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From the Minister for Health

M A Pattison Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
LONDON S W 1

31 July 1981

Dear Mike,

For some time, Dr Vaughan has been concerned about the criticisms - recently repeated in the press - of the fees charged to Arab patients by British medicine. He has been in touch with a number of Arab Governments, and also with the Secretary-General of the Medical Secretariat of the Arab Gulf States (based in Riyadh).

In view of the Prime Minister's pending visit to Kuwait, Dr Vaughan thought that she would wish to know that action on these criticisms is all part of a larger project on which he has been working - to bring together the private and the public sectors in medicine, in support of exports and to strengthen the home base of medical industries. Specifically, he is discussing with a few influential people the concept of a Trust (non-Governmental, but with Government involvement) to oversee a number of projects to make better use of our undoubted assets: among these projects are -

contractual arrangements for overseas undergraduate and postgraduate students to receive better coordinated training in facilities funded by overseas Governments;

contractual arrangements for treatment of overseas patients under DHSS auspices, at major specialised centres in London and at more general centres outside London;

an advisory service to train overseas technicians in the servicing and maintenance of British equipment.

In this way, we would hope to develop for example a hospital which would serve as an example of the best in British hospital management, provide a setting for British equipment, and a base for some of the most forward-looking medical techniques and the best practice in general medical care.

E. R.

It will be a little while before Dr Vaughan is ready to make a final proposal. But the general ideas are relevant to the Prime Minister's visit to Kuwait because Dr Vaughan discussed them extensively with Ministers there during his own visit last year.

I enclose for your own background information a copy of the note which Dr Vaughan will be using in his private discussions, and I am copying this letter to Steven Lamport in Mr Hurd's office and to David Wright.

Yours ever
Jeremy Knight

J E KNIGHT
Private Secretary

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