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From the Private Secretary

5 April 1988

Dear Flora

The Prime Minister has seen your letter to me of 31 March about the provision of statistics on operations carried out in the NHS. She is grateful for the careful consideration which has been given to the point she raised, and glad to know that more up to date information will be available for the future. In particular, she welcomes the fact that data will be available during the summer on the total number of operations performed during 1987/88, through the Health Authorities' collection of information on theatre usage.

The Prime Minister has concluded however that there is no strong case for incurring the extra administrative costs associated with compiling data on operations more frequently than once a year, unless the Department believes that would be justified for management purposes.

The Prime Minister has also noted the point in your final paragraph, that the new processes for speeding up data processing relate only to England. She believes we must be able to quote figures relating to the country as a whole - Great Britain, if not the United Kingdom.

BK 11 I should be grateful if you would offer further advice on this point, and I am accordingly sending a copy of this letter, and yours, to David Crawley (Scottish Office) and Jon Shortridge (Welsh Office).

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Mark Addison

M. E. Addison

Mrs. Flora Goldhill,
Department of Health and Social Security.

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