

Victoria Borwick AM
Chair, Health and Public Services Committee

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Pam Chesters
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Dear Pam

Mental health and the London Health Improvement Board

The Health and Public Services Committee recently held a meeting about the challenges facing mental health services. At this meeting a number of mental health experts spoke about the importance of developing effective joint working between mental and physical health services. As I am sure you are aware, there is a great deal of evidence about the close relationship between mental and physical ill-health, and therefore a strong imperative to treat both together to achieve the best outcomes for patients. However, historically, services to treat physical health problems have been separate from those for mental health problems.

The clear links between mental health and alcohol misuse and mental health and obesity mean that I am writing on behalf of the Committee to ask you to ensure the London Health Improvement Board (LHIB) considers mental health in its work programmes on childhood obesity and alcohol.

The Committee also heard from experts about the importance of prevention and promotion work in achieving good mental health. Currently, only a tiny proportion of NHS funding is spent on these elements of mental health, despite evidence showing that effective prevention and promotion programmes can reduce long-term costs of treating mental health, as well as reducing the severity of mental illnesses. The Committee would therefore like the LHIB to consider a mental health promotion and prevention workstream focusing on children and young people when it comes to revise its work programme priorities.

I would be grateful if you could respond to this letter by 24 February.

Yours sincerely,



Victoria Borwick AM
Chair, Health and Public Services Committee

If you have any queries about this letter please contact Susannah Drury, Scrutiny Manager:
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