Dear Dr. Wollaston,

I write to you in my capacity as Secretary General of EuropaBio, the European Association of Bioindustries, regarding the Health and Social Care Committee’s inquiry into the availability of Orkambi on the NHS in England. As an industry, we are concerned by the recent announcement of the HSC to potentially publish confidential commercial information of negotiations and price discussions between NHS England, NICE, and Vertex Pharmaceuticals (UK) Ltd.

EuropaBio represents 77 corporate/associate members and bioregions, as well as 15 national biotechnology associations, in total representing over 1800 biotech SMEs. Together, we represent an innovative and dynamic European biotechnology industry which is committed to the socially responsible use of biotech to improve quality of life, to prevent, diagnose, treat and cure diseases.

The protection of this type of commercial information is a principle of sound administration that binds all public authorities in democratic societies. In view of the current uncertainties around the future of the UK’s participation in the EU regulatory and research frameworks, undermining confidential commercial arrangements, agreed between NHS England, NICE, and biopharmaceutical companies, could have serious international repercussions for the life sciences sector, and would be in contradiction with the recent announcement from PPRS, supporting the UK as an attractive and vibrant life science market.

We fully understand the necessity for the Committee to evaluate this current file in depth but would like to emphasise the broader long-term negative implications of publishing such confidential commercial information.

We remain available for any further information that you might require.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Joanna Dupont-Inglis
Secretary-General, EuropaBio