



Department
of Health

From the Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP
Secretary of State for Health

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Ms Linda Burnip
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24 NOV 2017

De Ms Burnip,

Thank you for your letter of 7 November to Theresa May about the Mental Health Act (1983). As your correspondence relates to health it was passed to this Department.

The Government has commissioned an independent review of the Act because we are absolutely committed to delivering parity of esteem between mental and physical health. We want to ensure that people experiencing severe mental ill health receive the treatment and support they need when they need it, are treated with dignity, and that their liberty and autonomy is respected as far as possible.

The Prime Minister has asked Professor Wessely to lead an independent review of the Act because he is one of the most widely respected and experienced leaders this country has in the field of mental health. Professor Wessely will be assisted by three vice chairs who have a variety of experience, and will be consulting widely with stakeholders as part of the review process.

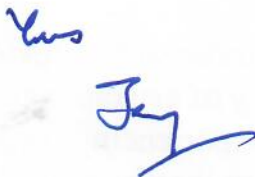
The Review will work very closely with people who have lived experience of the Act. In the Review's Terms of Reference, the Government was clear that the review should closely involve past and current service users and carers in all aspects of its work, and should:

- seek to understand practice across different local areas;
- engage widely with stakeholders; and
- make recommendations that have broad support among service users, carers, relevant professionals, and organisations.

On the subject of the management of chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis (CFS/ME) and the PACE trial, which examined the benefits of certain treatments, including graded exercise therapy, I do understand that this is an illness that can have a serious impact on people's health and wellbeing.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) exists to evaluate the efficacy and cost effectiveness of medical interventions. NICE has long supported the therapeutic approaches that Professor Wessely is associated with. On 20 September, NICE announced plans to undertake a full review of its CFS/ME guidance, including around the evidence for treatment approaches such as graded exercise therapy, to ensure its advice reflects the latest available evidence. The NICE Guideline Committee that will be assembled to develop the guidance will include people with the condition and their carers, the healthcare professionals who treat them, and the organisations that commission the treatment.

I hope this reply is helpful and would be grateful if you would share it with your co-signatories.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jey' with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

JEREMY HUNT