

Sarah Murphy AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Iechyd Meddwl a Llesiant
Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref Petition P-06-1220 and P-06-1242
Ein cyf/Our ref SM/00192/25

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair
Petitions Committee

petitions@senedd.wales

25 March 2025

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your letter of 5 February about **Petition P-06-1220 Increase funding available for Women's Health Services, Education and Awareness** and **Petition P-06-1242 Improve Endometriosis Healthcare in Wales**. I am replying as I have Ministerial responsibility for women's health.

Improving women's health is a priority for the Welsh Government. The [Quality Statement for Women's and Girl's Health](#), which sets out what women can expect from health services was published in July 2022. Wales' first *Women's Health Plan*, which was informed by the experiences of almost 4,000 women across Wales, was subsequently published on 10 December 2024 and is available at: [The Women's Health Plan for Wales - NHS Wales Executive](#)

The Quality Statement for Women's and Girls' health makes it clear health board services must reflect women's needs across a wide range of conditions, not just gynaecological conditions.

The Women's Health Plan has been developed by the National Strategic Clinical Network for Women's Health, led by Wales' first clinical lead for women's health. It is an ambitious 10-year plan which will drive real improvements in women's health and outcomes, through a series of short, medium and long-term actions. The short-term actions focus on awareness raising and education of both women and practitioners delivering care.

Women's symptoms and clinical presentations of cardiac disorders, asthma, incontinence, and mental health conditions are often different to men's, and their care must respond accordingly by recognising these patterns, and offer women diagnosis and treatment

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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.

according to their specific needs, through a model of service delivery that is gender and culturally competent.

The Women's Health Network has an important role to play in this by advocating for women. This will include working with the other clinical networks to ensure women's needs are considered; their voices heard, and their experiences are recognised.

An additional £3m has been allocated to support the delivery of the actions in the Women's Health Plan, with a particular focus on the establishment of pathfinder women's health hubs in each health board by March 2026.

Women make up half of the population, yet historically they have been disadvantaged by a lack of research and data about conditions specific to them. The previous Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care set out our approach to increasing funding for research for women's health. This included a women's health research prioritisation exercise that has sought the views of those with lived experience and health and social care professionals on the issues that matter most to them. The findings from this exercise will inform a focused call for research on communication around women's health to be launched in April, committing £750,000 to women's health projects.

In addition, just over £3m has been secured for a new women's health research centre in Wales, as part of a wider £49m funding package announced by Health and Care Research Wales. It will provide vital evidence to improve healthcare for women in Wales and will be led by Cardiff University working with Swansea University, Bangor University and the University of South Wales.

This funding represents a significant commitment to address health inequalities and shape future services for women, as set out in the Women's Health Plan for Wales.

With regards to improving endometriosis healthcare in Wales, we understand the difficulties faced by women living with this chronic condition. Endometriosis and adenomyosis is one of the eight priority areas in the Women's Health Plan. For this priority area, there are seven clearly defined actions. These will lead to improvements in the experience of women accessing information, treatment and support for endometriosis across Wales.

The actions will make improvements in a range of key areas, including raising awareness of the condition and improving information available for patients. Providing training and education for healthcare practitioners to ensure it is understood as a chronic condition. Establishing robust monitoring frameworks and data collection to help understand the need and capacity in each health board.

With regards to your specific query relating to tertiary endometriosis care, where more complex endometriosis treatment is required, referrals are made from health boards to an accredited endometriosis centre. There are currently two in South Wales – in Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and Swansea Bay University Health Board. Although these are accredited centres, they are not commissioned as a specialist service. We recognise the difficulties women face in accessing specialist services for women's health conditions, particularly tertiary care for endometriosis. Welsh Government officials will be working with the Women's Health Network and the Joint Commissioning Committee to explore establishing commissioned specialist services in this area.

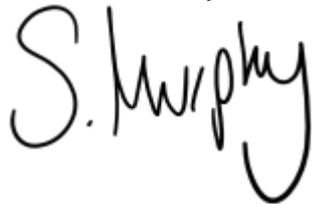
Reducing long waiting times is a national priority and £50m has been committed to cut the longest waits by March 2025. This is additional funding, over and above the recovery money available every year to support the NHS.

While waits of more than two years have reduced by 79% for gynaecology pathways since April 2022, we are committed to reduce this further and expect additional reduction as a result of this additional funding.

Timely diagnosis and management of menstrual health conditions including endometriosis will also be supported through the establishment of the pathfinder women's health hubs.

It is already the responsibility of health boards to deliver high quality gynaecology services, and it is vital they meet the expectations set out in the quality statement, which includes early diagnosis and the management of endometriosis in accordance with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidance.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. Murphy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'S' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'y'.

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