

## Chief Nursing Officer Directorate

Professor Alex McMahon,  
Chief Nursing Officer



Scottish Government  
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## Chief Medical Officer Directorate

Professor Sir Gregor Smith,  
Chief Medical Officer

## Healthcare Quality and Improvement Directorate

Professor Jason Leitch CBE,  
National Clinical Director

NHS Scotland Directors of Nursing  
NHS Scotland Medical Directors  
NHS Board Chief Executives  
NHS Board Chairs  
NHS Chief Operating Officers  
By email

January 2023

Dear Colleagues,

We have been notified of concerns from some frontline clinical colleagues about cases of people returning from overseas with complications arising from privately funded surgery and/or treatment that would not have been offered by or had any involvement with their local NHS Board.

Scottish Government officials and Public Health Scotland are working in the immediate term to gather data on this and in the medium term to explore future methods of recording information so that an evidence-based response can be developed.

In the meantime, we wanted to offer you guidance to clarify the position of NHS Scotland when people present to health care services with problems resulting from privately arranged and funded surgery overseas:

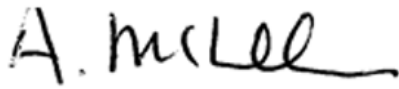
- While the NHS in Scotland will always provide emergency care where necessary, all routine pre and post-operative care should be part of the package of care purchased by the individual patient.
- There will be no obligation on NHS Boards to provide such routine pre and post-operative care.
- In the event of a patient advising a healthcare professional of plans to travel overseas for privately arranged and purchased surgery, they should be advised firstly that this is not recommended, and secondly that there will be no obligation on their local NHS Board to provide routine pre and post-operative care. All care required should be provided within the package of care sold by the overseas provider.



We are working with colleagues and partners to develop public-facing information and advice on this matter, but wanted to ensure this interim guidance reached you as soon as possible.

With our continued thanks for all you have done and continue to do in challenging times,

Yours sincerely,



**Professor Alex McMahon,  
Chief Nursing Officer**



**Professor Sir Gregor Smith,  
Chief Medical Officer**



**Professor Jason Leitch  
National Clinical Director**