

**Eluned Morgan AS/MS**  
**Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol**  
**Minister for Health and Social Services**

**Lynne Neagle AS/MS**  
**Y Dirprwy Weinidog Iechyd Meddwl a Llesiant**  
**Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing**



**Llywodraeth Cymru**  
**Welsh Government**

Our ref: WQs 88956-88957-88958

Russell George MS  
Senedd Constituency Member for Montgomeryshire

[Russell.George@senedd.wales](mailto:Russell.George@senedd.wales)

21 September 2023

Dear Russell,

We are writing following your recent written questions regarding midwifery and perinatal mental health. Please accept our apologies for the delay in responding, but we hope this letter addresses the questions and concerns raised.

To summarise, the questions you raised were as follows:

- What action is the Minister taking to break down potential geographical barriers that would prevent women from having standardised access to the same quality of perinatal mental health support around Wales? (WQ88956)
- With some women only having 15 minutes with a midwife to discuss any mental health problems they may be facing, what action is the Minister taking to ensure the system's capacity can be expanded in order to provide women with more one to one support should they require it? (WQ88957)
- Will the Minister confirm if there any plans to introduce a standardised signposting system that all women are able to access, during their pregnancy and after birth, in order to more easily locate and access mental health support? (WQ88958)

To support a standardised service offer for perinatal mental health across Wales, health boards are working towards meeting the relevant Royal College of Psychiatrists' quality standards and we have made service improvement funding available in order to support this. This work is supported by the National Clinical Lead for Perinatal Mental Health who is leading the national network's work programme, which also includes the development of a fully integrated care pathway and provision of support and advice leaflets.

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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.

A number of opportunities for improvement have been identified through the discovery phase of the Maternity and Neonatal Safety Support Programme, which will now be taken forward as part of the implementation phase. This includes the prioritisation of women's mental health throughout the pregnancy journey, ensuring all health boards embed the all-Wales Perinatal Mental Health Programme and that all staff are trained and feel competent to ask about mental health.

All women in pregnancy have a named midwife who will routinely ask about mental health issues. Antenatal contacts are often in primary care settings, which may have a time limitation. If concerns are identified, it is our expectation that additional visits will be provided, alongside liaison with primary care and referral to perinatal mental health teams if required. The named midwife would continue to provide ongoing support in addition to the care provided by perinatal mental health teams.


We hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,



**Eluned Morgan AS/MS**

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Cymdeithasol  
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