

Mark Drakeford AM
Cabinet Secretary for Finance

22 February 2018

Dear Mark,

In the autumn of 2016, the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee established a set of strategic objectives for the Fifth Assembly and agreed to consider all its work in the context of these objectives. I am writing to you in your capacity as Chair of the Welsh Government's European Advisory Group and in relation to our fifth strategic objective – consideration of the implications of the UK's withdrawal from the European Union (EU).

In November 2016, the Committee raised the issue of exiting the EU (Brexit) with the then Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport and Minister for Social Services and Public Health during scrutiny of the Welsh Government draft budget for 2017–18. At that time, we said there is a need to be confident that work is underway in the Welsh Government to plan for any number of future possibilities, particularly in relation to the key areas of staffing, research, regulation and funding. We further considered the implications of Brexit during our scrutiny of the Welsh Government draft budget for 2018–19.

Our report into Medical recruitment in Wales, published in June 2017, looked at the implications of Brexit for medical recruitment. During our evidence gathering, concerns were raised about the potential and very uncertain consequences of Brexit on health and social care staffing. We concluded that continued dialogue with the UK Government was needed to clarify the ability of EU nationals to continue working in the UK, as well as having the ability to work as medical professionals in Wales in the future.

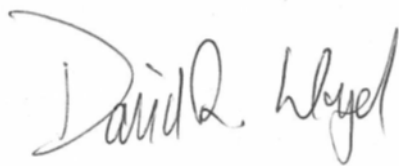


You will be aware that the External Affairs and Additional Legislation (EAAL) Committee published its report 'How is the Welsh Government preparing for Brexit?' earlier this month. The Chair of the EAAL Committee wrote to me to draw specific attention to sections 3.2 and 3.4 of the report, which comment on changes to immigration rules and implications for health following the UK's exit from the EU. We have noted the strength of concern presented to the EAAL Committee regarding disease prevention, health technologies regulation, reciprocal health care arrangements, and research collaboration and innovation. We have also noted that, in your written evidence to the EAAL Committee, you state the implications for health and other public services are being addressed by senior officials across the Welsh Government and co-ordinated through the Cabinet Sub-Committee and the European Transition Officials Group.

Members considered the letter from the Chair of EAAL Committee during our meeting on 14 February. Following that discussion, I would like to request that you provide this Committee with information on how the Welsh Government is looking to ensure continued cooperation with the EU on the matters outlined above and on other matters such as recognition of medical qualifications, maintaining medical research links, and continued cooperation on public health issues.

I look forward to receiving your response at the earliest opportunity.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'David Lloyd', is positioned above the typed name.

Dr Dai Lloyd AM
Chair, Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

Copied to:

Vaughan Gething AM, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services
David Rees AM, Chair of the External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee