

Funding for Children's and Young People's Mental Health Services

I have received the enclosed letter from the Minister of State for Care and Mental Health at the Department of Health and Social Care:

Dear Sir John,

Thank you for your correspondence about funding for children's and young people's mental health services.

I can assure your constituents that funding for children's and young people's mental health services is a priority for this Government.

On 27 March 2021, we published our Mental Health Recovery Action Plan, backed by a funding increase of £500million, to ensure that we have the right support in place over the coming year. This includes £79million to significantly expand children's mental health services and allow for a faster increase in the coverage of mental health support teams in schools and colleges. This is in addition to our commitment through the NHS Long Term Plan to invest at least £2.3billion more a year in mental health services by 2023/24, so that 345,000 more children and young people can access specialist NHS-funded mental health care.

To address the impact of COVID-19 on children's and young people's mental health, NHS England and NHS Improvement announced an extra £40million of funding. This includes £10million to provide extra beds at units providing care for young people with the most complex needs, including eating disorders, and £1.5million to ensure that there are additional facilities for children under 13.

To further support children's and young people's mental health, the Department for Education announced £17million of mental health funding for schools and colleges to help them recover from the challenges of the pandemic. Funding worth £9.5million will be offered for up to 7,800 schools and colleges to train a senior mental health lead from their staff in the current academic year; this is part of the Government's commitment to offer this training to all state schools and colleges by 2025.

We have also launched the £7million Wellbeing for Education Recovery programme, which provides free expert training, support and resources for staff dealing with children and young people who are experiencing additional pressures from the last year, including trauma, anxiety, or grief. This builds on the success of the £8million Wellbeing for Education Return, which has been used by more than 90 per cent of councils since its launch last summer.

I hope this reply is helpful.

GILLIAN KEEGAN