



Supporting occupational health
and wellbeing professionals

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Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP
Secretary of State
Department of Health and Social Care
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Rt Hon Thérèse Coffey MP
Secretary of State
Department for Work and Pensions
Caxton House
Tothill St
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January 7th, 2020

Dear Secretaries of State,

The SOM is the largest nationally recognised professional organisation for individuals with an interest in health and work. Congratulations on your re-appointment as Secretary of States.

We are pleased to be working with the joint Department of Health and Social Care/ Department of Work and Pensions Work and Health Unit, following the “*Health is Everyone’s business*” consultation (that closed in October 2019). There is now an opportunity to permanently reduce the disability employment gap, give many more disabled people and people living with health issues the chance to thrive in fulfilling employment, and to deliver economic benefits to the Exchequer and the wider economy. We were pleased to see the launch of the Healthcare Professionals’ Consensus Statement on Health and Work last year which marked the collective commitment of Healthcare Professionals’ to the Health and Work agenda.

We hope the Government response to the consultation will extend access to Occupational Health services to business, to improve productivity and keep people well through safe and skilled workforce. Occupational Health needs to be underpinned by a strong medical workforce. We welcome the focus in the consultation document “*Health is everyone’s business*” that there needs to be an increase in training places for specialist Occupational Medicine doctors and Occupational Health nurses. We hope action will follow in this area.

Specifically, we look forward to continuing to work with your Departments on developing an information centre for OH, making the case for an academic collaborative centre for work and health and workforce issues. We look forward to working with you on these issues and would welcome a meeting with you or your ministerial team at your convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Will Ponsonby
President