

**Y Pwyllgor Iechyd a
Gofal Cymdeithasol**

**Health and Social Care
Committee**

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Mark Drakeford MS
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care

22 August 2024

Dear Mark

Dentistry

You will recall that the Committee undertook an **inquiry into dentistry** last year. The inquiry focused on work being done to bridge the gap in oral health inequalities and rebuild dentistry in Wales following the COVID-19 pandemic and in the context of rising costs of living. We published our **findings** in February 2023.

Following the plenary debate on **dentistry training** on 3 July 2024, the Committee felt it was an appropriate time to seek an update on progress in implementing the recommendations in our report.

I have set out a number of areas in the attached annex where I would be grateful for an update on progress. For convenience, I have included a reference to the relevant recommendation from our report, where relevant. I would appreciate a response by **27 September 2024**.

Yours sincerely



Sam Rowlands MS
Temporary Chair, Health and Social Care Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg. We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



Annex

Could you provide an update in each of the following areas:

1. activity in relation to care and treatment delivered in 2022/23 under the reform variation and activity for 2023/24, once available (Recommendation 2);
2. the latest position regarding the formal negotiations on a new dental contract and whether there are any plans for a formal consultation where the Committee will have the opportunity to feed in its views (Recommendation 2);
3. whether the data collection requirements for NHS dentists has been discussed as part of the formal negotiations on a new dental contract (Recommendation 5);
4. the findings of the Welsh Government commissioned research to identify barriers to access to dental services for vulnerable groups (due to be completed May 2023) (Recommendation 7);
5. while our recommendation to explore options for the establishment of a dental school in North Wales and report back to us on its feasibility by July 2024 was accepted, during the plenary debate the previous Cabinet Secretary indicated that, while the establishment of a second dental school in Wales would be the best option, current financial pressures do not allow for this. Can you please provide an update on when the Welsh Government will be in a position to progress this recommendation (Recommendation 10);
6. what progress has been made in relation to schools that have been reluctant to re-engage with the Designed to Smile programme following the pandemic (Recommendation 12);
7. has any conclusion been reached on whether oral health programmes for up to 12-year-olds should be delivered through a school programme or through primary care dental services (Recommendation 13);
8. has the Gwen am Byth programme now been fully re-established and are there any further plans to expand the programme (Recommendation 14).