



Jane Hutt MS

Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip,

Welsh Government

5th Floor

Tŷ Hywel

Cardiff Bay

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3rd April 2025

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

Thank you for your letter of 17th March 2025 and for the helpful update you provided on the cross-departmental meeting between health, education and crime and justice colleagues on speech and language therapy provision within the youth justice system. It is welcome to have clarification that Welsh Government believe that it is for youth justice service teams to provide any further services relating to speech language and communication needs, beyond that delivered by their Local Health Board, in order to deliver on their reserved statutory role.

As you suggest, we are aware that there are currently a small number of funding streams for local authorities to buy in speech and language therapy provision. However, we speak regularly to youth justice managers across Wales and are concerned that as the Ministry of Justice Turnaround programme funded services are already in place and the funding is reduced from previous years, the continued funding for 2025/6 is unlikely to support the funding of speech and language therapists in areas which do not already have provision.

We recently met with Sir Nic Dakin MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Ministry of Justice to raise our concerns about the postcode lottery of speech and language therapy provision for young people within the criminal justice system in Wales and understand that the Minister was due to meet with you in March.

We are very grateful for your suggestion of a meeting with us and would be keen to receive an update on discussions with the Ministry of Justice as part of the conversation with yourself.

My colleague, Caroline Walters, External Affairs Manager for Wales (caroline.walters@rcslt.org) would be pleased to organise such a meeting if possible.

I look forward to hearing from you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Cotterill', is shown within a light grey rectangular box.

Pippa Cotterill
Head of Wales Office

Cc: Jenny Rathbone MS, Chair, Senedd Equality and Social Justice Committee

Ruth Crowder, Chief Allied Health Professions Adviser, Welsh Government

Catherine Pape and Claire Butler, National Speech, Language and Communication Co-ordinators,
Welsh Government

Alison Lott, Lead for Youth Justice, Welsh Government