Dear Mark,

I am writing in response to WQ81864: As recent research by Public Health England states that the death rate from COVID-19 is six times higher for people with a learning disability than the general population, will the Minister confirm whether autistic people and/or adults with learning difficulties will be prioritised to receive the COVID-19 vaccine?

Autism spectrum disorder contains a very broad group of people. Those with severe autism resulting in a severe or profound learning disability are categorised by the JCVI under priority group 6, unless a clinician has identified them as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable, in which case they would be considered as part of the Shielding Patients list and appear within cohort 4.

Subject to supply, Wales’ Vaccination strategy, published on 11 January, gives a commitment to vaccinate priority groups 1-4 by mid-February and groups 5-9 by the spring.

Yours sincerely,

Vaughan Gething

Vaughan Gething AS/MS
Y Gweinidog llechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services