



23 August 2018

EU Exit – Medical Devices and Clinical Consumables supply in a March 2019 ‘no deal’ scenario

I am writing as part of the Government’s ongoing preparations for a March 2019 ‘no deal’ Brexit scenario and the potential impact on the supply of medical devices and clinical consumables.

The Government has made significant progress in negotiations with the EU and remains confident we will leave with a good deal for both sides, that supports existing and future healthcare collaboration. However, as a responsible government, we continue to prepare proportionately for all scenarios, including the unlikely outcome that we leave the EU without any deal in March 2019. Given the significant amount of work that has now been done, I am confident this gives a clear basis for the health and care sector and the life sciences industry to plan so that patients can continue to receive high quality care unhindered.

Contingency planning approach

The Department has undertaken an analysis of supply chains for medical devices and clinical consumables identifying the proportion of product routinely imported into the UK from other countries in the European Union. Without a deal, we recognise that there is potential for the supply of these products to be disrupted.

To address this issue the Department has developed a range of contingency measures to mitigate the risk of disruption to the medical devices and clinical consumables supply chain posed by a March 2019 ‘no deal’ scenario.

Stock holding at a national level will be increased and suppliers will be contacted during September to start discussing their contingency plans and, where necessary, the need for an increase in the production and supply of products.

The Government's contingency plans have been developed so that the infrastructure and logistics capability of the NHS Supply Chain will be able to accommodate and manage these increased volumes.

In addition, arrangements are being put in place to facilitate the continued movement of medical devices and clinical consumables that are routinely supplied from other European Union countries directly to NHS organisations. Suppliers operating these supply models will also be contacted during September to discuss their contingency plans.

To ensure that we can keep you informed of these important developments, please could you confirm the contact details for the lead representatives in your organisation on EU Exit related matters. Details should be sent to us at mdcc-contingencyplanning@dh.gsi.gov.uk.

We recognise that many companies will already have taken steps to enhance supply resilience and it is important that these suppliers share details of their contingency arrangements with us via the email address above. This will aid our work in ensuring that patients can continue to receive high quality care unhindered.

Medicines

The Department has today communicated separately on contingency plans specific to the supply of medicines.

Further details can be accessed via <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/dhsc-publishes-brexit-guidance-for-pharmaceutical-industry-and-suppliers-of-medical-devices>.

Guidance to NHS provider organisations

Guidance is also being issued today to frontline organisations informing them of these plans for ensuring continuity of supply of medical products and advising them that they can expect to be able to continue accessing supplies through their existing supply routes in the event of a no deal Brexit.

Thank you for your support with this important programme. We look forward to engaging with you in more detail over the coming weeks.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Matt', is positioned below the text 'Yours ever,'.

MATT HANCOCK