



26 October 2022

Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
Department of Health and Social Care

By email

Dear Secretary of State

Congratulations on your appointment as Secretary of State for Health and Social Care. We would like to offer you an important early opportunity to set out your priorities for the NHS in a keynote speech at our annual conference and exhibition, which is taking place in Liverpool on the 15th and 16th November. This is the key event for provider sector board-level leaders and the largest single gathering of those leaders in the calendar. It presents an excellent opportunity for you to address over 600 frontline NHS leaders and stakeholders at a pivotal time for the service. The theme of this year's conference is resilience, and we will be focussing on resilient services, resilient communities and resilience for the future. We've welcomed each of your predecessors to the conference and we hope you will similarly regard it as a unique opportunity to address trust leaders. We have pencilled in your keynote speech for **16 November at 14.20**. We would of course be very happy to discuss alternative times with your office to accommodate your busy agenda.

During your time as Secretary of State over the summer you rightly acknowledged and understood the significant challenges facing the NHS, including pressures on the workforce and increasing demands across all services. As you are aware, the economic situation has changed significantly since the summer and inflationary pressures, increased energy costs and the rising cost of living all present substantial additional pressures for trusts, their hardworking staff and the patients they serve. All trust leaders understand the need to deploy limited public funds to best effect for patients and tax payers, but as existing stretching efficiency asks are made more challenging by the impact of inflation, we remain keen to explore with you the solutions to these unprecedented challenges and the impact they are having across acute, ambulance, community and mental health services.

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That said, the NHS continues to deliver extraordinary things in exceptional times – the number of people waiting two years or more for treatment has virtually been eliminated, community and diagnostic hubs are being created across the country to help carry out more diagnostic tests and planned operations, and the NHS is exceeding pre-pandemic levels of activity in many services, underlining how hard staff are working to drive recovery during very challenging times.

We look forward to supporting you and your team in building on those achievements and navigating the complex challenges facing the NHS to ensure those working at the heart of the health and care system have the right support in place to continue delivering high quality care for all service users. We look forward to meeting you soon and we hope to be able to welcome you to deliver the keynote speech to our annual conference and exhibition at this pivotal time for the NHS.

Yours sincerely



Sir Ron Kerr
Chair

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