

Yr Adran Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Cyfarwyddwr Cyffredinol • Prif Weithredwr, GIG Cymru

Department for Health and Social Services  
Director General • Chief Executive, NHS Wales



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Darren Millar AM  
Chair  
Public Accounts Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff

Our Ref: DS/SW/TLT

27 March 2014

Dear Darren

## **PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE – Valedictory Session**

Following the Public Accounts Committee on 18 March, I agreed to send you a note about a range of mental health issues.

Mental health is a key governmental priority, demonstrated by commitments in *Programme for Government*. Of particular significance is *Together For Mental Health*, the Welsh Government's 10-year mental health and wellbeing strategy to improve the lives of people using mental health services, their carers and their families. It aims to enhance the wellbeing and resilience of the wider population, as well as improving mental health services. It is the first all-age mental health strategy for Wales and takes a holistic, cross-government approach; clearly much that matters to people's mental well being – for example housing, employment or education – are beyond health and social care. At the heart of the Strategy is the Mental Health (Wales) Measure 2010, which places legal duties on Health Boards and Local Authorities to improve support for people with mental ill-health.

The main themes of *Together for Mental Health* are:

- Promoting mental wellbeing and, where possible, preventing mental health problems developing.
- Establishing a new partnership with the public, centred on:
  - Improving information on mental health
  - Increasing service user and carer involvement in relevant decisions.
  - Changing attitudes to mental health by tackling stigma and discrimination.

- Delivering a well designed, fully integrated network of care. This will be based on the recovery and enablement of service users in order to live as fulfilled and independent a life as possible.
- Addressing the range of factors in people's lives which can affect mental health and wellbeing through Care and Treatment Planning and joint-working across sectors.

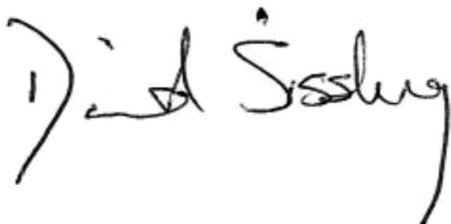
The first annual report for *Together for Mental Health* was published in December and showed progress in services across Wales, while accepting there is further work to be done. We are about to publish an interim report on the progress of the Mental Health Measure, which will also show positive impacts on peoples care and access to services

Central to Together for Mental Health, is the recognition that identifying and addressing mental illness at an early age can ameliorate problems later in life. As such children and young people are at the heart of the Strategy. You are aware from my correspondence of 10 March that we are working with LHBs to improve CAMHS services throughout 2014 as a priority. CAMHS in Wales is provided by the four Health Boards – Aneurin Bevan, Betsi Cadwaladr, Cwm Taf and Hywel Dda. Planning and commissioning is carried out by WHSCC who fund Tier 4, high specialist services.

As you know the Children, Young People and Education Committee is currently conducting an enquiry into CAMHS and these issues will be explored further as part of that work.

I trust the above is helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Sissling'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'g'.

**DAVID SISSLING**

cc Mark Drakeford AM, Minister for Health and Social Services