



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SECURITY

Alexander Fleming House, Elephant & Castle, London SE1 6BY

Telephone 01-407 5522

From the Secretary of State for Social Services

The Rt Hon William Whitelaw CH MC MP
 Secretary of State for the Home Department
 Home Office
 50 Queen Anne's Gate
 LONDON
 SW1

November 17 1982.

Joe Willie.

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE MISUSE OF DRUGS: REPORT ON TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION

The report of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs on treatment and rehabilitation is now ready for publication.

In your letter of 3 June you suggested that recommendations of the Advisory Council which justified immediate action should be implemented as soon as possible, and that an early statement should be issued to clarify the Government's intentions on the report. I agree and have prepared a draft statement which I enclose.

We believe it important that new initiatives should be taken in this field and that health and local authorities' responsibilities should be emphasised. I suggest in the statement that we accept the key recommendations of the Council for the assessment in each region of the nature of the drug problem, for the development of regional policies, and for improved controls on medical prescribing.

I believe we must consult authorities on the practical implications of implementing other specific recommendations and I suggest that copies of the report should be widely distributed for this purpose. We propose issuing the report to health and local authorities in England and to the national voluntary and professional organisations on the enclosed list.

We are anxious that consultations should not delay authorities and voluntary bodies in preparing the ground for new initiatives and are therefore making £2 million available for pump-priming grants on the lines recommended in the report. This money would be available for schemes brought forward in the coming financial year.

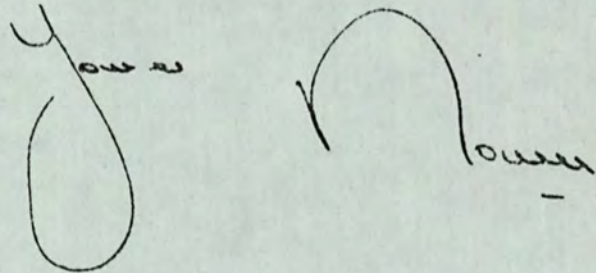
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I would propose making the statement in reply to an inspired written PQ, in which I might also announce on your behalf and on behalf of the other Health Departments any other immediate responses that are to be made. The reply could then be appended to a brief press release to issue from this Department.

I am copying this letter to Keith Joseph, James Prior, George Younger and Nicholas Edwards, and will be grateful for your and their views on the approach proposed. If it is acceptable, I would be grateful for advice on what in particular should be said in reply to the PQ about the action and parallel consultation which is envisaged by the Home Office and in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland; and what reference should be made to the interest of the Department of Education and Science in aspects of the recommendations on Education, training and research.

Subject to your views, I propose fixing the date for publication for 30 November.

I would be grateful for early replies to allow time for the necessary arrangements to be made.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Norman Fowler'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large loop for the 'N' and a long tail for the 'F'.

NORMAN FOWLER

ENC

DRAFT PQ AND REPLY

PQ: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Services, when the report of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs on treatment and rehabilitation is to be published; and what action the Government proposes to take.

SUGGESTED REPLY

The Advisory Council's report is published today. The report spells out the changing nature and growing problem of drug misuse. It shows the effect on individuals, their relatives and friends, and on the work of health and social services agencies, the police, the courts and the probation service. It gives an overall view of treatment and rehabilitation services currently provided for drug misusers and makes recommendations for their strengthening and development.

The Council challenges the "traditional" tendency to treat specific forms of addiction. It advocates instead a broader approach aimed at responding towards the whole range of problems encountered by drug misusers. As the council says, what is needed is "a long-term response which can bring about enduring change in the drug misuser's behaviour".

We welcome this report and are grateful to the Council for its work. Drug misuse is a major social problem with grave consequences that we cannot ignore. This field has not had adequate attention in the past and it is clear that new initiatives must now be taken.

We accept the Council's view that prime responsibility for the provision and development of services should remain at local level. This is consistent with our general policy for the health and personal social services.

It is important that each regional health authority should in consultation with local authorities, assess the extent of drug problems in its region - as the report recommends - and monitor the effectiveness of services in dealing with them. Each region must develop a policy for meeting local needs in this field, and we shall be following up developments under the arrangements introduced this year for improving the accountability of the health service.

Recommendations are made in the report for the establishment of regional drug problem teams and of drug advisory committees in each district. Arrangements are being made for the report to be widely distributed to health and local authorities and to voluntary and professional bodies for their comments on these and other specific recommendations, including the Council's suggestions for the development of hospital based treatment services, advisory and counselling services, and residential facilities and for improvements in training.

The report deals with prescribing safeguards. We believe it important to look in detail at the role of doctors in the treatment of drug misuse and at prescribing patterns, including the criticisms made of the prescribing practice of certain doctors. I am arranging for a special conference of the medical profession to be held in the New Year. As a matter of urgency my right hon Friend, the Secretary of State for Home Affairs, has already invited comments from the medical profession on the Council's recommendation that current licensing arrangements for the prescription of heroin and cocaine should be extended to include dipipanone.

My right hon Friends and I are concerned about the deficiencies in services which the report highlights and are anxious that the need to engage in consultations should not delay authorities in preparing the ground for new initiatives.

We are therefore making available £2 million for grants to authorities and voluntary bodies in England to enable them to bring forward schemes in the coming financial year. Grants will be made on a pump-priming basis - as recommended in the report and we shall be inviting proposals. Notes have been prepared on the sorts of schemes we wish to encourage. We shall be inviting comments on these with a view to issuing guidelines early in the New Year. I look forward to an imaginative response from authorities and voluntary organisations.

[My right hon Friend the Secretary of State for Home Affairs.....]

[In Scotland,.....]

[In Wales,]

[In Northern Ireland,.....]



QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

26/11/82
Book
mja

25 November 1982

Dear Norman

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE MISUSE OF DRUGS:
REPORT ON TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION

Thank you for your letter of 18 November with which you enclosed a draft statement which you propose to make, by inspired written P.Q., on 30 November.

I am glad that you are able to make a positive and early response to this report. I agree that we should accept straight-away the key recommendations of the Council for the assessment in each region of the nature of the drug problem, for the development of regional policies and for improved controls on medical prescribing.

I am content with the proposed timing and with the general approach adopted in your draft, but think it would appear a more unified response if the few specific Home Office points were incorporated at suitable points in the body of the statement, rather than being gathered together in a separate paragraph. They concern areas where there is a considerable overlap in the interests of our Departments. For convenience they are incorporated in the revised draft which I am enclosing.

I think it is particularly helpful that you are in a position to make £2 million available for pump-priming grants on the lines recommended in the report. This should be seen as tangible evidence of a constructive Government response to the worsening situation of drug abuse. Indeed you might like to consider strengthening the third paragraph of the draft reply slightly in the way suggested in the enclosed redraft.

I have asked my officials to get in touch with yours concerning the bodies that will need to be consulted. But I would not think it is necessary in this statement to go further than the general reference you make to consulting "voluntary and professional bodies".

I am copying this letter to the recipients of yours.

Norman
Fowler

SECRET
For advice
Mr. Pearson
Mr. King; Mr. Walker
Mr. Taylor; Mr. Sutton
Mr. Calder
Mr. Smith; Mr. White
CYLC 26/11

The Rt. Hon. Norman Fowler, M.P.

DRAFT PQ AND REPLY

PQ: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Services, when the report of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs on treatment and rehabilitation is to be published; and what action the Government proposes to take.

SUGGESTED REPLY

The Advisory Council's report is published today. The report spells out the changing nature and growing problem of drug misuse. It shows the effect on individuals, their relatives and friends, and on the work of health and social services agencies, the police, the courts and the probation service. It gives an overall view of treatment and rehabilitation services currently provided for drug misusers and makes recommendations for their strengthening and development.

The Council challenges the "traditional" tendency to treat specific forms of addiction. It advocates instead a broader approach aimed at responding towards the whole range of problems encountered by drug misusers. As the council says, what is needed is "a long-term response which can bring about enduring change in the drug misuser's behaviour".

We welcome this report and are grateful to the Council for its work. My right hon Friends and I recognise the challenge posed by the growth of drug misuse to which the Council has drawn attention and are determined to respond positively. Drug misuse is a major social problem with grave consequences that we cannot ignore. This field has not had adequate attention in the past and it is clear that new initiatives must now be taken.

We accept the Council's view that prime responsibility for the provision and development of services should remain at local level. This is consistent with our general policy for the health and personal social services.

It is important that each regional health authority should in consultation with local authorities, assess the extent of drug problems in its region - as the report recommends - and monitor the effectiveness of services in dealing with them. Each region must develop a policy for meeting local needs in this field, and we shall be following up developments under the arrangements introduced

this year for improving the accountability of the health service.

Recommendations are made in the report for the establishment of regional drug problem teams and of drug advisory committees in each district. Arrangements are being made for the report to be widely distributed to health and local authorities and to voluntary and professional bodies for their comments on these and other specific recommendations, including the Council's suggestions for the development of hospital based treatment services, advisory and counselling services, and residential facilities and for improvements in training. As recommended by the Council, such statistical data as is maintained centrally will be made available at regional and district level.

The report deals with prescribing safeguards. We believe it important to look in detail at the role of doctors in the treatment of drug misuse and at prescribing patterns, including the criticisms made of the prescribing practice of certain doctors. I am arranging for a special conference of the medical profession to be held in the New Year. As a matter of urgency my right hon Friend, the Secretary of State for Home Affairs, has already invited comments from the profession and other interested bodies on the Council's recommendation that current licensing arrangements for the prescription of heroin and cocaine should be extended to include dipipanone. He is also considering ways in which the tribunal procedure established under the ^{Misuse of Drugs Act 1971} to deal with irresponsible prescribing might be made more effective and less time consuming; at the same time investigation will continue into the prescribing practices of a number of doctors.

My right hon Friends and I are concerned about the deficiencies in services which the report highlights and are anxious that the need to engage in consultations should not delay authorities in preparing the ground for new initiatives.

We are therefore making available £2 million for grants to authorities and voluntary bodies in England to enable them to bring forward schemes in the coming financial year. Grants will be made on a pump-priming basis - as recommended in the report and we shall be inviting proposals. Notes have been prepared on the sorts of schemes we wish to encourage. We shall be inviting comments on these with a view to issuing guidelines early in the New Year.

I look forward to an imaginative response from authorities and voluntary organisations.

[In Scotland,]

[In Wales,]

[In Northern Ireland,]

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mail



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01-233 6106 (Llinell Union)

WELSH OFFICE
GWYDYR HOUSE
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01-233 6106 (Direct Line)

Oddi wrth Ysgrifennydd Gwladol Cymru The Rt. Hon Nicholas Edwards MP From The Secretary of State for Wales

SECRET
To: Mrs Pearson
Mr Vennings, Mrs Walden
Mr Joyce, Miss Barber
Mr Wodder, Mr Scott
Whyte.
SENT 29/11
29 November 1982

Dear Secretary of State,

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE MISUSE OF DRUGS: REPORT ON TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION

You sent me a copy of your letter of 19 November to Willie Whitelaw with which you enclosed a draft of the statement which you propose to make about the ACMD Report on treatment and rehabilitation when you publish it.

I endorse your conclusions on the Report and have no objection to your proposal to publish it next Tuesday, 30 November. We shall conduct a parallel consultation in Wales with health and local authorities, voluntary bodies and professional organisations.

I am considering whether to provide pump-priming funds in Wales on the same basis as you propose for England. Bearing in mind that the problem is not on the same scale here, I propose to consider first the response to the consultation.

For your statement I suggest a passage as follows:-

"My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Wales will be consulting Welsh interests on the Report's recommendations insofar as they are relevant to the situation in Wales and will decide what further action should be taken in the light of comments received."

I understand that this is what George Younger proposes for Scotland. If so, please feel free to draft an omnibus text covering both Scotland and Wales.

I am copying this letter to Willie Whitelaw, Keith Joseph, Jim Prior and George Younger.

Yours sincerely,
Keith Davies

The Rt Hon Norman Fowler MP
Secretary of State for Social Services
Department of Health and Social
Security
Alexander Fleming House
Elephant and Castle
LONDON SE1 6BY

Approved by the
Secretary of State
and signed in his
absence