

**P-05-859 Provide Child Houses in Wales for victims of child sexual abuse,
Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 12.11.19**

Thank you for the update with regards to the petition and letter. It's reassuring to know there are movements taking place to better secure the needs of victims of child sexual Abuse.

I note the following:

c) details on whether there are existing support services in place for children to access without the need for a referral.

The usual mechanism for a young person to access the SARC service is a referral from social services or the police, although some older children may self-refer. However, any child under the age of 16, attending the SARC would be seen and appropriately advised that, in line with All Wales Child Protection Procedures, an incident would need to be disclosed to police and children's services. This would engage all relevant support services.

* Again, we are not addressing the complexities of Child Sexual Abuse, that is different from Sexual Assault that can be seen or addressed often easier.

Child Sexual Abuse is very often over time abuse. The fact that there is still no service available that a child can access is the issue. Some older children may be able to refer... And yet younger children only by way of local authority involvement. This goes right back to the start of the petition, that victims of child sexual Abuse are unlikely to report to authorities.

So there is still no safe place for children to access by their own account and then if it's not an immediate sexual act, they will be spoken to over the phone.

There needs to be more facilities and safe spaces for children to access if they need.

With regards

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