



Our ref: SM/CYPE/1809/25

Buffy Williams
Chair
Children, Young People and Education Committee
Senedd Cymru

senedd.children@senedd.wales

18 September 2025

Dear Buffy

Thank you for the committee's letter about the Perinatal Clinical Implementation Network and clinical lead role.

There has been significant progress over the last few years in relation to the development and improvement of perinatal mental health services, including the establishment of community perinatal mental health teams in each health board and the development of an integrated care pathway. This work has been progressed through strengthened clinical leadership and the work of the network members, whose support has been invaluable.

We published our new, 10-year [Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#) in April. The Strategic Programme for Mental Health, which is part of NHS Wales Performance and Improvement, has subsequently reviewed its governance and implementation structures to support the delivery of its priorities within the strategy. This includes a revised governance structure which will strengthen clinical leadership across the programme.

The Strategic Programme for Mental Health has four clinical lead posts which cover all areas of mental health, and whose work programme is aligned with the strategy. These are:

- Clinical psychologist (adult and older adult mental health, perinatal, eating disorders)
- Registered mental health nurse (acute and crisis care)
- Consultant psychiatrist (child and adolescent mental health services)
- Clinical psychologist (psychological therapies).

These new arrangements will include a legacy report to capture the work of the network, and a review to ensure any open actions and risk management continue to be progressed. The programme has confirmed it will support this work, and the transition to a robust community of practice.

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Sarah.Murphy@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Sarah.Murphy@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.

Improvement work led by the Strategic Programme for Mental Health will support all mental health services, including perinatal mental health services. This will include the transformation to open-access mental health support.

This year, as part of its implementation of open-access services, there will be pilot sites to test changes and the Strategic Programme for Mental Health is looking to have at least one of these within a health board that will incorporate specialist perinatal teams. Over time, the open access approach will improve the service offer for the whole population.

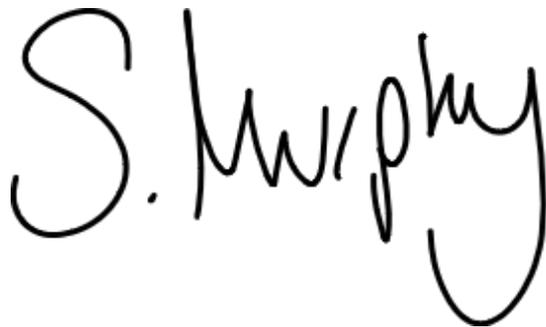
Other aspects of the work considered by the network will now be in the core remit of the relevant teams. For instance, the [CCQI](#) Type One standards for perinatal mental health services will continue to be monitored quarterly. Any issues identified will be addressed with health boards through the performance and assurance systems in place. Moving this arrangement into the standard Integrated Quality, Planning and Delivery (IQPD) process will ensure health board executive teams have continued oversight and will be held directly to account for their performance and any required improvement plans, which will strengthen accountability arrangements.

Learning and development needs will also be fed into our broader Strategic Mental Health Workforce Plan, with any outstanding national transformation or safety work for perinatal mental health services being incorporated into the work of the national steering groups, which sit within the Strategic Programme for Mental Health .

A Joint Ministerial Assurance Board is being established to support governance of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy. This will ensure there is challenge and scrutiny about its implementation. The first annual updates about progress is expected in May 2026.

In relation to the new mother and baby unit in Chester, it is anticipated the build will be completed in October 2025, with staff commencing at that point. We are expecting this will mean mothers will be supported within the unit from the new year. In relation to Tonna, its longer-term future will be part of the prioritised capital estates strategy. As this is a longer piece of work we are currently investing in the unit, which will include essential works to the roof and heating system.

Yours sincerely,

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

Sarah Murphy AS/MS
Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing