

**REPLY BY THE PRESIDENT OF  
THE COMMITTEE FOR HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE  
TO QUESTIONS POSED BY DEPUTY ST PIER PURSUANT TO RULE 14 OF THE  
RULES OF PROCEDURE**

**1. Following the publication in July of the Commission on Young Lives Report, ‘Heads Up. Rethinking mental health services for vulnerable young people,’ ([COYL-Heads-Up-Report-July-2022.pdf](https://thecommissiononyounglives.co.uk/COYL-Heads-Up-Report-July-2022.pdf) ([thecommissiononyounglives.co.uk](https://thecommissiononyounglives.co.uk))) given that many of the same issues impact the mental health of young people in our community, can the Committee please consider and advise which of the report’s recommendations have application in the Bailiwick to meet local need and how the Committee intends to address any such recommendations?**

Our professional team continually receive and evaluate reports relevant to their clinical practice, from the NHS and further afield, to keep up to date with best practice and developments. It is valuable to understand what other jurisdictions are doing in critical areas of health and care, such as mental health, to see what can be applied in the local context and this applies to the Commission on Young Lives Report (COYL Report). At the same time, it must be acknowledged that the experience of the pandemic, access to services and levels of deprivation for children and young people in England is markedly different to that in the Bailiwick. This means that it can sometimes be difficult to extrapolate and apply recommendations, such as those in the COYL Report.

In the first instance, therefore, those working in mental health services feel it is more appropriate to be focused on addressing the recommendations of the forthcoming Gedze report and taking steps to address recognised gaps in service provision arising from the recent mapping of services being delivered across all sectors. The feedback from Mr Gedze’s most recent time spent in the Island, which is based on the feedback and experiences of service users and stakeholders in Guernsey and Alderney (including States Members), will be a more appropriate and accurate means to make the necessary changes in our mental health and wellbeing services, reflecting the specifics of the Bailiwick context.

Without wishing to discuss the most recent findings of Mr Gedze’s work before publication later this month, his earlier work recognised some similar challenges to those identified in the COYL Report, such as the importance of integrated and joined-up services, better signposting and the need for clear pathways for various diagnoses. The 2018 report did, however, identify that HSC’s secondary care mental health services are generally well-resourced and that individuals requiring support have access to a variety of evidenced based interventions.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are aware that the COVID-19 pandemic has placed additional pressures on our children and young people in respect of their mental health and wellbeing, and work has already been undertaken to further enhance our mental

health provision in this area. For example, in response to the need to maintain the standards of timely initial responses, an additional post within the Service has been recently granted. Young people at risk of serious harm or suicide have always been assessed as emergencies. Partnership work is currently in progress with the voluntary sector and with Education Services to train three Educational Mental Health Practitioners and a Supervisor to provide face to face mental health support within schools from this academic term. CAMHS is also working closely with the Youth Commission and Action for Children to provide creative activities for young people as well as working in partnership with Education to address the numbers of young people struggling to access school.

The Committee would also add that the response to, and recovery from, the various issues brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic is reliant on the community as a whole and not just mental health services. The importance of this is acknowledged in the COYL Report, which highlights that housing issues, poverty, school attendance and living with parents who have mental health problems, addictions or where there is domestic violence, are strong drivers of poor children's mental health. Importantly, steps are being taken, on a cross-Committee basis, to address many of these areas through various Government Work Plan priorities, supplementing the multi-agency work that takes place at an operational level.

In the meantime, should any further information be required, clinicians working in this area would be happy to discuss the experiences of the pandemic in the local context and the specific needs in this area.

**Date of receipt of questions:** 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2022

**Date of response:** 7<sup>th</sup> September 2022