



OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

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HR Operations
Department of Health

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JIM EASTON

The Advisory Committee on Business Appointments has considered the application from Mr Easton to accept a full-time appointment as the Managing Director for Health with Care UK following his resignation from Crown service on a date to be confirmed.

When considering the application the Committee set aside any potential issues arising from Mr Easton's position on the NHS Commissioning Board as these are not for the Committee to address, and considered the proposed appointment from the perspective of a Department of Health SCS 3 civil servant moving to a healthcare provider.

When considering the application the Committee noted that Mr Easton has been leading on leading on efficiency and transformation of healthcare service, including looking at ways in which the outsourcing of service provision can contribute to this process, and that he will have gained considerable insight into Government policy in this area. Therefore there is the risk that any healthcare provider who wished to employ him could be thought, however incorrectly, to be gaining an unfair advantage by employing him. It could also be thought that he was being 'rewarded' by such an organisation for influencing policy on outsourcing in a way in which benefitted them in the widest sense. The Committee was of the view that the most effective way to address these issues was by ensuring that there was a clear gap between Mr Easton leaving the Department of Health and joining Care UK. Given his lack of any direct, contractual involvement with the company, and the fact that the reorganisation of the Department of Health will mean that many of its functions will soon transfer to other organisations, it felt that a gap of three months (the minimum it recommends) would be sufficient.

The Prime Minister accepted the Committee's recommendation that the application be approved subject to:

- a waiting period of three months from his last day of service;
- the condition that, for 12 months from the same date, he should not become involved in advising on bids or contracts for Department of Health business; and

- that, for two years from his last day of service, he should not become personally involved in lobbying UK Government on behalf of his new employer. The Business Appointment Rules define lobbying in the following way: “Lobbying in this context means that the former civil servant should not engage in communication with Government - including Ministers, special advisers and officials - with a view to influencing a Government decision or policy in relation to their own interests, or the interests of the organisation by which they are employed, or to whom they are contracted”.

I would be grateful if you could let us know when Mr Easton takes up this appointment, or when it is announced that he will do so (I enclose a form for this purpose). We shall otherwise not be able to deal with any enquiries, since we do not release information about appointments which have not been taken up or announced, and this could lead to a false assumption being made about whether he had complied with the rules.

Similarly, I would be grateful if you could ensure that he informs us if he proposes to extend or otherwise change his role with Care UK as, depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary for him to make a fresh application to the Committee.

Once the appointments have been taken up or announced, we will publish this letter on the Advisory Committee’s website and include the main details of the appointment, together with the Committee’s advice and the date on which he took it up, in both the regularly updated consolidated list on the website and in the next annual report.

BETH WATSON