

## **AXREM Post Brexit concerns**

AXREM is the trade association representing the suppliers of diagnostic medical imaging, radiotherapy, healthcare IT and care equipment in the UK. AXREM members supply most of the diagnostic medical imaging and radiotherapy equipment installed in UK hospitals. In doing so, our member companies and their employees work side by side with Consultant Radiologists, Radiographers and Practitioners, Oncologists and a wide range of healthcare professionals in delivering healthcare to patients using our technologies.

When it comes to delivering safe and efficient healthcare, time is of vital importance and we believe that there are some fundamental issues in the diagnostic medical imaging, radiotherapy, healthcare IT and care equipment sector that must be addressed swiftly.

The impact of the UK's vote to leave the EU could have major implications for health and social care, not least because it has introduced a period of significant economic uncertainty at a time when the healthcare system is facing huge operational and financial pressures. While the impact on health, and in particular radiology services, of leaving the EU is impossible to forecast, it is clear that a number of important issues will need to be resolved.

### **People**

The EU's policy of freedom of movement and mutual recognition of professional qualifications within the EU means that many health and social care professionals currently working in the UK have come from other EU countries. This includes over 50,000 of the NHS's workforce. Industries such as those comprising AXREM need personnel with the same or similar skills, and the concern of AXREM member is that access to those skilled people across Europe needs to be maintained. Furthermore, those personnel that are already in post in AXREM member companies need to be reassured that their position and future is safe while resident in the UK post BREXIT.

### **Regulations**

Currently the UK has considerable influence over EU regulation and in a post Brexit UK we must choose between adopting EU rules or being excluded from the single market.

Government should take the opportunity to ensure that regulation is clear, proportionate and has a positive effect on domestic and international trade, adapting and adopting the best regulatory practices available worldwide.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) plays a vital and expanding role in the safety and regulation of medicines and devices. This has the potential to grow significantly as the UK finds its place as a global player, outside of EU regulation. The MHRA must, therefore, play an important part in developing and implementing future regulatory strategy with industry and government, recognising the importance of medical technology device sales alongside innovation and patient outcomes.

### **Continued Research & Development**

The funding of Research and Development has been highlighted as a concern prior to the referendum vote to leave the EU and whilst it is acknowledged that the UK EU membership fees may be redistributed to areas such as R&D, there are real dangers that projects may be delayed whilst the redistribution discussions and agreements are determined. Many of the critical care machines supplied by AXREM members can trace key design DNA back to UK University based research and development, and a sharp reduction in this would disadvantage UK healthcare considerably. Therefore, we would encourage the UK Government to act fast when it comes to supporting university led research during the uncertain period between the vote to leave the EU and the time when the exit plan is agreed and implemented

### **Opportunities in the Health Service**

AXREM members support the objective of provided improved access for innovation, coupled with a value based procurement regime, and to achieve this the above factors of People, Regulations and Research & Development play a major part. However, the ambiguity with respect to the terms of any future international trade agreements is unhelpful and inherently can challenge investment plans.

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