

Jane Hutt AS/MS
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Ddiwylliant a Chyfiawnder
Cymdeithasol, y Trefnydd a'r Prif Chwip
Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice, Trefnydd and
Chief Whip



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Jenny Rathbone MS
Chair
Equality and Social Justice Committee
Welsh Parliament

SeneddEquality@senedd.wales

30 August 2024

Dear Jenny

Thank you for your letter of 2 July in response to the letter of 30 May from my predecessor, to which her response supported the position I had provided to the Committee in earlier correspondence. I, the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care and the Cabinet Secretary for Education continue to value how the Committee has championed the importance of this issue.

Our position remains as set out in the initial response to the Committee's report and in our correspondence since. There are only around 800 registered SLTs in Wales and NHS speech and language therapy (SLT) services face high demand. There are already successful case studies where Youth Justice Services (YJS) have established service level agreements with health boards and commission additional SLT provision to be embedded in YJS.

In that context, I advised in my letter of 29 February 2024 the main focus of the summit held on 24 January was to consider some options that could be delivered within that current resource envelope. Attendees discussed the barriers and opportunities for making better use of the resources and tools available and identified a range of possible areas for action. As requested, I attach the note of the summit, which provides more detail on the conversation and suggested next steps.

As set out in my predecessor's letter of 30 May, in terms of next steps from the summit, we are now encouraging local Youth Justice Services to discuss the options at their disposal with their respective Local Health Boards, utilising resources like the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists' 'The Box' training. 'The Box' is designed to give professionals in the justice system the ability to identify communication issues, the skills to work successfully with young people who have SLC needs, and how to recognise when they may need to refer for specialist support from SLTs.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

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

Gohebiaeth.Jane.Hutt@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Jane.Hutt@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.

Following the summit, which brought professionals together across the health and justice spheres, we are encouraging teams to work together locally to meet the needs of the children they work with, using the relationships built and resources highlighted in the summit to achieve this.

To further build on the learning from the summit and to address the action to consider the Welsh Government's approach to SLC provision more broadly, officials in the Education portfolio are arranging a sharing learning event which will bring together Welsh Government colleagues from areas like education, healthcare, youth work and children and families to share practice and consider the approach being taken across government portfolios.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

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

Jane Hutt AS/MS

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