



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

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Dear Sarah,

Thank you for your warm congratulations on my new post. I am looking forward to working closely with you and the rest of the committee.

I am writing in response to your letter regarding the correspondence from Graham McColl of Healthcare Environmental Group Ltd (HES) and the ongoing clinical waste incident.

Firstly, with regards to reference of the inappropriate or unsafe storage of infectious waste, I can assure you that all contingency waste services and storage has received appropriate approval, consent and inspection from the Environment Agency to ensure compliance with relevant regulations. There is no backlog of waste at NHS Trust sites, but where sites are storing waste, which is in large collection containers rather than bins, this is in readiness for collection and removal to permitted sites at scheduled times by authorised contractors.

We have worked closely with the Environment Agency, NHS Improvement (NHSI), NHS England (NHSE) and NHS Trusts throughout this incident to ensure that all of the waste continues to be removed and disposed of safely, with no disruption to NHS services and at no risk to public health.

Furthermore, I can confirm that those NHS trusts which were serviced by the HES Normanton site, are in receipt of a scheduled contingency waste collection service delivered by Mitie, which will continue until such time as a business as usual service can be resumed. I would add that this has been hampered by the unavailability of

purchased bins from HES. Notwithstanding this fact, newly procured receptacles will be in place in line with the Environment Agency's consents and given time frames.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of December I laid a Written Ministerial Statement in the House stating that HES has now failed to collect waste from a further 24 Trusts and that the optional extension in the Mitie contract has been exercised. The extension allows affected Trusts to access a replacement clinical waste service, should they choose this option. This has been communicated to all affected Trusts, and NHSI is working with them to identify the appropriate timing for them to mobilise and implement the contingency plans.

I can assure you and the committee that we have worked closely with NHSI and NHSE to ensure that the contingency plans we are putting in place are robust and will mean that Trusts are able to clear waste, with no deterioration in patient care and no health risk to the public.

*with all best wishes*



**STEPHEN HAMMOND**

*It would be helpful to arrange a meeting  
in the near future.*

*S*