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Jeremy Hunt MP questioned on Brexit impact by Health Select Committee

On 24 January Jeremy Hunt MP appeared before the House of Commons' Health Select Committee to answer questions on the impact of the UK leaving the European Union (EU).

Highlights of Jeremy Hunt's evidence to the Committee include:

He was unable to provide guarantees on UK citizens' right to access services covered by the European Health Insurance Card after the country exits the European Union.

He re-iterated his desire to train 8,000 more British doctors to end the NHS's reliance on foreign ones.

It is Government policy 'in the short term' to keep the 90,000 EU citizens working in UK social care in place.

The Department of Health will drop from 1,800 to 1,300 staff over the next three months, but will recruit 200 new staff specifically to deal with Brexit.

Plans for a parliamentary bill to tighten up NHS charging of overseas visitors in the middle of the current Parliament have been postponed. The

Government will now re-visit possible legislation after the UK has left the EU.

The UK will leave the European Medicines Agency (EMA), but the Government would like to retain close relations with it, if negotiations allow.

Note: the EMA is the EU's medicines regulator and is currently based in Canary Wharf, employing 900 scientists, doctors and support staff. It is expected to be relocated to an EU member country once the UK leaves the EU. Dr Philippa Whitford (SNP MP and oncologist) raised her concern that the EU and US get new drugs about six months earlier than other countries, so the UK's access to new medicines will be delayed once it is no longer part of the EU/EMA.