

**Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl
Ifanc ac Addysg**

**Children, Young People
and Education
Committee**

Sarah Murphy MS

Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing

Senedd Cymru

Bae Caerdydd, Caerdydd, CF99 1SN
SeneddPlant@senedd.cymru
senedd.cymru/SeneddPlant
0300 200 6565

Welsh Parliament Cardiff

Bay, Cardiff, CF99 1SN
SeneddChildren@senedd.wales
Senedd.wales/SeneddChildren
0300 200 6565

18 July 2025

Perinatal mental health support

Dear Sarah,

At our meeting on 16 July, we considered two letters from the perinatal mental health sector. One was endorsed by 15 organisations in the sector, and the other from the Parent Infant Network Cymru and Parent-Infant Foundation.

They both highlight "serious concerns" about proposals to disband the Perinatal Clinical Implementation Network, and the National Clinical Lead role, and replace it with a Community of Practice / Peer Group. They outline the potential impacts of these changes, not just on specialist perinatal mental health services, but on the wider system that supports families during this critical period. As well as raising concerns about the proposal itself, they also highlight concerns about the lack of consultation on the proposals.

More widely, while there is acknowledgement of positive developments in perinatal mental health in particular since the establishment of the network, there are concerns that there are still "significant challenges". These include inequity of service provision across Wales and a lack of support for dads and partners. They also highlight that the Mother and Baby Unit in Chester which will have two ring-fenced beds for Welsh women has not yet opened.

We share these significant concerns. Ensuring families can access effective and timely perinatal mental health support close to home can be critical at a time of great change, and in some instances it will be lifesaving.

We are very aware of the substantial work that our predecessor Committee did on these issues . In particular, we would like to highlight the recommendation they made to establish a clinical led managed clinical network. It is therefore disappointing to hear the plans to disband the Network.

1. We note that this is currently a "proposal". Please can you confirm the status of these proposals, and whether consideration is being given to retain the Network and Clinical Lead Role?
2. What are the reasons for the proposal, and what other options have been explored?
3. Can you also explain why there has not been wider consultation and engagement on the proposals themselves, and clarify whether this will be rectified?
4. If the Network is disbanded, how does the Welsh Government intend to ensure that the inequities which are currently present in the system are reduced and ultimately removed?
5. We would also appreciate an update on when the Mother and Baby Unit in Chester will be open to Welsh families, along with confirmation of the long term status of Uned Gobaith? Finally, when the recommendations from the one year review of Uned Gobaith will be implemented.

Due to the importance of this issue, we would appreciate a response by 10 September in time for us to consider it at our next available meeting in September.

Yours sincerely,



Buffy Williams MS

Chair

Children, Young People and Education Committee

Cc: Peter Fox MS, Chair, Health and Social Care Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.