



Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP  
Home Secretary  
Home Office  
2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF

Cc: HMICFRS

Our Ref: JC/jpi

6th February 2019

*Dear Home Secretary,*

**National HMICFRS report 'Policing and Mental Health – Picking up the Pieces'**

I welcome this report which highlights that policing is increasingly being used as the first port of call in responding to people with mental health problems and raises concerns about the level of demand facing police forces in dealing with those in mental health crisis. Mental health is placing a significant and preventable demand on police forces, in the last 12 months, more than 7,000 incidents reported to West Mercia Police were related to mental health.

Patients need access to the right help, at the right time. That currently isn't happening, as people suffer mental health crises that could be prevented through effective early intervention. At the moment, the police are often expected to deal with these incidents and they cannot provide the professional mental health treatment these people need.

Currently there is no triage service in West Mercia, but local mental health crisis arrangements are in place. The force is working with Redditch and Bromsgrove CCG and health partners in Worcestershire to set up a pilot street triage service in South Worcestershire and discussions are at an early stage in Shropshire to develop a service there. I will continue to work with partners to improve this situation, but it is clear that health services have a leading role to take.

The Government's recent announcement of increased investment in mental health support services is welcome from a policing perspective as the demand placed on our force linked to mental health is neither sustainable, nor is it in the best interests of patients or police officers.

I will continue to monitor progress and work with the Chief Constable and partners to ensure those in mental health crisis are supported in the right place by the right agency.

Best wishes,



John Campion  
**Police & Crime Commissioner**  
**West Mercia**