



23 November 2017

Vaughan Gething AM  
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care  
Welsh Government

Dear Vaughan

### **Re Perinatal Mental Health in Wales**

We welcome the report published last month by the Children, Young People and Education Committee on Perinatal Mental Health in Wales.

The report highlighted important issues and the challenges faced by this sector. The care of parents and new born children is important as these are formative years and both child and parents are very vulnerable to problems and lack of support. This can have implications for the health of both and also of the wider family for the rest of their lives and have marked implications for the child's wellbeing and education and potentially affect the lives of future generations.

We would urge that the recommendations are implemented in full.

We appreciate that mental health is everyone's business and as GPs we are at the forefront of providing care and support for those with mental health problems. Sadly, we have little or no routine involvement with maternity care and the care of the parents and the youngest babies as this is the remit of midwives and health visitors, who need support from specialist providers with rapid access to therapy and, if required, inpatient care. Unfortunately, due to service changes and fragmentation, midwives and health visitors often have little or no contact with GP practices, reducing communication for concerns about individual patients. For milder health problems, access to counselling or other talking therapy may be slow.

We support Recommendation 16 and I have highlighted this issue with the RCGP core curriculum team. The curriculum is currently being reviewed and there are requests for this section to be strengthened.

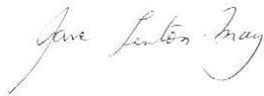
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Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jane Fenton-May".

**Dr Jane Fenton-May**  
**Vice Chair**  
**RCGP Wales**

Copy:

Lynne Neagle AM, Chair, Children, Young People and Education Committee  
Dr Dai Lloyd AM, Chair, Health, Social Services and Sports Committee