

Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP
Secretary of State for Health & Social Care
Department for Health and Social Care
39 Victoria St.
London
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Sent by email: mb-sofs@dhsc.gov.uk

16th March 2022

Dear Secretary of State,

Mental Health and Integrated Care Boards

We are writing as leaders of the major mental health charities to ask you to retain Lord Bradley's amendment 12 in the Health and Care Bill. This would ensure that the Bill gives full parity to mental health at all levels of government, including within integrated care systems.

There is a great deal that we welcome in the Bill, and we have been pleased to see some very significant improvements since it was first presented to Parliament. We would like to express our thanks to you and your colleagues for listening and for reinforcing the importance of parity in the new health and care system. One of the final remaining steps is ensuring that mental health has a voice in the new local structures.

We were pleased to hear that you regard integrated care systems as having a critical role in prevention when you set out your vision for the health system on the 8th March.

As currently presented to Parliament, mental health representation is required neither within integrated care boards nor integrated care partnerships. This is likely to have a negative impact on both treatment and population-level prevention of mental health problems.

Without such mandated representation, mental health is too easily overlooked or side-lined when decisions about priorities and resources are made. Even in areas where mental health is represented, the lack of a statutory requirement for representation means that its voice could be eroded over time.

Lord Bradley's amendment 12, which was passed in the House of Lords, would require integrated care boards to include a member with knowledge of mental health. It is worded broadly enough that it allows local systems a great deal of flexibility, so that they are not limited in who they appoint with the relevant expertise and can focus on treatment and prevention.

We strongly urge you to ensure that, when the Bill returns to the Commons, the effect of this amendment - to mandate mental health representation on integrated care boards - is retained. We would of course be very happy to work on this with your officials, who have already been very helpful. We support your vision

for prevention and share your ambition that the reformed health and care system should enable local systems to work flexibly and effectively for better mental health in every part of the country. The new architecture of the system needs to be consistent with this ambition, and we believe that the changes recently made in Parliament now provide a strong foundation for this to be realised in practice.

We would be delighted to meet with you or one of your ministers to discuss this: please contact Oliver Chantler at the Mental Health Foundation (ochantler@mentalhealth.org.uk) to arrange this.

Your sincerely,



Simon Blake OBE
Chief Executive
Mental Health First Aid England



Sean Duggan
Chief Executive
Mental Health Network



Paul Farmer
Chief Executive
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Sarah Hughes
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Centre for Mental Health



Dr Adrian James
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Emma Thomas
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Mark Winstanley
Chief Executive
Rethink Mental Illness

CC
Edward Argar MP
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