LETTER FROM JOHN CONNAGHAN, DIRECTOR OF HEALTH DELIVERY, SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, TO THE CONVENER OF THE PUBLIC AUDIT COMMITTEE, 27 AUGUST 2010.

AUDITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND REPORT – REVIEW OF ORTHOPAEDIC SERVICES

You will recall that in my letter of 2 August I provided information for the Committee on a number of topics, one of which was the use of the private sector by the NHS. I am writing to draw your attention to a recently answered Parliamentary Question on this topic, a copy of which is attached, which contains some additional information and data which the Committee may find useful.

I will of course be happy to answer any specific questions on this issue which Members might have at the evidence session on 8 September.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

JOHN CONNAGHAN
Director of Delivery
Mary Scanlon (Highlands and Islands) (Con): To ask the Scottish Executive how many operations and treatments have been carried out in the independent health care sector on behalf of NHS patients in each of the last 10 years.

Holding answer issued: 15 June 2010 (S3W-34007)

Nicola Sturgeon: As described in the answer to question S3W-21983 on 27 March 2009 the information relating to the activity undertaken for NHS patients through independent hospitals is known to have been under-reported in the past. Since 2007 steps have been taken to improve the recording of this activity. Given these concerns with data quality, which go back a number of years, it is not possible to provide a meaningful trend from the centrally collected statistics.

Table 1 shows the number of records received by ISD relating to discharges from independent acute hospitals. Table 2 shows the number of records received by ISD from the joint NHS/independent facility at the Scottish Regional Treatment Centre (SRTC) at Stracathro Hospital. The SRTC was established in January 2007 and was provided by the independent sector provider Netcare. This contract expired in January 2010 and the Centre is now managed by NHS Tayside.

As the figures in table 1 demonstrate, interpretation of these figures should be made with caution given the considerable variation in the number of recorded discharges year on year.

When this Government came to power we ceased direct central funding for independent sector activity. Prior to 2007 approximately £15 million per annum was provided from central funding to support independent sector activity in Scotland. In the latest year for which data is available (2008-09), approximately £10 million was spent by the NHS, compared to the £15+ million expenditure prior to 2006-07.

Table 1. Inpatient and Day Case Discharges for NHS Patients treated in the Independent Sector¹,² Number of Cases Reported to ISD Scotland, Years Ending 31 March 2000-09

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Ending 31 March</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of discharges from independent acute hospitals²</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>527</td>
<td>872</td>
<td>1,158</td>
<td>1,410</td>
<td>1,620</td>
<td>1,031</td>
<td>2,285</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Inpatient and Day Case Discharges from the Scottish Regional Treatment Centre at Stracathro Hospital¹,². Number of Cases Reported to ISD Scotland, Years Ending 31 March 2007-09

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Ending 31 March</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of discharges</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>1,612</td>
<td>2,434</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ISD Scotland SMR01. Date: June 2010.

Notes:
1. It is emphasised that the figures shown are based on incomplete returns. Submissions levels are believed to vary by location and over time. The figures are of limited use and should be treated with caution.

2. The figures in table 1 exclude episodes of care delivered at the Scottish Regional Treatment Centre (SRTC) at Stracathro Hospital. SRTC was established in January 2007 and was provided by the independent sector provider Netcare. This contract expired in January 2010 and the Centre is now managed by NHS Tayside.