



Department
of Health &
Social Care

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

39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

PO-1485591

The Rt Hon Sir George Howarth MP
By email to: george.howarth.mp@parliament.uk

20 December 2023

Dear Sir George,

Thank you for your correspondence of 11 December on behalf of your constituent, about the regulation of physician associates (PAs) and anaesthesia associates (AAs).

I am grateful to you for raising 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.

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**