



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

*From the Rt Hon Andrew Stephenson CBE MP  
Minister of State for Health and Secondary Care*

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Your ref: Andrew Brown  
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Iain Stewart MP  
By email to: [iain.stewart.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:iain.stewart.mp@parliament.uk)

15 January 2024

Dear Iain,

Thank you for your correspondence of 29 December about the regulation of physician associates (PAs) and anaesthesia associates (AAs).

I am grateful to you for raising these concerns.

We remain committed to the expansion of these roles, as set out in the *NHS Long Term Workforce Plan*. An important part of ensuring the roles remain safe as the numbers increase is to introduce statutory regulation as soon as possible.

On 11 December, we published our response to the Government's consultation on the legislation that will give the General Medical Council (GMC) powers to regulate PAs and AAs. The response can be found at [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/regulating-anaesthesia-associates-and-physician-associates/outcome/consultation-response-to-regulating-anaesthesia-associates-and-physician-associates](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/regulating-anaesthesia-associates-and-physician-associates/outcome/consultation-response-to-regulating-anaesthesia-associates-and-physician-associates).

In addition, we laid the Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates Order in Westminster and the Scottish Parliament on 13 December. This is an important step towards UK-wide statutory regulation of PAs and AAs by the GMC. These will be the first to be regulated under a reformed framework, which will subsequently be used to modernise all healthcare professional regulators' governing legislation to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

The GMC now has until December 2024 to consult on rules, policies and guidance to introduce regulation for the roles, and we understand it plans to do this in March.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

**THE RT HON ANDREW STEPHENSON CBE MP  
MINISTER OF STATE**