



Dear Mr Hunt and Mr Clark,

As cancer charities representing the interests of patients, we urge you to safeguard the interests of people affected by cancer throughout the second phase of Brexit negotiations. We welcome the Prime Minister's recent commitment to explore how the UK can remain part of critical EU agencies including the European Medicines Agency, as an important first step. We must ensure the UK retains prompt access to the most innovative cancer treatments and the ability to collaborate on the development of new drugs through clinical trials.

The European Medicines Agency centralises drug licensing across the EU, and is currently working on ways to better coordinate pan-EU clinical trials. Regulatory alignment with the EU on clinical trials and drugs licensing is crucial: to ensure patient safety, timely access to life-saving cancer drugs and our continued participation in clinical trials.

For pharmaceutical companies bringing new drugs to market, the European-wide process is valuable: it accounts for 25% of the global market, whereas the UK accounts for just 3%. Our involvement in the EMA's process helps people with cancer in the UK get life-saving new drugs quickly – and we cannot afford for that to change. We are concerned that this could be at risk if we diverge from the EU's centralised process of assessment. While we recognise that the Government have committed to maintaining close links, we have not seen any firm progress yet. The Government must make progress on this soon – and must send a clear message to patients that there will be no delay in access to these life-saving cancer drugs after we leave the European Union.

We also know that research is critical to improving outcomes for people with cancer, and that many clinical trials – especially in rare and children's cancers – must often be conducted across multiple EU countries to succeed. The EU Clinical Trials Regulation will come into effect in 2019, after the UK leaves the EU, and will streamline the set-up of clinical trials. Adopting and aligning with this Regulation is critical to future progress in cancer research. Alignment will be vital for UK academic institutions to lead the valuable non-commercial trials often funded by charities.

Ultimately, we urge you to prioritise reaching an agreement with the EU that maintains our alignment with both the EMA's centralised drug licensing process and the Clinical Trials Regulation. This is critical if we are serious about improving outcomes for people affected by cancer in the UK.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Lisa Wilde, Director of Research and External Affairs, Bowel Cancer UK and Beating Bowel Cancer

Alasdair Rankin

Alasdair Rankin, Director of Research and Patient Experience, Bloodwise

Sue Farrington Smith MBE, Chief Executive, Brain Tumour Research

Fiona Hazell, Director of Policy and Engagement, Breast Cancer Now

Emma Greenwood, Director of Policy and Public Affairs, Cancer Research UK

Jane Lyons, Chief Executive Officer, Cancer 52

Maggie Wilcox, President, Independent Cancer Patient Voices

Robert Music, Chief Executive, Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust

Nick Turkentine, Chief Executive Officer, Kidney Cancer UK

Rose Woodward, Founder, Kidney Cancer Support Network

Zack Pemberton-Whiteley, Campaigns and Advocacy Director, Leukaemia Care

Andrew Kaye, Head of Policy and Influence, Macmillan Cancer Support

Dr Simon Ridley, Director of Research, Myeloma UK

Victoria Clare

Victoria Clare, Chief Executive Officer, Ovacome

Diana Jupp, Chief Executive Officer, Pancreatic Cancer UK

Heather Blake

Heather Blake, Director of Support and Influencing, Prostate Cancer UK

Roger Wotton, Chairman, Tackle Prostate Cancer

Rebecca Rennison

Rebecca Rennison, Director of Public Affairs and Services, Target Ovarian Cancer

Sarah Lindsell

Sarah Lindsell, Chief Executive Officer, The Brain Tumour Charity