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PO5009995

25 February 2005

The Rt Hon Ian McCartney MP

Dear Ian,

Thank you for your letter of 31 January enclosing correspondence from Ms Eve Richardson, Chief Executive of The National Council for Palliative Care, First Floor, 34-44 Britannia Street, London WC1X 9JG about the publication of the *Palliative Care Manifesto 2005*.

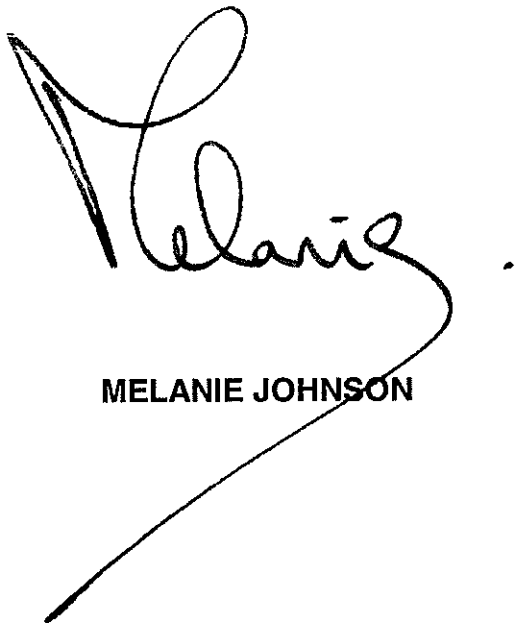
First, may I say I appreciate the important role that the National Council for Palliative Care has played in shaping the development of palliative care nationally. We particularly value the National Council's representative and strategic role for the whole hospice and palliative care movement, helping to bring consensus to the national table.

As you will be aware, although more remains to be done, we have made a great deal of progress in improving palliative care services in recent years and much of this relates to the points raised in the *Palliative Care Manifesto 2005*.

From 2003/04, we have boosted investment on specialist palliative care, including hospices, by £50million per annum. The extra £50million meets the Government commitment set in the *NHS Cancer Plan* and represents a significant increase in NHS investment in specialist palliative care for adults with cancer of about 40 per cent over 2000 levels. Figures from 2003/04 show that over half of this new money has gone to voluntary sector services.

John Reid and I have both received a copy of the *Palliative Care Manifesto* from the National Council, and I have agreed to meet Eve Richardson within the next couple of weeks to discuss the Manifesto and other issues relating to palliative care.

Best wishes,



MELANIE JOHNSON