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Y Gweinidog Cyllid a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Finance and Trefnydd

Rt Hon Stephen Barclay MP
Chief Secretary to the Treasury
1 Horse Guards Road
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12 May 2020

Dear Chief Secretary

At the recent Finance Ministers' Quadrilateral we raised our collective concerns in regards to the limited supply of PPE currently being delivered through the proposed UK-wide procurement approach. This has resulted in the devolved governments incurring significant costs to secure sufficient PPE to protect our frontline workers.

We agreed our officials would work together to consider the basis of costs incurred to date and we welcome the constructive and on-going discussions between officials to progress this. However, we are mindful that during the Quadrilateral you noted that HM Treasury is providing all funding for PPE to the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC).

Our understanding is that DHSC cannot currently guarantee the UK Government led PPE procurement can meet the needs of the devolved governments. Since our meeting, a draft Four Nations Protocol on the supply of PPE has been shared with the devolved governments which provides for devolved PPE purchasing as well as the UK-wide approach.

We all appreciate the current pressures around PPE procurement. All countries are chasing the same supply chains which has become a sellers' market with significant implications for the public purse. In principle we therefore support the DHSC proposal for a Four Nations approach which delivers the PPE we require to meet our needs whilst also providing some flexibility to enable our own procurement if it doesn't. In doing so, however, we would expect to receive funding to cover fully the costs we have incurred, respecting the concerns you expressed last week that these costs are not 'double-funded'. We therefore seek your support in securing the necessary budget transfers with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.