



Department
of Health &
Social Care

*From Karin Smyth MP
Minister of State for Health*

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Ms Claire Cunniffe
Chief Executive
Cleft Lip and Palate Action
By email to: lachlan.bruce@clapa.com

27 April 2026

Dear Ms Cunniffe,

Thank you for your correspondence of 13 March to Wes Streeting about Training Interface Group (TIG) fellowships for cleft surgeons. I apologise for the delay in replying.

I appreciate your concerns.

In 2025, NHS England made the decision to discontinue central funding of the salary support component of the TIG programme and target financial resources more effectively to address regional workforce priorities.

Regions or provider organisations that wish to continue developing these skills are still able to recruit, fund and train staff using the curriculum set by the Joint Committee on Surgical Training.

NHS England is also working to understand where it can enhance and support smaller, highly specialised areas of practice. Its specialised commissioning teams will feed into this work, which will consider how TIG programmes could be best supported in the future.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

KARIN SMYTH