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Dear Ms Simmons,

Thank you for your e.mail of 11 August to the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) on the subject of Unexplained Dermopathy, also known as "Morgellons". The CMO has asked me to respond to you on his behalf.

With regard to the Government's plan for addressing this condition, our approach is to investigate the symptoms of each person who suffers from this condition on an individual basis. The symptoms associated with this rare condition are wide ranging and non-specific and it is important that individuals are thoroughly assessed in the first instance by their GP, and any treatment tailored to their individual needs.

You may be aware that the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), based in Atlanta, has commissioned an objective scientific investigation into this condition, and the Department is awaiting the results of that investigation. In the Department's view, it would not be a good use of resources to conduct research in the UK as this would duplicate the work being undertaken in the United States. Currently, the cause of this condition remains unknown, and there is no evidence that the condition is transmissible from person to person, hence its continued medical description as Unexplained Dermopathy. There is as yet no universal or specific treatment for this condition.

I would like to thank you for writing. I note that you refer to being 'in contact with missing patients'. The Department's advice to any such persons is to seek the advice of their GP, and I trust that you will pass this advice on to those with whom you are in contact.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Ailsa Wight
Head, Infectious Disease and Blood Policy Branch.