

Lewis Macdonald MSP Convener  
Health & Sport Committee

By Email.

4 June 2020

Dear Lewis

I am writing to you to inform you of the changes the Scottish Government has announced today in relation to the governance of cancer services in Scotland.

I have also copied this letter to Opposition Party Leaders for their interests.

As you will be aware, the Scottish Government convened a National Cancer Treatment Response Group (CTRG) on 18 March, in response to the ongoing public health emergency. This clinical group was responsible for advising the government and producing guidance on a national approach to the management of individual patients who require cancer treatment. As we move away from the initial response phase of planning and into the re-mobilisation phase, the CTRG has come to a natural close.

Moving forward, the work of previous cancer governance groups including the Scottish Cancer Taskforce and the National Cancer Clinical Services Group will continue to be paused. As we shifting our focus onto recovery planning, we are establishing the National Cancer Recovery Group (CRG), which will first meet on 5 June. This group will provide national strategic end to end oversight of all cancer services. Below this group will sit a new National Cancer Treatment Group (CTG).

The CTG will agree and promote clinical prioritisation adopting a national approach. We have also published a cancer surgery recovery framework to ensure patients are prioritised and seen based on clinical need across all of NHS Scotland. The CTG will oversee the implementation of this and support our key aim to have equity of access across the country.

We have received support for this new governance structure and clinical prioritisation from a number of stakeholders, including surgical and oncology colleagues and the Scottish Cancer Coalition. These new structures will support us to reduce the current backlog of delayed cancer services and will facilitate patients across Scotland to access the earliest available appointments.

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I have instructed officials to mandate this group's work immediately and we will report back to the Health & Sport Committee.

**JEANE FREEMAN**

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