

**Lynne Neagle AS/MS,
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Iechyd Meddwl a Llesiant
Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing**



**Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government**

Jayne Bryant MS
Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee

16 November 2022

Dear Jayne,

Thank you for your letter dated 25 October 2022 setting out the views from the Committee in relation to the request for an update on Mind Over Matter.

Since the publication of the Mind Over Matter Report in 2018, and the follow-up report in 2020 - a huge amount of work has been undertaken to improve the support available for children and young people's emotional and mental well-being. The Mind over Matter recommendations have been fundamental in shaping Welsh Government policy, for instance through our joint-Ministerial Whole School Approach, now Joint Ministerial Whole System Approach and the development and implementation of our NEST NYTH framework. Most notably we have:

- Published statutory guidance on the Whole School Approach to Emotional and Mental Wellbeing in March 2021. We are continuing to work with schools and other partners to implement and embed the Framework, which is supported by implementation of the new Curriculum for Wales and the Health and Wellbeing Area of Learning and Experience in particular. We have also made over £43m available jointly from health and education budgets over the course of the three-year budget period to enhance wellbeing in schools and support PfG commitments in relation to school counselling and the development of CAMHS school in-reach services.
- In further education over £10m of funding has been allocated since 2020 to support the mental health and wellbeing of staff and learners. Institutional projects support the appointment and training of staff; collaborative projects bring colleges together to develop new strategies and share resources; and national projects support colleges in developing resources and initiatives on areas such as substance misuse, active wellbeing, Adverse Childhood Experiences and trauma.

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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.

- All our universities have well-being and health strategies in place. HEFCW monitors the implementation of the strategies to ensure they are appropriately ambitious and respond effectively to the needs of staff and students in HE. HEFCW have also embedded the Universities UK: Stepchange mentally healthy university and Suicide Safer frameworks within their policy work. In order to be eligible for health and well-being funding HEFCW expects HE institutions to sign up to UUK's #stepchange and Suicide Safer Universities frameworks and ensure that their expenditure plans align with the approaches outlined.
- We have invested significantly in tier 0/1 support to provide easy access to a range of support for children and young people – including the CALL Mental Health Helpline, Young Persons Mental Health Toolkit and BEAT's Eating Disorder helpline.
- We have also invested to establish a Wales wide offer, where young people and their families can access free online mental health support, without needing to be referred by a GP. This online therapy now has a suite of support programmes designed to help young people manage their mental health and wellbeing. Parents and carers can sign up for a free 12-week online therapy programme to help children and young people aged 4-18 with mild-to-moderate anxiety. Teenagers aged 16-18 can also sign up themselves, without needing adult consent, for support with anxiety or low mood directly via their mobile, tablet or laptop.
- We are also investing in crisis care with roll out of the all age 111 press 2 option for urgent mental health. Hywel Dda University Health Board is the first to establish this service on a 24/7 basis and all health boards are working towards implementation. As part of the Co-operation Agreement, we have also recently agreed four pilots to test alternatives to admission for young people in crisis.
- All health boards have made progress in improving eating disorder services and are working towards earlier intervention and achieving a 4-week waiting time for assessment. We have also commissioned a feasibility study to investigate the potential for a specialist eating disorder unit here in Wales.
- We have developed the NEST/NYTH Framework as a planning tool for RPBs to implement a Whole System Approach in their areas. We have recently appointed a NEST Implementation Lead who is working across Government, with RPBs and external stakeholders to truly embed NYTH/NEST in children and young people's policy and services.

The Committee will be aware that the current 10 year Together for Mental Health Strategy is coming to an end this year and work is underway to develop the successor strategy. As part of this process, we are reviewing the work already undertaken to take forward and embed the Committee's Mind Over Matter recommendations and identify remaining work that will need to shape the new national Together for Mental Health strategy. We will be taking a thematic approach to this and will provide the Committee with an update on progress in the New Year.

In the meantime, there is a Committee session planned with the Minister for Education and Welsh Language and myself on 23 November, when I am happy to answer any questions on progress against the Mind over Matter recommendations. I am also very happy to attend a separate scrutiny session with the Committee on Mind Over Matter if the Committee would prefer to do that.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Lynne Neagle', written in a cursive style.

Lynne Neagle AS/MS

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Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing