



Ein cyf/Our ref MA-P/VG/2308/19

Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Mark Isherwood AM  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

20 June 2019

Dear Mark,

I write following business questions on 18 June when you called for a statement on support for older people with alcohol misuse. The Minister for Finance and Trefnydd, confirmed this is something we are addressing as part of the future substance misuse delivery plan and has asked me to provide you with an update on this.

The Welsh Government's overarching aim has always been to reduce the harms caused by substance misuse to the individual and wider society. Prevention and early intervention is key and we want to ensure that people of all ages are aware of the dangers and the impact of substance misuse, to enable them to make informed choices and to know where they can get help and support if they need it.

Our Substance Misuse '*Working Together to Reduce Harm*' 10 year strategy ended in 2018 and a future strategy on substance misuse will be set out as part of a new Substance Misuse Delivery Plan for 2019-22. We will be consulting on this plan in July. Over the last 12 months two key pieces of work have been published which have influenced the direction of travel on substance misuse policy and the details in the plan. The first is the independent, external evaluation of the impact of the 2008-18 strategy, published in April 2018, and the second is the Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) 'Joint Thematic Review of Substance Misuse Services in Wales', published in July 2018.

As part of the Substance Misuse Delivery Plan 2019-22 I am committed to ensuring that the needs of older people are considered and taken into account, as was the case in the previous strategy. This is through both prevention work or through the substance misuse services which are commissioned by Area Planning Boards (APBs). Indeed, I want to ensure that the Welsh Government works with APBs to ensure that services are accessible to all people with protected characteristics. We have previously issued a Substance Misuse Treatment Framework on Substance Misuse and Older People as we recognise the needs of this particular group and that services must adapt to meet their needs.

I am aware of the good work that is being undertaken by Drink Wise, Age Well (DWAU) to highlight the needs of older people in relation to alcohol misuse and I am very grateful to them for this. As I've said above, we will be consulting on the new plan shortly so there will

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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.

be an opportunity for DAWW members to respond to the consultation and I would urge them to do so.

I know that my officials have been in contact with the DAWW members over the past year as their work has developed and that they also attended the launch of the Charter on the 5 June 2019. I have asked that officials continue to work closely with them to discuss their final Charter, in order that that we can consider how best this work can enable us to further support older people with substance misuse issues across Wales.

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