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CEO Chris Bath
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14 July 2015

Dear Mr Bath

NAAN REPORT ON APPROPRIATE ADULTS FOR VULNERABLE ADULTS

Thank you for providing me with a copy of the draft National Appropriate Adult Network (NAAN) report on the provision of appropriate adults for mentally vulnerable adults in police custody, '*There to Help: Ensuring provision of appropriate adults for mentally vulnerable adults detained or interviewed by police*'.

The report's findings and 10 recommendations require full and proper consideration. The status quo is clearly not acceptable and I was concerned to read that a number of mentally vulnerable adults, who clearly meet the current eligibility criteria in PACE Code of Practice C, do not receive the support of an appropriate adult. Considered in light of the purpose of appropriate adults – to safeguard the welfare and rights of mentally vulnerable adults and demystify the custody setting so that they understand what is happening to them – the priority must be to act to ensure that vulnerable people are provided with the support they are entitled to.

I have asked my officials to take forward work on examining the recommendations and implementation options. A special working group, which will report to the PACE Strategy Board, will be established in the summer. Given NAAN's expertise and responsibility for supporting appropriate adults nationally, I would therefore be grateful if NAAN would work with my officials and be a key contributor to this group, advising on membership and on options for tackling the complexity of this issue.

This report is an important foundation from which to develop workable solutions to the challenges we face to ensure that the vulnerable get the support they need.

Again, I thank you and NAAN for your continued dedication to ensure fair and humane treatment for both vulnerable adults and children when they are particularly vulnerable – in trouble and in police custody.

Yours sincerely

Rt Hon Theresa May MP