

Primary Care Directorate  
General Practice Policy Division



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

Chief Medical Officer Directorate  
Professor Sir Gregor Smith  
Chief Medical Officer

**For Action**

GP practices

Cc Chief Executives NHS Boards

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Dear colleagues

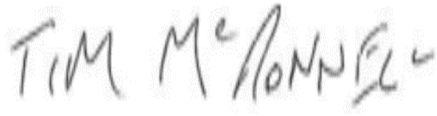
In January, the Chief Nursing Officer, Professor Alex McMahon, the Chief Medical Officer, Professor Sir Gregor Smith, and the National Clinical Director, Professor Jason Leitch, wrote to offer some guidance to clarify the position of NHS Scotland when people present to health care services with problems resulting from privately arranged and funded surgery overseas.

Scottish Government officials and Public Health Scotland continue to work to gather data on this and, in the medium term, explore future methods of recording information so that an evidence-based response can be developed leading to the issue of public-facing information and advice.


We are writing today to provide further clarity for general practitioners in advance of that evidence-based response.

The Scottish Government understands that it is often the case that patients present in general practice having been treated abroad without first advising their GP of their intentions. It is unlikely that all of these patients will ensure that all care required will be provided by the overseas provider. In these circumstances, the Scottish Government would not expect GPs to be obliged to provide such routine associated management required as scans, blood tests, follow-up treatments or arrangements to deal with complications as required by the private sector but should always provide care based upon their own judgement, and in keeping with the GMC's guidance on [Good Medical Practice](#), local board policies, procedures and pathways.

With our continued thanks for the work you do in challenging times.

Handwritten signature of Tim McDonnell in black ink.

Tim McDonnell  
**Director of Primary Care**

Handwritten signature of Professor Sir Gregor Smith in black ink.

Professor Sir Gregor Smith  
**Chief Medical Officer for Scotland**