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Deputy Doublet
Chair, Health and Social Security Panel

BY EMAIL

30 April 2024

Dear Chair,

Re: Women's Health Strategy

Thank you for your letter dated 25 April. As the Deputy will be aware, following the response to Oral Question 28/2024 provided by my Assistant Minister Deputy Howell in the Assembly today, the proposed decision not to produce a standalone Women's Health Strategy was discussed and agreed at the Women's Health Political Advisory Group (the "Group") on Wednesday 3 April 2024.

In agreeing this decision, the Group recognised that there are limited staff resources that can be allocated to developing a stand-alone strategy as the Health Policy Team is fully engaged in other essential work, such as revisions to the Mental Health Law and the Capacity Law, development of a proposed new Adult Safeguarding Law, health funding reform, whole system strategy development, assisted dying, regulation of medicinal cannabis prescribing, and a review of Medicines Law and Misuse of Drugs Law.

The Group decided it should focus on work that is already in train – which includes the Termination of Pregnancy Law ("ToP"), In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) and contraception services – rather than divert officer resource to the production of a standalone and unfunded Women's Health strategy, particularly given that, as matters stand, additional investment will most probably be required to deliver ToP, IVF and contraception service improvements.

I would add that the women's health and wellbeing public consultation is still ongoing and, once the Group has had an opportunity to reflect on the findings of that consultation, they will publish a statement of intent, setting out other priority issues they will seek to address once they have supported delivery of their current activity.

I trust the above is of assistance to the panel.

Yours sincerely,



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