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EU and EEA citizens working in  
Social Care in Scotland

6 November 2019

Dear Colleague,

## **EU AND EEA CITIZENS WORKING IN SOCIAL CARE IN SCOTLAND**

We have written to you a number of times over the past 12 months about the UK's exit from the EU. You may recall that in our last letter, dated April 2019, we had expressed a wish for more clarity. We are in a situation now where the EU has granted the UK Government a further extension to 31 January. However the upcoming General Election, and the decisions that a new UK Government will make after the election are unknown, meaning that there is still a lot of uncertainty about our future relationship with the EU.

We know that helpful information and supportive comments from employers is important, which is why we are continuing to work with health and social care partnerships and social care providers to spread the message that your contribution to the health, independence and wellbeing of people in Scotland is hugely valued. We are aware that this will be an increasingly worrying and anxious time for you and we want to assure you, as we have before, that our top priority continues to be to ensure that your rights are protected and that you have access to the information and assistance you require.

We are also continuing to work closely with health and social care partnerships to make sure that preparations for the UK exiting the EU are fit-for-purpose and adaptable to the various scenarios that could evolve over the coming months. The Scottish Government is funding a consultant, based in Scottish Care, to support and encourage social care providers in their resilience planning which will be important in ensuring the wellbeing of older and disabled people in Scotland.

As we said in our December and April letters, the Scottish Government greatly values the huge contribution that you continue to make to the provision of social care support. We want you to continue to live and work in Scotland.

## **EU Settlement Scheme**

The EU Settlement Scheme has now been open for over six months, and we know that over 92,000 applications have been received from EU citizens in Scotland. This is encouraging but it is less than half of the estimated total number of EU nationals living in Scotland.

Although the UK Government have said that EU citizens are not required to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme until December 2020 at the earliest, we would encourage all EU staff members and their families to apply as soon as possible, if they have not already done so.

The *Stay in Scotland* campaign toolkit has been distributed widely in the social care sector, through organisations such as the Scottish Social Services Council and Scottish Care and we hope that your employer has found it useful. If you would like to access the guides yourself, then you can find them all at: [www.gov.scot/stayinscotland](http://www.gov.scot/stayinscotland) .

The Scottish Government is funding Citizens Advice Scotland to deliver an advice and support service for EU citizens and their families. This service is for anyone who would like to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme but who may need additional help. You can access the service through your local Citizens Advice Bureau or by calling the full-time freephone helpline on **0800 916 9847**.

The First Minister has also written an open letter to EU citizens encouraging them to take the necessary steps to continue living in Scotland. If you would like to read the letter, it can be found on the Scottish Government website at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/first-ministers-letter-to-eu-citizens-in-scotland-october-2019/>

I again want to say thank you for all that you do. I hope that this letter provides further reassurance that you are welcome in Scotland, that you are valued and that we would like you to stay.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Jeane'.

**JEANE FREEMAN**

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Stuart Currie'.

**COUNCILLOR STUART CURRIE**