

Vaughan Gething MS
Minister for Economy
Welsh Government

Dear Minister

I am writing first to offer my sincere thanks to you for speaking at the most recent meeting of the Cross Party Group on Medical Research. I am particularly thankful for your insights around the potential of Medical Research to contribute to Wales's economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and hope that you will consider the contributions of the Fraser of Allander Institute and British Heart Foundation Cymru this in any future budget discussion.

I understand your time is valuable and we appreciate your attendance for the limited time you have available. I have included with this letter the minutes of the meeting for your perusal. As you will see from the minutes after your contribution to the meeting, there were several areas of discussion which I promised Members of the Group I would raise with you for your response.

1. Though the team were able to construct an appropriate model with accurate findings, James Black who worked on the Fraser of Allander Institute report explained how the methodology for the study was constrained in its ability to model and compare Wales against the other UK nations. The team were unable to access the Input-Output table from the Welsh Government, preventing them from constructing a high-quality model for Wales. James explained that this apparent lack of transparency is being reconsidered by the Welsh Government. Are you able to shine further light on the situation and reassure the CPG that the Input-Output table will be made available for researchers to utilise in future studies?
2. The news that the Welsh Government will in the not-too-distant future consult on its new cross-portfolio Research and Innovation strategy is welcome. The commitment you made to write to me as Chair of the CPG to draw upon the Group's insight and expertise is also welcome.
3. Due to the cross-cutting nature of the planned strategy the CPG will also send copies of this covering note and CPG minutes to relevant Senedd scrutiny committee Chairs and Clerks to ensure they are also aware of this critically important piece of work in terms of their forward work planning. Any timetable from the Welsh Government concerning publication of a draft strategy for consultation would be welcome.

4. The CPG would also welcome your thoughts concerning whether the new strategy will come with a commitment to increased Welsh Government spending on medical research infrastructure which is desperately needed.
5. You shared with the CPG insight concerning the meetings you have had with the UK Government at which you lobbied on behalf of research in Wales. Can the Welsh Government furnish the CPG with a more detailed briefing on the content and scope of these meetings. This will assist the CPG in establishing recommendations which support an inter-Governmental approach.
6. Finally, my colleague Altaf Hussein MS described his own personal frustration developing a surgical innovation, and the lack of support for realising an idea. We would welcome your thoughts concerning the Welsh Government support available to individuals to innovate in a clinical setting.

Once again, your contribution was appreciated by all who attended the meeting of the CPG and we all look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Russell George". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

Russell George MS

Chair, the Cross Party Group on Medical Research

Cc.

Clerk, Health and Social Care Committee

Chair and Clerk, Children, Young People and Education Committee

Chair and Clerk, Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee

Chair and Clerk, Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

Altaf Hussein MS