



Department
of Health

From Rt Hon Norman Lamb MP
Minister of State for Care and Support

Department of Health
Richmond House
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POC3000904431
Councillor Lucy Howvells
Durham Health and Wellbeing Board
Country Hall
Durham
NR12 8YR

04 DEC 2014

Dear Councillor Howvells,

I am writing to congratulate you for signing your local Crisis Declaration in Durham & Darlington.

As you may know, I am personally committed to doing everything I can to drive improvements in crisis care given my belief that, currently, the lack of parity of esteem is most stark in this area. I want to make sure that Declarations cover the whole country by the end of the year so that we rapidly spread and share best practice, and I am very pleased to see the positive movement in Durham & Darlington. I would like to thank you for your leadership to date and to pay tribute to Karen Turner, Senior Commissioning Support Officer (Mental Health), for her hard work in getting you to this stage.

It is imperative that the Crisis Care Concordat leads to real change across the country. Many areas – yours included – are already developing exciting plans but we owe it to service users to ensure that transformation happens everywhere. I would therefore now urge you to work together with all local partners in Durham & Darlington to build on the Declaration and move forward in drawing up a comprehensive Action Plan.

The Department of Health has contracted Mind to help support you in this work. They have produced a Concordat website at <http://www.crisiscareconcordat.org.uk/> which contains a map that will display progress on ensuring every local area has a Declaration in place by the end of the calendar year. There are also resources available on the website to assist you in drawing up your Action Plan, including approved Plans that have already been submitted by other local areas.

My officials and colleagues at Mind stand ready to assist you as you progress and I look forward to hearing further about your work in Durham & Darlington.

I am copying this letter to your co-leads, Councillor Bill Dixon, Darlington Health and Wellbeing Board, and Michael Houghton, Director of Commissioning and Development. I would be grateful if you could circulate this letter to the other signatories of your local Declaration so that they too can see how much I personally appreciate your collective efforts.

Congratulations once again.

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NORMAN LAMB

Thanks so much for your leadership!