



**Department
of Health &
Social Care**

*From the Baroness Blackwood
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Chair, Science and Technology Committee
House of Commons
Westminster
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Dear Chair

I am writing in response to the 31st October 2019 letter from the Rt Hon Norman Lamb, your predecessor as Chair of the Commons Science and Technology Committee, to the Secretary of State.

Let me first congratulate you on your appointment as Chair of the Committee in this new Parliamentary term. As we both know, cutting edge science is an essential underpinning of our health and care system and our society and economy more generally. This is why the Government has committed to significantly boost public R&D funding and I look forward to ensuring that the Department of Health and Social Care plays its role in furthering this commitment by continuing to invest in the National Institute for Health Research and wider structures supporting research.

The Health Research Authority (HRA) is a vital part of our national research infrastructure and it is working increasingly closely with other regulators, with the Devolved Administrations and, of course, with the wider research community. The Department will continue to support the work of the HRA and we will ensure that it has the right level of resources to help improve clinical trials transparency and to support its range of other duties, all of which are essential to ensure that the UK remains a great place to base life sciences research.

With regard to the 31st October 2019 letter from your predecessor, as you will appreciate, the level of resources which will be allocated to the HRA needs to be considered in the round, alongside the Departments investments in other regulators,

Arms Length Bodies and our investments in core research activities. We expect to resolve the level of these investments early in this new Parliamentary term. After these decisions have been made, I will write to you again with further detail on the HRA and on the Governments plans with respect to supporting clinical trials, in order to ensure that NHS patients will have continued access to the innovative medicines now and in the years to come.

Best wish

Nicola

NICOLA BLACKWOOD