



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY
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Private Secretary to the
Lord President of the Council
Civil Service Department
Old Admiralty Building
Whitehall
LONDON SW1A 2AZ

2.
Prime Minister
This Answer is being
given today MA 16/11
13 November 1981

Dear David,

[Handwritten mark]

FAMILY PRACTITIONER COMMITTEES

We propose to announce a decision on the future status of Family Practitioner Committees on Monday by means of an Inspired PQ (copy attached).

This will mean a small change in primary legislation at a date to suit us but as you will see from the reply nothing is promised for this session, and the profession are happy to accept interim arrangements if necessary for several years.

We are under considerable pressure to make an early announcement following the consultative paper, particularly from the profession. Subject to any comments you have on the answer proposed it will be made on Monday and announced in a Press Release the same afternoon.

I am copying this to Private Secretaries to the Prime Minister, the Chief Whip, the Chief Secretary, the Secretaries of State for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

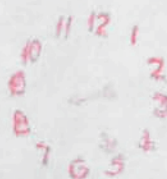
Yours ever
[Signature]

D BRERETON
Private Secretary

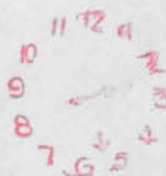
FAMILY PRACTITIONER COMMITTEES

We have studied carefully the responses to the Consultative Paper issued in March, and have concluded that establishing Family Practitioner Committees as Health Authorities in their own right, with powers to engage their own staff, is likely both to facilitate the development of primary care services and lead to increased efficiency in the administration of the Family Practitioner Services. We shall when time permits seek the legislation necessary to introduce these new arrangements but this cannot be fitted into the Government's programme for the present session. For the time being the present statutory relationship between health authorities and family practitioner committees will, therefore, continue. My decision will in no way affect the Government's intention to reduce the proportion of total NHS resources spent on management by 10 per cent by the end of the financial year 1984/5.

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nat Health

MCS
MCS to see
MM

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

Rt Hon Norman Fowler MP
Secretary of State
Alexander Fleming House
Elephant & Castle
London SE1 8BY

17 November 1981

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FAMILY PRACTITIONER COMMITTEES

attached

I have seen your Private Secretary's letter of 13 November about your announcement by means of an Inspired PQ on 16 November of a proposed change in the status of Family Practitioner Committees.

I think it is a pity that the timing of this letter made it very difficult indeed for recipients to give the matter proper consideration. There is some risk that the proposed change may make it more difficult in practice to bring the Family Practitioner Service within cash limits, should we wish to do so. I shall be writing to you about this shortly. But I note and endorse the understanding reached between our officials that your announcement of the proposed change in the status of FPCs will not be regarded as a reason for opposing the cash-limiting of the FPS, whatever else might be the considerations for and against such a move.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, the Chief Whip, the Secretaries of State for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and Sir Robert Armstrong.

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