# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TITLE** | **Ministerial visit to India** |
| **DATE** | **17 December 2019** |
| **BY** | **Vaughan Gething AM, Minister for Health and Social Services** |

Members will be aware that I recently undertook a Ministerial visit to India. The purpose of my visit was to reinforce and enhance the Medical Recruitment Initiative Programme (MTI) operated by the British Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (BAPIO) together with NHS Wales and to make new connections with both Union and State Governments of India.

This is the fourth year the MTI programme has operated in India, allowing doctors from India to benefit from training and development in NHS Wales for up to 24 months. Due to the scheme’s success this year it has been extended to include the region of Chennai. NHS Wales and the people of Wales benefit from a significant number of middle grade doctors.

This year again saw large numbers of applications with over 100 doctors expected to be accepted into the programme. As in the previous three years the doctors will be matched and placed across all seven Health Boards in Wales.

I met a number of organisations active in the healthcare, medical nurse and healthcare professional training schools, healthcare providers and of course large numbers of doctors. These events took place in Jaipur and Bharatpur in the state of Rajasthan and Chennai in the state of Tamil Nadu.

In Jaipur, I met with:

* Pratham Software Company who specialise in pioneering tele medicine and patient medical record systems;
* Dr G K Prabhu, President, Manipal University Jaipur and the senior team which included the signing of an memoranda of understanding between Manipal University and the University of South Wales; and
* Vishnu Laate, Mayor of Jaipur and Dr Mahesh Joshi, Chief Whip of the Rajasthan Government.

In New Delhi, I met the MTI recruitment team together with a group of candidates. I then met with the British High Commissioner who hosted a reception at the High Commission residence. The reception was to raise Wales’ profile in the Indian capital with representatives from health, business and education in attendance. I also met a number of potential inward investors.

In Chennai, I again met with the MTI Recruitment Team. I also inaugurated a stem cell transplant unit at SIMS hospital in Chennai, which will provide life-saving treatment for cancer and blood disorders. Additionally, I attended the signing of three further memoranda of understanding on healthcare with:

* BIHER University Chennai;
* KI Medical Institute Chengeluput, Tamil Nadu; and
* Sriram Institute of Medical Sciences Chennai.

I also held an informal meeting with Dr C Vijaya Baskar, Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Government of Tamil Nadu. There are clear synergies and opportunities for collaboration between Wales and India that go beyond staff recruitment and training.

This statement is being issued during recess in order to keep members informed. Should members wish me to make a further statement or to answer questions on this when the Assembly returns I would be happy to do so.