

From the Permanent Secretary  
Sir Chris Wormald



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

39 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0EU  
[permanent.secretary@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:permanent.secretary@dhsc.gov.uk)

Sent via email to: [psmatthancock@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:psmatthancock@dhsc.gov.uk)

28<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Secretary of State,

## **CoVID19 – MINISTERIAL DIRECTION**

As you know the Department and the NHS are fully committed to tackling CoVID-19 as our top priority.

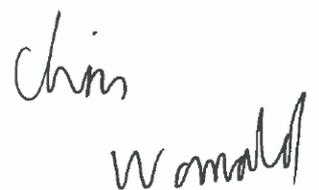
Consistent with the Chancellor's statements in the Budget, the approach we have been taking is to ensure that any potential uncertainty about the availability of funding does not prevent the right and necessary actions being taken at pace. A consequence of this is that, as we approach the end of the financial year, we cannot be certain that new covid-19 expenditure can be contained within the Departmental Expenditure Limits authorised by Parliament for 2019-20 through the Estimates process. Exceeding those controls would be a breach of Managing Public Money on regularity grounds.

To ensure that this does not introduce any delay to the agreement of spend in support of our efforts to combat coronavirus, we are therefore seeking your confirmation that we should continue to approve and spend money on covid-19 issues as needed. This letter therefore serves as a formal request for a Direction from you to proceed with such expenditure, even if this means a breach of Parliamentary financial controls.

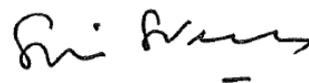
Let us assure you that nothing in this request in any way undermines our determination to support as fully as we can the work of the Government, the NHS and the care system in providing excellent care to the public and to our workforce at this time.

I am copying this letter to the Cabinet Secretary (CO), the Comptroller and Auditor General (NAO) and to the Treasury Officer of Accounts (TOA).

Yours sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Chris Wormald in black ink on a light grey background. The signature is written in a cursive style, with 'Chris' on the top line and 'Wormald' on the bottom line.

**SIR CHRIS WORMALD**  
**PERMANENT SECRETARY**  
**DHSC**

Handwritten signature of Sir Simon Stevens in black ink. The signature is written in a cursive style, with 'Sir' on the top line and 'Stevens' on the bottom line.

**SIR SIMON STEVENS**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**  
**NHS ENGLAND**