

Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP  
Secretary of State  
Department of Health and Social Care  
39 Victoria Street  
London SW1H 0EU

3 August 2018

*Dear Secretary of State*

**BREXIT: IMPACT ON PATIENTS**

I am writing to ask if you would please meet a delegation from the voluntary sector to discuss the implications of Brexit for patients and health.

As the main coalition of health and care charities, National Voices has an important role in ensuring that policy works for patients and citizens. We coordinate views and intelligence from our 160 members and also work closely with the Department as a member of the Health and Wellbeing Alliance.

We are very concerned that the manner of the UK's departure from the European Union could adversely affect:

- Patients' timely access to medicines and treatments
- The availability of health and care staff
- The UK's participation in European research and development collaborations, and patients' ability to take part in UK-based clinical trials
- Reciprocal health agreements allowing UK citizens to be treated in EU countries regardless of means
- Protections arising from cross-Europe collaboration on public health.

We note that the Brexit deadline is fast approaching, that there is considerable uncertainty about the matters listed above, that health is not a separate strand of negotiation with the EU, and that Government Ministers have acknowledged a serious and possibly growing risk of a "no-deal" exit.

We note also that while contingency planning is sensible and responsible, the recent public comment and disclosures concerning stockpiling of food and medicines have not been conducive to public reassurance.

We therefore think it would be timely to discuss with you how the Government is seeking to minimise the risks to patients and health set out above, and whether there might be a role for the voluntary and community sector in supporting these efforts.

On Brexit issues National Voices has also been working as part of the broad-based Brexit Health Alliance. We support the Alliance's call for greater clarity and national guidance on these matters, and echo the serious concerns that it has raised.

I look forward to hearing from your office.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeremy Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping 'J' and a long, trailing 'y'.

Jeremy Taylor  
Chief Executive