



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Jeane Freeman MSP
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Via email only

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Dear Cabinet Secretary

Thank you for attending the Health and Sport Committee meeting on 5 November to discuss our Primary Care Inquiry.

I am writing to follow up on a number of points that arose during the session, including: information you offered to share with the Committee; a specific commitment you made, and to request responses to a number of other questions we did not have time to ask due to time constraints.

During the meeting you offered to provide additional information on a number of areas:

- on the target of 800 additional GPs you offered to share the Government's modelling on how that figure was reached (Column 43). It would be helpful if your response includes information on how policy, patient and population outcomes were factored into the modelling
- you also said that an alleviation package would be announced very shortly to help doctors with pension tax bills (Column 44). We would welcome more information on this, including the cost to the public purse? What other ways have been considered to address retention issues with this particular group of doctors?
- on the question of Community Link Workers (CLW) you offered to share information on the location of the current cohort of CLWs and information on plans for the CLWs yet to be deployed (Column 48). We would also

appreciate information on how the scheme is going to be monitored and evaluated into the future. We do not need to see the evaluation of the pilot projects.

- you committed to consider how the concerns and views of patients could be incorporated into the negotiations of Phase 2 of the GMS contract (Column 51). The Committee would be grateful if you could keep us informed of your developing thinking in this area.
- Naureen Ahmad offered to share information to update the Committee on the Scottish Government's response to Professor Sir Harry Burns's review on developing a set of standards and indicators to better understand the contribution of multi-disciplinary primary care (Column 54).
- you offered to share with the Committee an update on the work underway in sharing the Emergency Medical Record (Column 58).
- you offered to provide the Committee an update on how the Primary Care Transformation Fund was being used (Column 59). The Committee would appreciate if this could include a breakdown of activity by each Integrated Joint Board (IJB), how this activity has been evaluated and how it will inform ongoing transformation.
- you proposed to send information regarding the Government's plans for a public information campaign on how primary care is changing

There were several areas we did not have time to cover at the meeting and I would like to take the opportunity to request responses to the following questions:

- in light of the [NHS in Scotland 2019 report](#) which recommended the Scottish Government in partnership with NHS boards and integration authorities should "develop a new national health and social care strategy to run from 2020 that supports large-scale, system-wide reform, with clear priorities identifying the improvement activities most likely to achieve the reform needed". What steps is the Government taking to meet this recommendation, and what are the anticipated timescales for this?
- what guidance does the Government issue to ensure the quality improvement priorities of GP clusters align with the strategic commissioning plans and outcomes for localities of the health and social care partnerships?
- what specific levers does the Scottish Government have to ensure the new model of primary care best meets the needs of communities and is sustainable?
- how is the Scottish Government fully incorporating the centrality of AHP roles into the strategic planning of health and social care services?
- how does the Scottish Government ensure the views of young people are considered in future policy development?

- what actions are the Scottish Government taking to meet the recommendations of the Audit Scotland report [NHS workforce planning – part 2](#) on the primary care workforce
- can you give confirmation of if/when national data on clinical activity and demand in primary care will be available and what this will include? (as called for by the Office for Statistical Regulation). And outline how this will be made publicly available.
- what steps are being taken to ensure developments in technology are accessible to everyone in the country?
- the Committee is particularly keen to understand when you believe that an individual's health records will be accessible to all the primary care professionals that need read/write access?

The Committee have a keen interest in the survey responses you are seeking from GP practices on workforce numbers, activity, income and expenses and would appreciate being updated once that data has been collected and analysed. Please confirm that aggregated data will be made publicly available and periodically updated.

I would be grateful for a response by **Tuesday 26 November**.

Yours sincerely



Lewis Macdonald
Convener, Health and Sport Committee