



Ein cyf/Our ref: WQ80986

Bethan Sayed MS
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

21 October 2020

Dear Bethan,

I'm writing in response to WQ80986 – Will Welsh Government follow good practice in other areas of the UK by signing up to the National Childbirth Trust #hiddenhalf campaign, funding GPs to ensure all new mothers receive a dedicated 6 week check?

Through the All Wales Maternity Record and as recommended by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) all pregnant women in Wales are asked a series of questions about their mental health at the start of their pregnancy. These questions help midwives identify women with mental health conditions at an early stage, helping to ensure the most appropriate care is in place throughout and after pregnancy.

Support and assessment continues through the work of health visitors. The implementation of the Healthy Child Wales programme by health visitors ensures early intervention and support is available. All GPs are encouraged to offer women an appointment at 6-8 weeks after childbirth to assess the mother's physical and emotional wellbeing in accordance with NICE guidance. Some GPs offer a double appointment to undertake this assessment on the same visit as the baby's 8 week check, others offer two separate appointments.

The mental health of a new mother is monitored by several members of the health team involved in the care of mothers and babies. After the birth, the community midwife will observe the mother's mental state and ensure support and referral if required with handover of any concerns to the health visiting team. The health visitor also makes contact with the family after 14 days and continues to maintain those observations and support. The health visitor or midwife may carry out screening for depression via, for example, the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS). Concerns raised by the midwife or health visitor are referred to the appropriate service for further investigation.

Yours sincerely,

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

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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.