

Rebecca Evans AC/AM
Gweinidog Iechyd y Cyhoedd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Social Services and Public Health



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: MA-L/RE/0023/17

Dr Dai Lloyd AM
Chair of the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel,
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

31 January 2017

Dear Dai,

Public Health (Wales) Bill

Thank you for your letter on 24 January and for forwarding copies of the additional evidence the committee has received from the Royal College of Physicians and the Children's Commissioner for Wales.

Detailed consideration was given to the most appropriate age restriction for intimate piercing throughout the development of the Bill and the issue was also explored in depth during scrutiny by the previous Assembly.

In reaching the decision to set the age restriction at 16, a broad range of factors were taken into account. These included the views of stakeholders and the evidence submitted in response to Welsh Government consultations, as well as consideration of other types of activities, which are subject to restrictions at the ages of 16 and 18, and the full range of protections for children and young people provided under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). In particular, our approach intended to protect children and young people from harm without disproportionately trespassing on their rights to express themselves and make decisions about their own lives.

The committee's inquiry into the Bill has resulted in a number of stakeholders expressing a strong preference for raising the proposed age restriction for intimate piercing to 18, for a range of reasons. I have also noted the call from the Children's Commissioner for Wales, in her most recent letter to the committee for further consideration of information and evidence in this area. I have therefore instructed my officials to re-examine the evidence, particularly that which has recently emerged.

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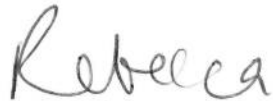
Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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.

Due to the complex and detailed work involved, this will take several weeks to complete. My intention is to consider the conclusions the committee reaches on this finely-balanced issue as part of its stage one review of the Bill and outline the Welsh Government's position when the general principles of the Bill are debated by the National Assembly.

I look forward to receiving the committee's report on the Bill's general principles shortly.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rebecca".

Rebecca Evans AC / AM

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Minister for Social Services and Public Health