

Reference M2B/MC/01

Mencap Cymru response to Covid Inquiry request for evidence under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006, Module 2B of the UK Covid-19 Public Inquiry ("the Inquiry")

Mencap have previously provided responses to questionnaires on 28 November 2022 and 8 December 2022 (attached) and the Inquiry is referred to those for further detail which is not repeated in this response.

1. A brief overview of the history, legal status and aims of the organisation or body.

Please explain whether the work of the organisation or body is UK wide, or is instead confined to Wales only.

Royal Mencap Society, a charitable company registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales, operates across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. See previous submissions of 28 November 2022.

2. A brief description of the group(s) which the organisation or body supports or represents.

See previous submissions from RMS dated 28 November 2022 (particularly question 2).

3. A brief overview of the work of the organisation or body in supporting or representing the relevant group(s) between January 2020 and May 2022 as it relates to the response to Covid-19 of (i) the UK Government; and/or (ii) the Welsh Government.

- (i) See RMS submissions dated 28 November 2022 and 8 December 2022.**
- (ii) Mencap Cymru is a member of the Wales Learning Disability Consortium and during the pandemic, Welsh Government officials met weekly with members of the Consortium to present updates and listen to the issues affecting people with a learning disability. We also had representation on various Public Health Wales Vaccines Task and Finish Groups relating to Covid Responses.**

The Learning Disability Consortium are the 6 third sector organisations which sit on the Learning Disability Ministerial Advisory Group in Wales. The Consortium members are Learning Disability Wales, All Wales People First, All Wales Forum of Parent/Carers, Downs Syndrome Association, Cymorth Cymru and Mencap Cymru and usually meet monthly in addition to the formal meetings of the Ministerial Advisory Group. The Consortium represent the voices of people with a learning disability and family carers

and providers of support services and is a direct route into Ministers and officials in Government.

During the Pandemic, we would raise issues of concern to our membership such as prioritisation, access to accessible information and DNACPR and make recommendations to Government on how to address these concerns.

4. A list of any articles or reports the organisation or body has published or contributed to, and/or evidence it has given (for example to UK Parliament or Senedd Select Committees) regarding the impact on the group(s) which the organisation or body supports or represents of the response to Covid-19 by (i) the UK Government; and/or (ii) the Welsh Government. Please include links to those documents where possible.

(iii) See our response dated 28 November 2022 and 8 December 2022.

**(i) The consortium recommended to WG a single point of contact for information on Covid. This was hosted on the Learning Disability Website:
<https://www.ldw.org.uk/project/coronavirus/>**

It also promoted the use of the Wales Learning Disability Helpline as the route for advice and information and the freephone 0808 8000 300 was given on all communication from Public Health Wales in relation to shielding and vaccinations

5. The view of the organisation or body as to whether the group(s) it supports or represents was adequately considered when decisions about the response to Covid-19 were made by (i) the UK Government; and/or (ii) the Welsh Government. Please also explain the reasons for the view expressed by the organisation or body in this respect.

(i) See RMS submission dated 28 November 2022 and 8 December 2022.

(ii) The three key areas of concern which we were required to influence were lock down rules and supported living settings, accessible information & DNACPR. Officials from Welsh Government also ensured the LD Consortium met with Chief Medical Officer for Wales and Chief Nursing Officer for Wales and produced information in an accessible format through the Easy Read Wales Service in Wales.

We also had regular meetings with both the Equality & Social Justice Minister Jane Hutt and Deputy Minister for Social Services Julie Morgan.

We believe the relationship with Government Officials and Political Leaders was respectful and collaborative and colleagues on the LD Consortium were involved in any meeting where the needs of vulnerable people were being considered.

We were very pleased that all vaccination communications in Wales contained the number of the Wales Learning Disability Helpline operated by Mencap Cymru and staff on this helpline were invited to meetings with PHW officials before any changes to Covid guidance were announced to ensure the helpline team were able to draft appropriate responses when they were called.

6. Whether the organisation or body raised any concerns about the consideration being given to the group(s) which it supports or represents with (i) the UK Government; and/or (ii) the Welsh Government, when those governments were making decisions about their response to Covid-19. Please provide a list of any such correspondence or meetings with (i) the UK Government; and/or (ii) the Welsh Government, including the dates on which the body or organisation wrote or such meetings were held, to whom the correspondence was addressed or with whom the meeting was held, and any response received from the UK Government or the Welsh Government addressing such concerns.

<https://www.itv.com/news/wales/2020-03-19/disabled-people-likely-to-face-harm-from-coronavirus-outbreak>

<https://www.itv.com/news/wales/2021-02-23/mum-says-daughter-with-learning-disability-should-have-been-given-covid-vaccine-urgently>

<https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-04/joint-cmo-cno-letter-on-dnacpr.pdf>

7. A brief summary of the views of the organisation or body as to any lessons, if any, that can be learned from any consideration which was given to the group(s) that the organisation or body supports or represents by (i) the UK Government; and/or (ii) the Welsh Government when they were making decisions about their response to Covid-19.

See RMS submissions dated 28 November 2022 and 8 December 2022.