

Victoria Atkins MP  
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care  
Department for Health and Social Care  
*Sent by email*

13 November 2023

Dear Ms Atkins,

Congratulations on your appointment as Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.

No doubt you will be overwhelmed with introductory messages, so we will be brief. NHS dentistry faces a crisis like no other in its history. The country faces a genuine prospect of losing a core part of its health service.

So, we look to you to do two things.

First, in April the Department pledged a recovery plan for NHS dentistry. Seven months on and it has yet to materialise. With every day that passes dedicated colleagues are walking away from a broken system. Many have simply given up hope of change. A properly resourced plan is Government's best chance to send a clear signal – both to this profession and the millions we treat - that it is serious about NHS dentistry having a future.

Secondly, we are awaiting the Government's response to the Health and Social Care Committee's recent inquiry. The Committee's cross-party recommendations provide a clear roadmap to rebuild a sustainable service. With a model of care that is prevention-focused and patient-centred. A system that makes a clean break from the discredited NHS contract that is fuelling the exodus from our workforce.

The Department now has an opportunity to show it shares these aspirations.

Last year the Prime Minister pledged to 'restore' NHS dentistry. Health Ministers have since said anyone who wants NHS dental care should be able to access it. These goals require both urgency and ambition.

We wish you well in your new post and would be happy to meet with you at any time.

Yours sincerely,



**Eddie Crouch**  
Chair  
British Dental Association  
Committee



**Martin Woodrow**  
Chief Executive  
British Dental Association



**Shawn Charwood**  
Chair  
General Dental Practice