

To: • Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP Secretary
of State for Health and Social Care

NHS England
Wellington House
133-155 Waterloo Road
London
SE1 8UG

25 February 2025

Dear Wes

We have discussed for some time that radical reform of the size and functions of NHS England and the DHSC is needed to best support local NHS systems and providers to deliver for patients and drive the Government's reform priorities, which you know I share. Having put in place the foundations for a closer working relationship, I believe that the step change now required would be best served by new leadership in NHS England.

We share the view that the appointment of a new Chair and impending publication of the 10 Year Health Plan, supported by the Phase 2 Spending Review, will mark the start of this new phase, and I believe creates a natural moment for me to stand aside from the role of Chief Executive at the end of this financial year.

This has not been a decision I have taken lightly. It has been an enormous privilege to help lead the NHS in England since 2019, through the most difficult period in its history, first as Chief Operating Officer and latterly as Chief Executive.

I am enormously proud of the NHS response to COVID-19 and how, over the last two years, we have begun the process of steady recovery from the inevitable impacts of the pandemic – with performance in urgent and emergency care, elective and cancer all improving, and NHS teams delivering record levels of activity in primary care, community and mental health services.

In large part, this has been achieved through concerted efforts to recover the productivity inevitably lost due to a lack of resilience going into the pandemic, with annual acute productivity growth twice that of the pre-pandemic years despite unprecedented industrial action. Initiatives to support operational and clinical improvement – like NHS IMPACT, GIRFT and the Management and Leadership Framework – are now maturing and set to yield ongoing benefits.


We have also put in place the foundations for sustainable improvement and transformation on which the 10 Year Health Plan will build and your three shifts – which I wholeheartedly support – will be delivered. This includes the digitisation of frontline services and much greater use of the NHS App; the rollout of Community Diagnostic Centres and surgical hubs which have delivered a significant increase in tests and treatment and reduced long waits; delivering new community-based offers nationally, such as mental health crisis lines and urgent community response teams; and initiatives which are preventing illness and reducing health inequalities, such as high street heart checks and mobile lung CT scanners.

In addition, it has been hugely rewarding to work with colleagues to deliver some notable advances and innovations in patient care. In particular, this has included the launch of the NHS Genomic Medicine Strategy, the Cancer Vaccine Launch Pad, new treatments and care pathways for people living with sickle cell disease and thalassaemia, and personalised CAR-T therapies.

As Lord Darzi said in his report, the NHS is full of extraordinary people, who do extraordinary things every day for patients. The achievements I have listed above, and many more, are theirs. Supporting our colleagues has always been, and will always be, central to delivering the best possible care for patients. So I am equally proud to have delivered the first ever long term workforce plan for the health service. While it is right that the specifics of the LTWP continue to evolve to best serve the needs and strategic direction of the NHS, under your leadership I know the commitment within it to improve the working lives of NHS staff will remain constant. I am pleased during my tenure to have been able to champion important initiatives under this banner, including the first ever menopause policy and sexual safety charter, and that the NHS Staff Survey is showing real signs of improvement.

The NHS has shown time and again that it can do incredible things for patients, and for wider society, when given the tools it needs. You and I share the same passion for the NHS and the same desire for it to thrive for future generations – I believe now is the right time to re-shape the leadership of NHS England and the DHSC to give the NHS the best chance of realising that goal. It has been an honour to be able to play my part over the past five and a half years, and I remain committed to contributing to the success of the NHS, in whatever form that takes.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'A. Pritchard' in a cursive style.

Amanda Pritchard
NHS Chief Executive