

The Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP
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Dear Mr Hancock,

I understand that you have recently been contacted by a range of organisations such as the ABPI, AMRC and the Brexit Health Alliance, of which Diabetes UK is a member. They have raised concerns about the supply of medicines and devices to the UK in a No Deal Brexit scenario. People with diabetes use a large number of medications to manage their diabetes and it is essential nothing gets in the way of them receiving them as normal.

We have particular concerns about insulin. It is used by approximately 600,000 people. They include everyone with Type 1 diabetes and significant numbers with Type 2 diabetes, who can become seriously ill within hours if they do not have insulin. Any interruption in insulin supply is serious – people become seriously ill within hours without it. Swapping to another brand of insulin is not an option as they work in different ways, so changing the brand of insulin can have a significant effect of diabetes management. For this reason, we felt we should contact you directly.

Almost all insulin and many other essential diabetes medications are made outside the UK and must be refrigerated. This makes any possible delays in supply chains of particular concern.

Diabetes UK wrote to all pharmaceutical companies producing medications for diabetes in August. Two out of three insulin manufacturers who responded said they were stockpiling insulin for between 14 to 16 weeks.

In recent weeks we have been contacted by more and more people concerned about the potential impacts of a No Deal Brexit, and anecdotal stories shared of stockpiling by some individuals. This is deeply concerning, and it is important there is not a loss of public confidence which worsens this issue, as any shortfalls in local supplies could have significant impacts on other individuals.

We are concerned that details have not yet been shared that demonstrate plans are in place to deal with these issues comprehensively. We understand these are complicated issues to deal with but believe it is vital crucial information is shared publically to reassure individuals and organisations that a robust plan is in place. Diabetes UK is very keen to be able to reassure our supporters, however this is difficult if we cannot refer and signpost to such plans. Furthermore, doing so would enable the kind of consultation that improves policy and reduces risk when going through major changes.

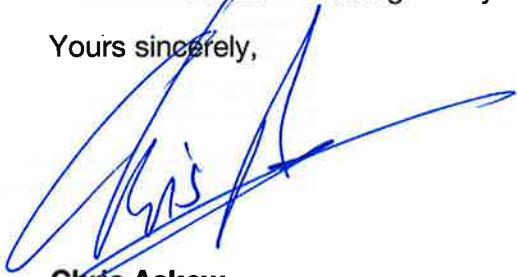
Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

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*Calls may be recorded for quality and training purposes.

We support the Health Committee's recommendation that there is a list of medicines published for which there is any supply risks. Urgent clarification is needed as soon as possible about the situation and guarantees that safeguards are in place to ensure the continued access to insulin.

We look forward to hearing from you shortly about this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris Askew', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chris Askew
Chief Executive