



Ein cyf/Our ref – MA-L/VG/0479/19

Mick Antoniw AM
Chair
Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

13 June 2019

Dear Mick,

Thank you for your letter of 29 May.

I have noted your concerns and endorsement of the points raised by the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications (CWLC) Committee in its letter to me of 10 May. I replied to that letter on 20 May recognising the interest of the CWLC Committee in the amendments and offered the CWLC Committee a technical briefing with my officials. That technical briefing took place on 6 June. Previous amendments to these Regulations have not gathered the same level of interest and I have asked my officials to ensure in future, if they involve the Welsh language, we alert and engage with CWLC earlier in the process.

With regard to your concern the Explanatory Memorandum attached to the regulations was laid in English, I and my officials regret the delay in the Welsh language version of the document not being available at the same time. This falls below our usual high standard and we regret if this oversight detracts from the benefits these duties will have for patients receiving healthcare in the primary care setting.

With respect to your further point on the Welsh Government's policy on translation of Explanatory Memoranda, officials have already discussed this matter with Assembly Commission officials and reached agreement in principle that we will progressively increase the number of explanatory memoranda for statutory instruments that are laid in Welsh before the Assembly. Further work is currently underway to look at the significance of this in relation to the time required for the delivery of legislation and supporting documents to be laid before the Assembly in both official languages.

These duties, in my view, are a significant step forward in promoting and supporting Welsh language awareness and services in primary care. Independent primary care contractors have not previously been subject to any form of Welsh language schemes and I am pleased the representative bodies, despite raising some challenges, have agreed with the approach we are taking.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
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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.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Vaughan Gething AC/AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services