9th March 2010

Lord Lipsey
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

Dear [Name],

In your email of 23 February you noted that I had mistakenly described the position in Scotland with regard to the provision of free personal care during the Committee stage of the Personal Care at Home Bill on 22 February.

I said: "In Scotland, they offer a much different system, which is about the provision of full care free of charge, not personal care, as we are proposing, which is a much more targeted approach." (col. 912)

You are correct to note that in fact Scotland offers only free personal care and free nursing care, and not free provision of wider domiciliary or residential care as could be interpreted from my response in Committee.

However, I disagree with your statement that "the system [in Scotland] is to all intents and purposes the same as the government is proposing for England". In Scotland free personal and nursing care is available to all, whatever their level of need. In the proposals outlined by the Personal Care at Home Bill, personal care will be provided free of charge only to those with the highest needs who are living at home. This is a far more targeted approach than that which was adopted in Scotland, and as such we do not envisage the sorts of "soaring cost" that you described in your email.

I hope that this has clarified the issue for you. A copy of this letter will be placed in the Library.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

GLENYS THORNTON