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From the Private Secretary

4 February 2020

Dear Natasha,

The Prime Minister met your Secretary of State, the CST and colleagues from the centre today for his first DHSC Departmental Performance meeting. Thank you for all the quick work in preparing for this meeting, especially given other existing pressures.

We began with a short update on coronavirus. Following an update from the CMO, the Prime Minister stressed the need to continue to explain our stance to maintain public confidence in the plan. On further travel restrictions, your Secretary of State was engaging FCO and European colleagues and would revert with a proposal on the way forward, which will require an assessment of what constitutes a proportionate response. Please keep No10 closely involved on key decisions in the coming days.

Your Secretary of State identified three core objectives for the NHS: delivering the manifesto commitments; improving performance even beyond delivery of these commitments; and building public confidence through focusing on what citizens are demanding. We spent the remainder of this meeting focused on the first of these, and will cover the other issues in a future discussion. One specific request to support future conversations was to share material you have gathered on public expectations around the NHS through existing focus group work.

On manifesto commitments, we agreed as a room the below Name Redacted here will be collecting these agreed actions into a tracker, which we will then use to monitor follow-ups and delivery:

50,000 Nurses

- We agreed a stretch target of 50,000 additional nurses by autumn 2023, off a September 2019 baseline at the PM's request. This will require us to 'pull on all levers at once' with notable additional international recruitment, while reforming domestic supply.
- We must overhaul nurse training so it is fit for purpose, looking for instance at reducing the numbers of years in training or more 'on the job training', looking at the Australia model as well as alternative/digital provision (e.g. Open University) of courses. Your Secretary of State committed to making any necessary legislative changes in the NHS bill due for introduction later this year to allow changes on the ground at latest by Sept 21. It was also agreed to upskill