

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Ddiwylliant a Chyfiawnder
Cymdeithasol
Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Jenny Rathbone MS
Chair,
Equality and Social Justice Committee
Welsh Parliament

SeneddEquality@senedd.wales

30th May 2024

Dear Jenny,

Thank you for your letter of 18 March to Jane Hutt MS, the then Minister for Social Justice seeking confirmation of timescales to take actions forward from the Summit on Speech, Language and Communication (SCL) held January 24, 2024. I apologise for the delay in the response to your letter.

Since the summit on SLC in the youth justice system, officials have considered the position further with Ministers, including with the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care who holds responsibility for Speech Language and Communication provision.

We recognise the potential benefits to young people of embedding Speech Language and Communication support across Youth Justice Services teams in Wales. However, as highlighted in our initial response to the Committee's report, there are only around 800 registered Speech and Language Therapists (SLTs) in Wales and insufficient NHS employed SLTs to embed them across Youth Justice Services teams in Wales. The current financial challenges would make it very difficult to recruit, train and employ additional SLTs in this way.

It is for Local Health Boards (LHBs) to determine their health needs and how best to meet them with the resources available, including for children in contact with the justice system or those at risk of coming into contact with it. Welsh Ministers therefore encourage local Youth Justice Services teams to discuss with their respective LHBs the level of demand for speech and language support in their areas and how they can best be met.

The summit also highlighted resources Youth Justice Services teams can use to improve their Speech Language and Communication provision without requiring full SLT provision, including the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists' 'The Box' training and resources which are designed to give professionals in the justice system the ability to

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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.

identify communication issues and the skills to work successfully with individuals who have such issues. We encourage teams to make full use of these resources to support their work and meet the needs of the children they work with. The 'The Box' resources could also help to establish the level of demand for SLTs within the youth justice system and support more considered work in this area in the longer term.

I appreciate this is a challenging position but it reflects the realities of the current resourcing position on SLTs and the pragmatic need to make full use of the levers and resources at our current disposal. I am pleased the summit brought professionals together across sectors to discuss the issue and to highlight the resources available to Youth Justice Services teams

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesley Griffiths". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end of the name.

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS

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