

Jane Hutt AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol
Minister for Social Justice



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Jenny Rathbone MS
Chair
Equality and Social Justice Committee

31 March 2022

Dear Jenny,

Please find update to the Equality and Social Justice Committee relating to recommendation 2 of the report on Debt and the Pandemic which was published in December 2021.

Recommendation 2 states that the Welsh Government should commission expert research into the relationship between addiction and debt and report back to this Committee on progress. This research should cover addiction in all its forms including gambling, alcohol and other substance addictions and the Welsh Government should write to the Committee with an update on progress and timescales for completion and publication before the end of March 2022.

You will be pleased to note that officials have carried out an initial desk-top research exercise to discover what already exists in terms of the evidence base on the relationship between addiction and debt. This work has highlighted that although there is more literature available relating to the relationship between gambling and debt, including a report commissioned by Public Health Wales in 2019, Wales needs to broaden the scope of surveys and other data collection methods to explore levels of gambling harms across Welsh communities more accurately.

In terms of other forms of addiction such as alcohol and substance addiction, there is a lack of good quality data and much less evidence available on the relationship between these types of addiction and getting into debt.

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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.

In terms of the next steps, we are now looking at how we can link in with Public Health Wales and considering developing a specification and commissioning research on this topic later on this year. A copy of the desk-top research exercise can be supplied to the committee if this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane', with a horizontal line above the first letter.

Jane Hutt AS/MS

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Minister for Social Justice
