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Derek Wanless
Health Trends Team
Room 82/G
HM Treasury
Parliament Street
London SW1P 3AG

22 January 2002

Dear Mr Wanless,

Securing our Future Health: Taking a Long Term View interim report

The RCN would like to congratulate you on the publication of the interim report of *Securing our Future Health*. We are encouraged by the Treasury's commitment to a long term view of health spending.

The RCN will shortly be publishing detailed research into trends in the nursing labour market which we would like to be considered as part of our response to the interim report, along with our submission to the Treasury on the Spending Review 2002. Both will be forwarded upon publication.

In the light of the recent announcements concerning the increased involvement of the private sector in the NHS, and the increased autonomy of individual health trusts, we would like to make the following points:

- The National Health Service should be free at the point of access and delivery.
- There should be no further introduction or extension of charges for NHS services.
- Speed of access to services determines levels of cost-effectiveness.
- The key issue for modernising health services to deliver a quality service is the expansion of NHS capacity. The workforce is at the centre of capacity and must therefore be at the centre of expansion. Unless the problems of recruitment and retention can be solved and the numbers of health professionals increased, plans for modernisation cannot come to fruition.
- A modernised workforce depends on Government commitment to sufficient investment in the pay modernisation process, Agenda for Change.

We would welcome the opportunity to expand further on our enclosed submission.

Yours sincerely,

Beverly Malone RN, PhD, FAAN
General Secretary
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