

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gwasanaethau
Cymdeithasol
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref VG/05332/17 and VG/05349/17

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Assembly Member for Aberconwy
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3 January 2018

Dear Janet

Thank you for your emails of 7 and 8 December on behalf of your constituents regarding their concerns about Llys Meddyg GP surgery in Penmaenmawr.

I note your constituents concerns. I have written to Dr Peter Higson, chair of Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and asked him to consider the issues raised and provide you with a reply that can be shared with your constituents.

The Welsh Government is working in close collaboration with stakeholders in Wales to address GP recruitment challenges, which are not unique to Wales. As part the government commitment to *'take action to attract and train more GPs, nurses and other health professionals across Wales'*, a national and international campaign "This is Wales: Train, Work, Live", was launched in October 2016 to market Wales and NHS Wales as an attractive place for doctors, including GPs, to train work and live. The first year of the campaign and an associated package of incentives for GP trainees has resulted in a significant increase in the number of trainee GPs choosing Wales, particularly in areas that have traditionally found it difficult to recruit. The latest recruitment figures for North Wales show an increase in the overall number of GP training places filled, including in the Bangor Speciality Training Scheme, covering North West Wales

We are also committed to working with healthcare professionals to recruit and retain the workforce that we need in primary care. That will involve a change in the way that local healthcare is delivered with a different mix of healthcare professionals.

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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.

Our primary care workforce plan contains short and medium-term actions to improve primary care services in Wales. This includes diversifying the primary care workforce which will help to relieve some of the pressures on GPs in areas which are experiencing recruitment difficulties. The plan envisages using all the skills of the wider primary care workforce to allow GPs to focus on patients with the most complex conditions. GPs would also continue to have a key leadership role.

With regard to the point you raised about a medical school in north Wales, while I have not been persuaded of the need for a new medical school, I do believe there is a case for increased medical education to take place in north Wales. My decision was based upon advice I received following a series of discussions with key stakeholders across north Wales, the wider NHS family and the two current medical schools in Wales. I have also discussed and agreed how to take this matter forward with my Cabinet colleague, the Cabinet Secretary for Education.

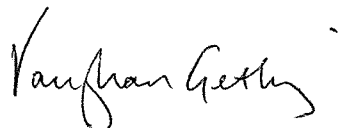
All parties have confirmed a willingness to work together to deliver programmes which would result in students having the option of spending a far greater period of their studies in north Wales.

The Welsh Government hosted a meeting on 21 September in Cardiff with stakeholders to consider what the education and training landscape should look like in north Wales and the opportunities, barriers and timescales involved.

I am pleased that we have been able to agree funding of £7million in next year's Budget to support our plans for the development of undergraduate medical education in north Wales. I have committed to providing an update about plans to take this expansion forward to Assembly Members by the end of the year.

Thank you again for writing to me on this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Vaughan Gething'.

Vaughan Gething AC/AM

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