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Samaritans, Floor 2, 33-35 Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF11 9HB

Dai Lloyd AM
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Thursday 13th September 2018

Dear Dai,

Suicide Prevention Inquiry Draft Report

Firstly, may I commend you on your contribution to the debate on the Children, Young People and Education Committee report on its inquiry into the Emotional and Mental Health of Children and Young People. We welcome your comments and are particularly encouraged by your continued focus on prevention, early intervention and 'empowering our teachers'.

As I'm sure you will know, Samaritans Cymru were heavily involved with the Inquiry into the Emotional and Mental Health of Children and Young People and were pleased to speak at the launch of the report. We welcomed *Mind over Matter* and believe its recommendations set out the step change needed to improve the outlook of children and young people's mental health in Wales.

We were pleased to provide a briefing for Assembly Members ahead of the debate and were delighted to hear so many members share their contributions and personal comments. We have shared our further comments with Lynne Neagle AM and believe the Welsh Government response needs to be stronger and fully recognise the step change needed.

Following our contribution to the Loneliness and Isolation Inquiry, we were delighted to welcome your committee's Inquiry into Suicide Prevention. We were pleased to provide written and oral evidence and highlight the role that schools and educational settings have to play in suicide prevention.

Since the launch of our teaching resources in 2014, known as DEAL (Developing Emotional Awareness and Listening), we have lobbied extensively to achieve the following -

- Fulfilling the potential of the the focus on health and wellbeing in the new curriculum; the inclusion of emotional health and wellbeing lessons on the curriculum should be statutory.
- Emotional, mental health and suicide awareness training for all existing and new teaching staff across all schools in Wales
- Increased confidence in teaching staff and basic mental health literacy by the inclusion of emotional and mental health awareness in Initial Teacher Training (ITT)

Pwyllgor Iechyd, Gofal Cymdeithasol a Chwaraeon
Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

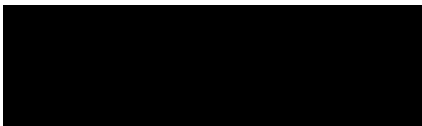
As you discuss the 24-108 Paper in your report on suicide prevention, we wanted to take the opportunity to share our view on the potential of the recommendations of *Mind over Matter* in reducing suicide in Wales. As we stated in both Inquiries, we believe that investment in prevention and early intervention can reduce human, social and economic costs. Emotional and mental health education in schools should be viewed as a form prevention and early intervention which could reduce pressure on CAMHS, reduce specific mental health problems and suicidal ideation.

We know there are recommendations in *Mind over Matter* which target suicide specifically and we have welcomed them (Recommendation 16). We have urged the Welsh Government to approach the emotional and mental health of children and young people in new and innovative ways and have said that *Mind over Matter* could be a significant driver for change.

With regards to the role of education and suicide prevention in Wales, we would like to once again, strongly commend *Mind over Matter* for its vision and focus. We believe a strong focus on the role of education is needed to reduce suicide in Wales; school years are the crucial opportunity to equip children and young people with the skills they need to build their resilience and improve their emotional health. Provision and understanding of this approach is not sufficient in Wales at the current time.

As always, we would be delighted to meet or further discuss our shared areas of work. May I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support of our work in Wales and your commitment to driving change in these crucial areas.

Yours Sincerely,



Executive Director for Wales
Samaritans

Noddw'r: Ei Uchelder Brenhinol Tywysog Cymru. Sefydlwyd yn 1953 gan y diweddar Brebendwr Dr.Chad Varah CH CBE.
Elusen wedi'i chofrestru yng Nghymru a Lloegr rhif 219432, yn yr Alban rhif SC040604.
Wedi'i chorffori yng Nghymru a Lloegr yn 1963 fel cwmni wedi'i gyfyngu drwy warant rhif 757372.

Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales. Founded in 1953 by the late Prebendary Dr Chad Varah CH CBE.
A charity registered in England and Wales no. 219432, in Scotland no. SCO 40604.
Incorporated in England and Wales in 1963 as a company limited by guarantee no. 757372.



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