

NHS England and
Improvement

PO Box 16738
Redditch
B97 9PT

**Publishing Approval
Reference 001225**

Classification: Official

29 October 2019

Dear colleagues,

Extension of the Article 50 period to 31 January 2020

As you will have seen, the UK and the EU have agreed an extension of the Article 50 period to 31 January 2020. This means that the UK will not leave the EU on 31 October 2019. As a result, we are now making the necessary changes to stop our no deal plans coming into force on 31 October.

The nature of the extension is that if the Withdrawal Agreement is ratified by both the UK and European Parliaments, the UK will leave with a deal. If ratification has not happened by 31 January 2020 the legal default is that the UK will leave the EU without a deal. This means that preparations for a no deal outcome must continue, adjusted to the new timescales. The current daily EU Exit SitRep therefore will be paused from today (Tuesday) until we approach the next no deal date.

As discussed on the 29 October webinars we will use the period of the extension to review our plans for all scenarios, including a deal or no deal. We will work with organisations where there are outstanding issues to ensure we are as ready as we can be when the UK leaves the EU.

The hard work that NHS staff across the country have put in to ensuring that we are prepared for leaving the EU has not been wasted. The new date will require further thought about no deal preparations, and we will provide additional information as it becomes available.

Once again, I thank you and your teams for the huge amount of work you have done to prepare for EU Exit and for your patience and professionalism.



Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Willett', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Professor Keith Willett

EU Exit Strategic Commander

Medical Director for Acute Care & Emergency Preparedness