



Jayne Bryant MS
Chair
Children, Young People and Education Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

15 January 2024

Dear Jayne Bryant MS,

RE: Senedd Children, Young People and Education Committee evidence session with the Minister for Health and Social Services on Thursday 11 January

We are aware that comments were made by the Minister for Health and Social Services in response to Laura Anne Jones MS's question on speech and language therapy support at the committee scrutiny session last week.

The Minister stated that there has been an 11% increase in speech and language therapy training places in the past year. Training places for speech and language therapy have not increased since 2020 despite the advent of a second course at Wrexham University and have remained at 49. We understand that an anticipated increase of 8% in training places (from 49-53) for 2024/25 is not now due to go ahead due to budget pressures. We have repeatedly raised concerns that the Wrexham course is the smallest course in the UK (10-11 places) and that our membership data suggests that we have less speech and language therapists in Wales than any other part of the United Kingdom. We recognise the Minister's comments with regards placements but wanted to place on record that both our higher education institutions and health boards believe that the expansion of commissioning places is both possible and necessary.

We would be grateful if this letter could be brought before the attention of the committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pippa Cotterill'.

Pippa Cotterill,
Head of Wales Office, Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists