

The Rt. Hon Jeremy Hunt MP
Secretary of State
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

16th July 2015

Dear Secretary of State,

I wanted to update you on my work reviewing the professional codes of doctors and nurses.

I believe the codes, as far as they go, are fit for purpose; and the insertion of the professional duty of candour is a welcome sign that the professional bodies recognise the importance of the issues you have raised.

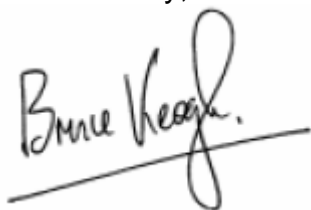
However, there is more that could be done. Not least a message that true professionalism includes a presumption towards open, frank and considered behaviour. I would like to work with the professional regulators to see what further incentives we could agree to ensure all NHS staff – whether clinical or managerial – are more open.

As a first step I am hosting a summit of professional regulators with the Chief Executive of the Professional Standards Authority, Harry Cayton, on 14th September. I hope to get the views from regulators about how quality and openness can be championed and true professionalism encouraged across all staff in the NHS. I would like to agree what steps all nine professional regulators can take, working together, to develop a common set of values to encourage these behaviours and promote quality improvement across the NHS.

I will use this summit to inform my deliberations with the intention of completing my work for you by the end of October.

I will then submit a series of proposals focusing on how we could promote a more balanced approach to harness the power of values, behaviours and professionalism as drivers for improvement across the NHS, rather than a focus on professional regulation and failure.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce Keogh". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Professor Sir Bruce Keogh KBE
National Medical Director