

Russell George MS
Chair, Health and Social Care Committee

By email: SeneddHealth@senedd.wales

11 December 2023

Dear Mr George,

The Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates Order 2024

We have now received the Department of Health and Social Care's (DHSC's) response to its consultation *Regulating anaesthesia associates and physician associates*, and the draft legislation that will bring these professionals into regulation will shortly be laid before the UK and Scottish Parliaments.

We welcome this legislation which is significant to the NMC's own work, as it acts as a template for the future regulation of all health and care professionals and will support the way in which they care for everyone in the UK. We were delighted to have confirmation from the Department of Health and Social Care that it will consider our legislation next, alongside that of the General Medical Council and Health and Care Professions Council. This change is much needed, and we would welcome further clarity on timelines from the Department.

It is vital that our legal framework is updated soon, so we have the right tools to regulate well, and so we can better support the 808,000 professionals to deliver the best possible care for people and communities in Wales.

Recruitment and retention of nurses and midwives, as you are well aware, is a significant issue nationally and supporting growth of the workforce is essential. With regulatory reform, new legislation will enable us to adapt the way we regulate in the future to support the workforce across the four UK nations and support innovation in nursing and midwifery education and practice.

In addition, it will deliver improvements to our fitness to practise processes so we can act more rapidly to protect the public if someone can't meet the required standards of proficiency and conduct, while also encouraging learning from genuine mistakes. We'll also have a register of professionals that is clearer and easier for people to understand, and more easily stop people calling themselves a nurse when they're not.

We look forward to continuing our work with our partners, including the Welsh Government, to deliver these changes, to ensure that they benefit both the people on our register and the public we serve.

Yours faithfully



Matthew McClelland
Executive Director, Strategy and Insight