Sarah Wollaston (Totnes, Conservative)

In Devon and Cornwall since the beginning of this year there have been three occasions when children as young as 12 and 13 with acute mental illness have been detained in police cells instead of an appropriate place of safety, and 25 occasions when children of 17 and under have been so detained. Will the Minister meet me to discuss how we can end this appalling situation and make sure that all children who are detained under section 136 are seen in an appropriate location?

Daniel Poulter (Central Suffolk and North Ipswich, Conservative)

My hon. Friend is right to highlight this problem, which is unacceptable. My hon. Friend the Minister of State is looking into it. A lot of anecdotal evidence is stacking up that this practice is happening. We do not find it acceptable, and I or my hon. Friend will be happy to meet her to discuss the matter further and ensure that it is stopped.

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