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Mr Jeremy Hunt MP
Secretary of State for Health
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Dear Jeremy

I am writing to seek an update on the UK Government's plans in relation to the UK's membership of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and clarity on the future relationship between the Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the EMA.

I noted your letter to the Financial Times on 4 July where you stated the UK Government's commitment to continued close working and collaboration with the EU in the interests of public health and safety. It is the Scottish Government's view that the best way to secure this outcome is for the UK to remain within the EMA. You appeared to rule that option out when you spoke at the House of Commons Health Committee on 24 January 2017, however your letter to the Financial Times suggested that a continued relationship may now be a possibility. It is essential that clarity on the UK Government's position is provided as soon as possible.

To date, the UK Government has been unable to provide any information regarding the timescales for decision-making on this issue or detail on the process for the negotiations. In addition, there has been little engagement with the Scottish Government about the future shape of medicine regulation or the relationship between the medical licensing agencies. It is a clear risk that pharmaceutical companies could be less attracted to the UK market as a priority than they will be to the larger combined states of the EU and US. This could result in potential delays to patients getting access to the medicines they need in Scotland and the wider UK. We are also concerned that medicine manufacturers could be negatively impacted by additional costs as a result of having to work separately with the UK. This may mean that some manufacturers choose not to do so as a result. To add to this, there are questions over clinical trials and pharmacovigilance for medicines and a risk of this impacting on both access to new medicines and medicines safety. For these reasons I am deeply concerned by the possibility of the UK no longer participating in the EMA.

The Scottish Government is clear that all possible options must be considered as quickly as possible and appropriate plans put in place which will ensure that medicines licensed through the EMA remain approved for use across the UK, whatever the future relationship with the EU may be.

I would be grateful for an update on the UK Government's position and, as we move forward, would welcome the full and regular involvement of the Scottish Government in these crucial discussions and decisions.

**SHONA ROBISON**