

From Ann Keen MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State



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Mr Dave Fleming
National Officer
Unite Health Sector
128 Theobald's Road
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Dear Mr Fleming,

31 MAR 2010

Thank you for your letter of 1 March to Andy Burnham about the Modernising Scientific Careers (MSC) consultation process.


We are committed to ensuring that the NHS has a healthcare scientific workforce that is equipped with the right set of knowledge and skills to meet the future needs of the service. The need for change is driven by a number of factors such as a tougher economic environment, the more complex healthcare demands of an ageing population, new opportunities and demands in service delivery, the need for greater flexibility and new roles and ways of working, and the need for rapid adoption of new science, medicines and technologies to deliver care more innovatively. It is more important than ever to focus on delivering high quality care whilst improving efficiency and effectiveness.

The publication of *Modernising Scientific Careers: The UK Way Forward* and the analysis of responses clearly set out what was said in the original proposals, what was heard as a result of consultation and deliberative events and the assessment of those contributions. This has led to some changes to the original proposals, which have been made as a result of consultation and that are clearly set out in the *UK Way Forward*.

The specific issues that you raise are for the individual action plans being prepared by each country. I am aware that you have had the opportunity to have sight of a draft version of the England Action Plan and through discussion have made comments that the MSC team is addressing. As you know, regulation of the healthcare science workforce will be the subject of a separate consultation, and I understand that the trades unions have representation on the UK Healthcare Science Regulation Liaison Group.

I, too, would like to see the trades unions involved as social partners in the implementation of MSC at national, regional and local level. Sue Hill, the Chief Scientific Officer, and her team are committed to making this a reality through trades union membership of the new national advisory groups that will be established to fully reflect these working principles, focusing on the employment-related aspects of implementation and on aspects of education and training.

I look forward to receiving updates on the progress of MSC through the Social Partnership Forum.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann Keen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

ANN KEEN

Approved by the Minister and signed electronically in her absence.