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Convener
Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

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11 January 2023

Dear Gillian

Final Report - Independent Oversight and Assurance Group on Tayside's Mental Health Services

I write to inform you that the Independent Oversight and Assurance Group on Tayside's Mental Health Services has submitted its Final Report to me. I have accepted the report and it was made publicly available on the Scottish Government [website](#) this morning. I have also updated Parliament, and announced the report's publication, by way of a Government Initiated Question (GIQ).

You will recall that I appointed the Oversight Group in October 2021 to provide independent scrutiny and assurance on the progress being made by partners across Tayside, to fully implement the 51 recommendations arising from [Trust and Respect](#).

As a result, the Oversight Group has played a critical role in supporting the sustainable change that is required to improve the delivery of Tayside's mental health services. It is commendable how the Oversight Group has worked with Tayside Executive Partners; the mental health workforce; third sector organisations; and how they have placed those with lived experience at the heart of their considerations.

I am encouraged that the Final Report from the Oversight Group is largely positive and that it demonstrates the progress which has been made in several key areas. It does, however, highlight six priority areas for action where further work is required. The Scottish Government will therefore continue to support sustainable change and improvements in Tayside. We will do this through engagement with the Tayside Executive Partners and by working with colleagues across the Health Board, Chief Officers and the Integration Joint Boards across the three local authorities, to ensure that a detailed improvement plan is in place which has clear milestones and deliverables to ensure the safe and effective delivery of mental health services.

A copy of the full GIQ is included at Annex A of this letter.

I trust this information is useful.

Best wishes.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Stewart". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

KEVIN STEWART

GOVERNMENT INITIATED QUESTION (GIQ)**Question:**

To ask the Scottish Government what progress has been made by the Independent Oversight and Assurance Group on Tayside's Mental Health Services to take assurance that partners across Tayside are making improvements to the delivery of mental health services; and that progress has been made in responding to the findings and recommendations from Trust and Respect, published in February 2020.

Answer:

The Final Report from the Oversight Group has been published today on the Scottish Government website: <https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781805254362>.

Overall, the report is positive. It highlights where progress has clearly been made but also states a number of areas where further work is required.

The Scottish Government will continue to support sustainable change and improvements in Tayside, to ensure the safe and effective delivery of mental health services. We will work with partners in Tayside to ensure a detailed improvement plan is in place, with clear milestones and deliverables which progress the key areas for action detailed within the Oversight Group's Final Report.

We will measure progress against agreed key deliverables in this plan, working closely with NHS Tayside, Local Authorities, Integration Joint Boards, the Chief Officer for Mental Health and other Chief Officers in Tayside. These arrangements will inform whether NHS Tayside can be deescalated from Level 3 to Level 2 for Mental Health Services in the future.

The Scottish Government will provide additional support to colleagues across Tayside, including access to advice and support from Professional Advisors and Senior Officials in the Mental Health Directorate to support progress.

I would like to thank the Oversight Group for the meticulous approach to this work. I have particularly welcomed the wide engagement the Chair and Members have had with staff and people with experience of using mental health services across Tayside, which has been a critical aspect in the successful delivery of this very challenging, but extremely important, programme of work.