

Mark Drakeford AC / AM  
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MB/MD/2098/15

Ann Jones AM  
Chair  
Children, Young People and Education Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Dear Ann,

1 June 2015

Thank you for your letter of 27 May regarding our work in relation to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

I have the following comments to make in relation to the additional information you seek.

The Part 1 Measure Task and Finish Group will reconvene for the first time in July. I will ask the group to consider your request and how best it can provide outcome information for children and young people. It will need to consider this in relation to the range of other qualitative and quantitative data collected in relation to CAMHS, such as service user outcome data collected as part of the mental health core data set and data collected as part of the current CAMHS benchmarking exercise. I provided a paper to the Committee on the former as part of my evidence for your CAMHS inquiry. Key will be ensuring the small CAMHS service is able to manage the need to collect performance information, whilst not diluting its core work with children and young people.

As far as the ring-fence review is concerned, I am due to receive the Price Waterhouse Coopers review and recommendations shortly. I do not want to pre-empt the report, though I am generally not in favour of separate hypothecation. If we were to ring-fence CAMHS we would need to also separate adult and older people's mental health funding, hampering the ability of health boards to react to local circumstances, pressures and unforeseen issues, particularly around transition between services. That is not to say Welsh Government is not examining health board performance, including financial performance, particularly following the significant new investment in CAMHS I recently announced.

As for your request for a private briefing with those involved in the prescribing review and CAMHS benchmarking, I am content for this to occur, subject to the willingness and availability of those involved. The prescribing review phase one report (ADHD medication and antidepressants) is due imminently and my officials have discussed with the report author, Dr Ann John, Associate Professor of the School of Medicine at Swansea University (who is familiar to the Committee from her role as Chair of the Advisory Group on Suicide and Self-harm), the potential for her to meet the Committee. She is happy to do so, though due to other commitments her only availability is the morning of the 10 June.

In relation to the benchmarking, this work is being taken forward by the NHS Wales Quality Assurance Team and the NHS Benchmarking Network, not Public Health Wales. CAMHS services have asked for an extension to 5 June (from 19 May) to collect data for the audit and this data will be analysed by early July. Meeting the Committee in June will not therefore be possible, though if you wish to reschedule to July I am sure they would be willing to discuss their findings.

Best wishes,  
Mark

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