any support we provide for Brynawel. We do not fund Brynawel directly from Welsh Government with any revenue funding as placements are

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Lynne.Neagle@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Lynne.Neagle@gov.wales

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.

funded either by local authorities or through the ring fenced £2m for residential treatment provided to APBs. Placements are made, led by service user choice, through our Rehab Cymru framework. However, I'm pleased to say that in February 2023 we awarded Brynawel £795,000 of capital funding for the expansion of their service through the purchase and refurbishment of a neighbouring property.

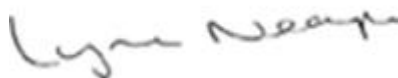
In addition to our funding for substance misuse services, we also continue to support our Out of Work Peer Mentoring Service. The service helps people recovering from substance misuse and/or mental ill-health through peer support and will be funded with £5.4million in 2024-25. The service aims to support up to 10,000 people including 3,000 young people across Wales between its start in October 2022 and March 2025. This service is a successor to the previous European funded service between 2016-2022.

I referred to the Wales Police Schools Programme (WPSP) at Committee. The programme is currently funded through the substance misuse budget but faced with potential cuts to frontline services I have decided to prioritise our substance misuse investment to ensure access to vital services and support. Therefore, I have had to withdraw the Welsh Government's funding contribution of £1.98m per financial year to the programme from the 31st March this year. The landscape around wellbeing for learners on a range of important issues has changed significantly since the introduction of the programme. Many areas are now subject matter that would be considered in mandatory health and well-being learning in Welsh schools. Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) covers a number of areas, including substance misuse, online safety and domestic violence. There are further plans to develop more resources for schools to inform learning about a range of health and wellbeing issues and my officials are working with colleagues in education to maximise learning from the programme

My officials will continue to work with the Police to work through the implications of the withdrawal of the Welsh Government's match funding for the programme. The Welsh Government will continue our close relationship with the four Police and Crime Commissioners and forces in Wales and they are valued partners.

I am copying in the chairs of the Equality and Social Justice Committee, Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee and the Children, Young People and Education Committee.

Yours sincerely



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Annex A.

	2023-24	2024-25	Change
Substance Misuse Action Fund	£39.063m	£41.063m	+£2m
Wales Police Schools Programme	£1.980m	£0	-£1.980m
Drug & Alcohol*	£1.542m	£1.022m	-£520k
Capital	£2.5m	£2.5m	£0
Health Board ring fence	£22.102m	£22.912m	+£812k
Overall total	£67.187m	£67.497m	+£312k

*The Drug and Alcohol Budget supports key central services and activity. These include Public Health Wales, WEDINOS, Naloxone and evaluations of both MUP and Buvidal.