

From Anne Milton MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health



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Mr Don Flynn
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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Don Flynn'.

11 JAN 2012

Thank you for your letter of 12 December about the UK Border Agency (UKBA) refusing an application for leave to enter or remain in the UK to any person who is regarded as having an NHS debt of £1,000 or more.

You may be aware that the Government announced in March 2011 that it was undertaking a full review of the current policy on charging non-residents for NHS treatment. That review is underway and I will ensure that your comments are considered as part of this work.

You have raised specific concerns that individuals who have had access to GP treatment may have been identified as chargeable and, as a result, may be subjected to the new immigration rules that empower the UKBA to refuse requests for entry clearance to the UK for a person with outstanding NHS debts. However, as you have noted, there are currently no powers to charge for NHS treatment in primary care. The process by which information will be shared by the NHS to enable the UKBA to apply these rules clearly applies only in respect of hospital treatment where charges have actually been levied and remain unpaid. It will not therefore be possible for these rules to be applied in respect of primary care treatment.

Please do contact me again if there are any further concerns.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Anne Milton'.

ANNE MILTON