



Health and Social Care Committee

House of Commons London SW1A 0AA

Tel: 020 7219 6182 Fax 020 7219 5171 Email: hsccom@parliament.uk

Website: www.parliament.uk/hsccom Twitter: [@CommonsHealth](https://twitter.com/CommonsHealth)

From Rt Hon. Jeremy Hunt MP

Sir Bernard Jenkin
Chair of the House of Commons Liaison Committee

17 March 2022

Dear Bernard,

The Health and Social Care Select Committee published a report entitled 'Children and young people's mental health' on 9 December 2021. The Department's response to our report was published today, 17 March 2022, as a Command Paper.

I wanted to write to you to express our concern about the response itself. While the response engages with the detail of our recommendations, we noted that, in response to almost half of the 25 recommendations we had made, the Government stated that it was "considering" them. After three months, we do not think it is acceptable for the Department simply to send a holding response, saying that it is "considering" recommendations, which enables it to evade further scrutiny. To respond in such a way is disrespectful not only to the Committee, but to all those witnesses who gave candid evidence, in some instances about very difficult personal experiences.

I have written to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care today to urge him to instruct his Department to send a further response addressing the 11 recommendations which the Government said it was "considering" and making it clear whether the ultimate result of this consideration is that the Government accepts or rejects the recommendations.

I would be interested to know whether this phenomenon of responding by saying that the Department is "considering" the recommendation is more widespread and whether other Select Committees are also troubled by it, and, if so, whether the Liaison Committee might consider what could be done to encourage Departments to provide clearer responses to Select Committee reports.

Yours sincerely,

Jeremy Hunt MP
Chair, Health and Social Care Committee