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Lewis Macdonald  
Convenor  
Health & Sport Committee

4 March 2020

Dear Lewis,

I am writing to you as Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans in regard to the absence of the Chief Medical Officer from the Health and Sport Committee meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> March.

Firstly, let me apologise for the inconvenience caused the committee and its members.

As a former parliamentary committee convener myself, I understand entirely the significance of such briefings and that this one was the starting point for your consideration of the Scottish Government's Forensic Medical Services (Victims of Sexual Offences) (Scotland) Bill. It is my strong hope that there should be no impact on the overall Bill timetable.

The Chief Medical Officer is also fully understanding of the importance of her engagement with the committee on this and other matters.

The absence was due to a short notice request by the First Minister for the CMO to attend Bute House. Communication by email, regrettably late that evening and a phone call the following morning to inform the Committee was undertaken. It was unavoidable that this was at short notice.

The CMO is entirely blameless for this. The mistake lay elsewhere in government.

Let me apologise unreservedly for the situation that arose and give you an undertaking that the CMO will seek to attend committee at a time convenient to yourselves.

If the committee clerks contact her office they will look to agree an appropriate date.

Kind regards

**Graeme Dey MSP**  
Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans

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