



Ein cyf/Our ref MA/P/VG/1289/19

Dr. Dai Lloyd AM
Chair
Health, Social Care and Sport Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

10 April 2019

Dear Dai,

Thank for your letter of 25 March about the delivery of autism reforms and your invitation to attend Committee in the summer. I would be very pleased to accept that invitation.

The full report of the independent evaluation of the Integrated Autism Service was published on 1 April. This was accompanied by a Written Statement issued on 3 April, which provides an overview of the evaluation outcomes and our next steps. It also explains the further research being undertaken on barriers to improving diagnostic waiting times and alignment between children's neurodevelopmental services and the Integrated Autism Service. This research was completed during March, and we anticipate the report being available by June. Moreover, I will continue to monitor the implementation improvements to services for autistic people. A further two year independent evaluation is planned, and the contract for this work should be awarded by the summer.

As you will be aware, I initiated a public consultation on our proposals for the Code of Practice on the Delivery of Autism Services, which closed on 1 March. Sixty responses were received. During the three month consultation process my officials engaged with a range of stakeholders including through four large stakeholder consultation events in Llandrindod Wells, Swansea, Llandudno and Cardiff. These events were well attended and generated valuable feedback to inform the development of the code. A summary of the consultation feedback will be published by June and my officials are establishing technical groups to provide expert advice on the development of the code. We aim to publish the draft code of practice for public consultation by December this year.

I am also pleased to confirm that the Integrated Autism Service is now operational in all areas in Wales. I acknowledge that due to the phased roll out of the service some regions are better established than others. We will continue to embed and improve the service over the next two years.

I will publish the second annual report on the delivery of the autism strategy by June. After publication, I welcome the opportunity to discuss the outcomes achieved over the last operational year and to provide an update on future delivery plans.

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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.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Vaughan Gething AC/AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services