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Ms Janet Davies AM
Chair of the Audit Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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Date 7th September 2006
Our reference JC/0356/fgb
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Dear Chair,

**AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT: ADULT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN WALES:
A BASELINE REVIEW OF SERVICE PROVISION**

The Clerk's letter of 4 September 2006 requested my advice on the Welsh Assembly Government's response to the recommendations made by the Audit Committee in its report *Adult Mental Health Services in Wales: A Baseline Review of Service Provision*.

The response of the Welsh Assembly Government is a positive one with all eight recommendations being accepted in full. In addition, the Welsh Assembly Government has already produced a national Action Plan as part of its revised National Service Framework that incorporates the issues and recommendations made by the Wales Audit Office. It has also required each Local Health Board to develop a local Action Plan setting out how, in partnership with Local Authorities, NHS Trusts and other stakeholders, they intend to implement the NSF and the recommendations of the Wales Audit Office over the next three years.

The Welsh Assembly Government states, in response to Recommendation 3, that the annual programme budget returns have to date been based on indicative expenditure figures and that the aim is for an incremental improvement in quality each year, but that this is dependent on accurate activity information being received from NHS Trusts. It will be essential that the quality of financial information is improved, given the need both to identify differential spends on mental health services and to provide assurances that resources are being directed to the areas and services with greatest needs.

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The Wales Audit Office will continue to monitor the progress made by the Welsh Assembly Government and public sector bodies towards implementing the Committee's recommendations and the revised NSF. In particular, we are considering following up the baseline review across Wales in 2007/08 formally to assess progress. We will draw to the Committee's attention any areas where we consider that further action by the Committee is merited.

Yours sincerely,



Jeremy Colman
Auditor General for Wales