



Ein cyf/Our ref VG/07257/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair – Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

13 August 2019

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 18 July regarding Petition P-05-902 Paternal Mental Health (New Fathers Mental Health) from Mark Williams.

The birth of a child is a significant life event which can be a stressful time for many parents. Families are provided with support following a birth from midwives and health visitors. Should any concerns be identified they would contact their GP who would assess and refer as appropriate. Recently, I launched the new vision for maternity services in Wales, 'Maternity care in Wales; a five-year vision for the future 2019-2024', this incorporates five core themes with a central component being family centred care.

I recognise the transition into fatherhood can be traumatic and this policy ensures midwives and maternity staff incorporate a holistic approach to parenthood. Recognition and detection of emotional and mental health struggles will enable early referral to services through primary care pathways, with the appropriate support and treatment plans.

Recent work to further develop health visiting services has included the development of a 'Team around the family' approach with an improved skill mix to provide continuity of care to families and develop 'trusting' relationships to strengthen support for both parents. Monitoring of any emotional or mental health issues through the universal provision of the 'Healthy Child Wales Programme' provides the visiting regime to enable early detection and referral if required.

All health boards are expected to work towards meeting agreed standards for integrated perinatal health services in Wales which were developed by the All Wales Perinatal Mental Health Steering Group (AWPMHSG) by March 2020. These standards includes considering the mental health and well-being of fathers/partners.

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Gohebiaeth.Vaughan.Gething@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Vaughan.Gething@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.

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.

In Wales, we have also implemented the Mental Health (Wales) Measure which provides services at an early stage through the Local Primary Mental Health Support Service, as well as ensuring those in need of specialist services receive the highest quality of care and treatment.

We continue to work with stakeholders to further develop the specialist community services following our investment in 2015. Perinatal mental health services have also been included as a priority area for the service improvement funding which commenced this year.

Lastly, we are currently consulting on the Together for Mental Health delivery plan for 2019-2022, which includes improving access and quality of perinatal mental health services as a priority area. The links to this consultation are below:

English:

<https://gov.wales/together-mental-health-delivery-plan-2019-2022>

Welsh:

<https://llyw.cymru/law-yn-llaw-iechyd-meddwl-cynllun-cyflawni-2019-i-2022>

The consultation closes on 30 August.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely,

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

Vaughan Gething AC/AM

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