

## SAMPLE LETTER

### **RE: DRAFT BUDGET CONSULTATION – MENTAL HEALTH ALLOCATION**

I am writing to express my concern about the meagre allocation to Mental Health and Learning Disability Services in the Draft Budget over the next 3 years. When overall spending on Mental Health, the required efficiency savings and inflation are taken into account it seems that this represents no real growth in spending for Mental Health and Learning Disability. It is very disappointing and is inconsistent with the Executives stated priorities of Health, Mental Health, Social inclusion and Equality.

There are many areas in Mental Health Services which require development to improve them to a standard provided elsewhere in the UK. Some of these include the development of Psychiatric Liaison services in the acute hospital. The acute hospitals including A&E Departments are the location where a lot of Mental Health crisis initially present. The development of Psychiatric Liaison services should also include Perinatal psychiatric services for women at risk of severe mental illness following child-birth.

I would also like to highlight the need for the development of specialist Psychotherapy services within Mental Health Services throughout Northern Ireland. Despite Mental Health professionals willingness to develop these Services they have been severely limited due to lack of specific and dedicated resources.

I would appeal to the Executive to consider these specific Service needs and provide for them by increasing the Budget allocation to Mental Health Services.

Yours

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CONSULTANT PSYCHIATRIST

Other examples of Service Development needs:

- Access to Services for the following most overlooked groups, older people, prisoners, adolescents, the learning disabled and the physically ill with mental health problems.
- Sufficient bed capacity for inpatients to be admitted locally.
- Development of Rehabilitation and Recovery Services with opportunities for education, training and paid work.
- Development of a range of staffed hostels and sheltered housing.