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Mr James Dornan MSP  
Convener of the Education and Skills Committee  
The Scottish Parliament - T3.40  
EDINBURGH  
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Dear James

Thank you for your letter of 22 December regarding the Education and Skills Committee's discussion on the additional funding committed to mental health and your request for further information in relation to the allocation of this funding to support services for children and young people.

From the £150 million we have announced a £54.1 million package of support over 5 years to improve access to mental health services. Details of this allocation were provided in a letter sent to Boards in March 2016, a copy of this letter is attached separately. To summarise this funding included:

- £24.7 million to improve capacity to see more people more quickly;
- £24.6 million to improve workforce supply and train existing staff;
- £4.8 million through Healthcare Improvement Scotland for a Mental Health Access Improvement Support Team who will provide a comprehensive package of support to
- work in partnership with Boards to improve access to mental health services.

In addition to the funding announced to support improved access to services we have announced:

- £10 million over 2 years to support over 30 innovative tests of change in primary care mental health services, many of which focus on improving the physical health of people with severe and enduring mental illness; improving support available in rural areas and in areas of high social-deprivation. The third sector, including link workers will have a key role to play in this, signposting people to local community resources such as peer support, and helping them manage their own conditions.
- A £15 million Mental Health Innovation Fund to support better access to CAMHS and to develop innovative approaches to delivering mental health services.



- Alongside £1 million over 3 years to the Scottish Association of Mental Health to improve the physical health of those with mental health challenges and
- £4.2 million over 4 years to test and develop the effectiveness of distress brief interventions to better support people in distress who turn to frontline services.

The remaining funding will support the priorities in our forthcoming mental health strategy, to ensure we continue to improve access to services – including for children and young people – but also increase support for early intervention and prevention, to support people to keep well. This will include investment in early years; primary care, and parity of esteem between physical and mental health. We will take these future decisions in due course.

In addition there are many issues in the health and wellbeing of children and young people that are not mental health specific but that will help support and improve their mental health and wellbeing. These include using universal services, such as the new health visiting pathways, to support good mental health, prevention and early intervention and exploring with education colleagues how best to support mental wellbeing in schools, and to ensure that teachers are fully supported to deliver the mental wellbeing aspects of the Curriculum for Excellence. Education Scotland is supporting the delivery of 'Scotland's Mental Health First Aid: Young People' training nationally in secondary school communities for teachers. This will complement the range of initiatives and approaches to support mental health and mental wellbeing that local authorities already have in place.

Health and Wellbeing is also about the whole approach of the nursery, school, college or other setting. Children and young people should feel happy, safe, respected and included in the learning environment and all staff should be proactive in promoting positive relationships and behaviour in the classroom, playground, and wider learning community. The Scottish Government recognises the importance of nurturing approaches in addressing and overcoming the barriers that some children experience in school. This addresses many of the concerns around equity outlined within the Scottish Attainment Challenge. In response Education Scotland have developed national resources to support the development and practice of nurturing approaches for both primary and secondary schools. Education Scotland also provide training for school staff to support the development of positive relationships and behaviour in schools A whole school Nurturing Approach can promote school connectedness, resilience and the development of social and emotional competences all of which are key aspects of promoting mental wellbeing.

We recognise that treating people once they become ill is only part of the story. We want to support people to stay well which is why our new mental health strategy will focus on shifting the balance of care towards prevention and early intervention, particularly for children and young people. The strategy will set out the priorities that we think will deliver significant improvements in the mental health of the population of Scotland. Mental health outreach work will have a key role to play in this – supporting a shift to prevention and early intervention, but also protecting the rights of people with mental health challenges by reducing inequalities of access and treatment for people living with mental health problems.

**MAUREEN WATT**