



Reference WQ82792

Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

8 July 2021

Dear Janet,

In response to your written question reference WQ 82792

“What immediate steps is the Welsh Government taking to support the resumption of face-to-face elderly support groups to assist with the drive towards social prescribing in Wales?”

I would like to advise our vision is an age friendly Wales, that supports people of all ages to live and age well. This has become even more pertinent since the Covid-19 pandemic and the affects that it has, and continues to have, on older people in our society. To support this, we have committed to allocate funding to each local authority to facilitate engagement with older people and support local older people’s groups to flourish.

In response to the pandemic, many local authorities and third sector organisations acted swiftly to develop alternative approaches to delivering face to face services, using telephone and digital means. Feedback shows that these services provided a valuable source of support and advice to many isolated older people. However, I recognise the importance of face to face contact and as the public health restrictions are eased, services are once again offering this form of support.

We have encouraged local authorities to re-open face to face services safely or set out plans for re-opening as soon as possible. The Welsh Government has recently relaxed restrictions for community centres where many older people’s support groups meet. My officials are currently developing action cards to support the Covid-safe operation of day centres which will be available soon. We have also asked the Association of Directors of Social Services Cymru (ADSSC) to look at the impacts of covid-19 on day centres and respite services and to identify positive practice that can be shared.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Julie.Morgan@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Julie.Morgan@gov.wales

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.

In regards to social prescribing, a task and finish group was established by the then Minister for Mental Health, Well-being and Welsh Language in March 2021, to understand how social prescribing could aid Wales in its recovery from Covid-19. In partnership with primary care, health boards, the third sector and other relevant bodies, the group will explore and develop an understanding of the benefits of introducing an all Wales offer to support the development of social prescribing in the light of Covid-19.

The group will also work towards an understanding of the barriers to progressing social prescribing within Wales and a costed options appraisal for a consistent, high quality, all-Wales approach to social prescribing along with a timeframe for the delivery and implementation of the preferred model.

The second meeting of the task and finish group meeting was held on the 23rd June where they considered the 6 key pillars of the national framework: Quality Standards; Monitoring & Evaluation; Technology; Funding; Governance and Leadership and Co-production. Officials will now meet with stakeholders over the summer to agree a work plan in each of these areas with the next meeting of the group set to be held in September.

Your sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Julie', is centered below the text 'Your sincerely'.

Julie Morgan AS/MS

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Deputy Minister for Social Services