



Nick Ramsey MS  
Welsh Parliament  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

15 March 2021

Dear Nick,

I am writing following the Business Statement on 2 March, when the Trefnydd made a commitment for me to update you on stroke services, following the report in September about how COVID is affecting stroke survivors in Wales.

We are fully aware of the impact that Covid-19 has had on stroke services since the earliest phases of the pandemic and have worked diligently to alleviate this impact by guiding health board planning and activity with regard to stroke care.

Last May, the Welsh Government issued essential service guidance for stroke and transient ischaemic attack services for the population of Wales in the face of overwhelming pressure on NHS services. This framework is designed to help organisations and services to deliver stroke services during the pandemic and the subsequent phases by maintaining the integrity of stroke services and patient outcomes alongside acute Covid-19 care. The framework includes guidance on secondary prevention, rehabilitation to minimise long-term disability, support for carers and life after stroke services.

The Welsh Government has also consistently sent out messages to the general public to encourage them to continue to attend emergency departments for serious or life threatening illnesses such as stroke throughout the pandemic.

We also remain committed to improving support for stroke survivors and welcome the Stroke Association 'Recoveries at risk' report published last September. Last year we announced an additional £1.4m for rehabilitation services for all people at risk of losing their independence and published our rehabilitation framework: a framework for continuity and recovery 2020 to 2021 to help organisations plan rehabilitation services following Covid-19.

Our aim remains for people of all ages to have the lowest possible risk of having a stroke, and, when it does occur, to have an excellent chance of surviving, and returning to independence as quickly as possible. Building on the work of the Stroke Delivery Plan, the Stroke Implementation Group or successor forum will provide national leadership and drive forward change to deliver better quality, higher value and more accessible stroke 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.

This will include implementing the recommendations of the Cross Party Group on Stroke inquiry into implementation of the Welsh Government's Stroke Delivery Plan.

I hope this reassures you that stroke care is certainly not forgotten and we remain committed to improving support for stroke survivors and helping them rebuild their lives.

Yours sincerely,

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

**Vaughan Gething MS/AS**

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