THE SOCIAL SECURITY COORDINATION (RECIPROCAL HEALTHCARE) (AMENDMENT ETC) (EU EXIT) REGULATIONS 2019

THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE (CROSS-BORDER HEALTHCARE AND MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS ETC.) (EU EXIT) REGULATIONS 2019

Thank you for your letter dated the 5th of March confirming that the Health & Sport Committee is content for the Scottish Government to give consent to allow UK Ministers to make the above-named regulations (you will wish to note that the title of the Social Security Regulations has changed) on behalf of the Scottish Government, where they touch on devolved competence.

I have written to Stephen Hammond MP, Minister of State for Health, advising him of this and asking him to ensure that the Scottish Government is kept informed of progress, particularly as regard to the SI that would enable the continuation of reciprocal healthcare arrangements on a UK-wide basis, as far as that can be achieved, in a 'no deal' situation. I will ensure that the Health and Sport Committee is also kept updated.

You also make reference to the regulation making powers of the Healthcare (International Arrangements) Bill. I have noted the Committee’s wish to be kept informed of discussions between the UK and Scottish Government on the scrutiny role for the Scottish Parliament, and the parliamentary procedure that will apply if parallel powers are conferred on Scottish Ministers, if regulations are taken from the Bill that impinge on devolved competence in Scotland. I will to ensure that the Committee is kept informed of developments.
The Scottish Government will always consider whether there is a genuine need for the introduction of UK-wide regulations when they impinge on Scotland’s competence, and recognises the essential role that Parliamentary Committees and the Scottish Parliament play in scrutinising such legislation.

Kind regards

[Signature]

JEANE FREEMAN