

Mark Drakeford AC / AM  
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MD/02252/14

William Powell AM  
Chair  
Petitions Committee

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11 June 2014

*Dear William,*

Thank you for your recent letter on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding Petition P-04-408 about Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder Services (CAMHS ED).

When I made the announcement of additional funding for CAMHS ED services in October 2013, I was clear that this was specifically to improve ED services in south Wales and this is still the case. I made this announcement for south Wales, as the north Wales CAMHS unit already has experience and over capacity of provision, per head of the population. I also undertook to consider the wider needs of all-Wales following evaluation of activity in south Wales. Nevertheless, north Wales will benefit from the training being delivered by the funding; north Wales is also covering north Powys, while southern Powys is provided for from south Wales.

The funding is intended to provide dedicated specialist staff with experience in ED treatment, enhanced ED training for existing CAMHS staff and enable community outreach clinics to be expanded in south east and west Wales and also southern Powys. Local Health Boards are now progressing this and a dedicated training package has been developed in association with the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, the exemplar Eating Disorder Service in the country.

Recruitment is also progressing and, until the posts have been filled substantively, the Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee (WHSSC) have appointed a part time locum CAMHS Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist and Senior Nurse who began working from 1 June. Both the locum staff have a significant amount of experience in this field. The Consultant will be working one session per week in June and July and two per week from August. The Senior Nurse will provide two sessions a week. These sessions are in addition to the ones being provided into the existing Eating Disorder clinic at Ty Llidiard.

I have been clear from the outset that the funding is intended to ensure that more young people can be repatriated to Wales instead of being sent out of area. The savings on these out of area placements then being reinvested back into general provision CAMHS in Wales, instead of funding CAMHS services elsewhere in the UK.

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With regard to the comments about providing a state of the art facility for children with ED, this already exists in the two CAMHS inpatient facilities we have invested over £42m in at Abergele and Bridgend. A key priority of mine is to ensure these expensive resources are fully utilised and occupancy levels are increased, though this should be coupled with more community provision, as I believe hospitalisation should be the last resort. This is why the funding will also expand community clinics, these working in association with the expansion of Local Primary Mental Health Support Services, which have been created with £3.5m of Welsh Government funding as part of our Mental Health (Wales) Measure to ensure services are delivered as locally as possible.

I have previously stated that ED has always comprised a significant proportion of the CAMHS caseload, with, at any given time, around 40% of the inpatients in the south Wales Unit being there as a result of ED. Figures provided to me by WHSSC to inform the discussion we had in the Committee last October showed that during 2012-13 11 of 36 out of area placements were for an ED. These will have been for a variety of reasons, including the need for very highly specialised treatment only available at a handful of clinics in the UK, a lack of capacity within Wales, and risk factors.

I hope this is helpful.

*Best wishes,*

*Mark*

**Mark Drakeford AC / AM**

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