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Reference

241921

Date **13 OKT 2010**
Subject status medical school

Dear Sir,

Recently, we have been receiving requests to provide greater clarity regarding the position of Medical Schools in the Netherlands Antilles and their position after 10 October 2010. In response to these requests we would like to take this opportunity to inform you as follows.

Charter

A few years ago, the Antillean government granted several charters with respect to the Medical Schools on Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba (BES). If requested, we are prepared to extend the statement issued in 1988 on your educational activities. I would like to point out that any such statement from us does not entail a confirmation regarding the provision of any form of recognised or accredited education under Dutch law. You are, however, free to continue your educational activities in their current form. The latter is a result of the right to freedom to provide education which applies in the Netherlands.

WHW (Dutch Higher Education and Research Act) on BES

The political changes that go hand in hand with the transition of the Netherlands Antilles islands of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba, mean that as of 10 October 2010 the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (WHW) will apply on these islands.

The WHW contains provisions for higher education institutions that involve funding (of a part of the institutions), the quality, registration and content of the education provided and the management of the institution. In no case whatsoever will we fund independent higher education institutions on Bonaire, Sint Eustatius or Saba.

The WHW sets out the conditions that apply for the admission to the system of higher education in the Netherlands of non-subsidised institutions and the consequences thereof.

An important stipulation in this regard is that a legal entity can ask for permission from the Minister of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) to award degrees (Article 6.9, WHW). To be eligible for this consent from the Minister, the education provided by the legal entity must be of sufficient quality (to be assessed by the NVAO, the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders), it must meet the statutory requirements regarding teaching and exams, and the



procedures, therefore including an external review). To this end, use is made of the existing assessment framework for bachelor's or master's programmes. The duration of the programme must be the same as that mentioned in the Act. For a bachelor's programme at a research university this is three years; a master's programme in Medicine also lasts three years (180 credits). After the transition, admission to the Dutch higher education system will only be possible in the manner indicated above.

International Affairs

Our reference
IZ 3027181

Decree Restricting the Establishment of Medical Practitioners on BES

As of the transition date of 10 October 2010, the above Decree will apply for medical practitioners seeking to establish themselves on the BES islands. The Dutch Individual Health Care Professions Act (BIG) will not yet apply on the three islands; the Antillean National Ordinance on Individual Health Care Professions will cease to exist for the BES islands.

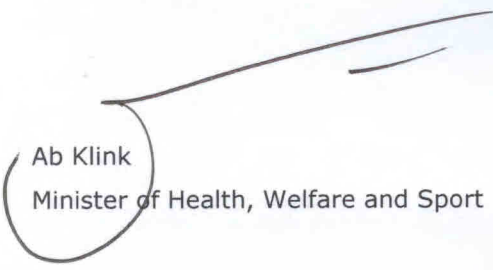
Based on the Decree Restricting the Establishment of Medical Practitioners on BES, a prohibition will apply to establishing oneself as a medical practitioner on the BES islands, *unless*:

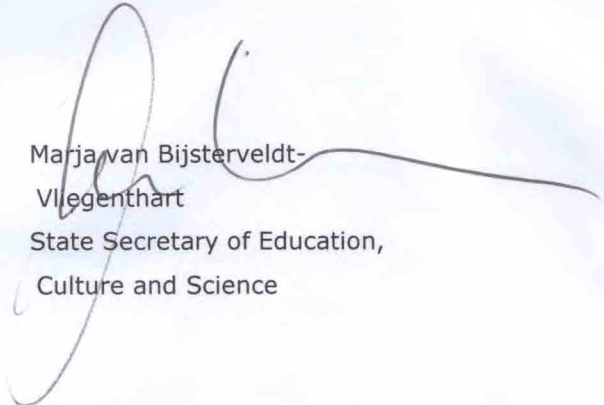
- 1) The medical practitioner has been granted dispensation by the Minister of Health, Welfare and Sport;
- 2) At the time that the Decree enters into force, the medical practitioner is already established and working as such on the BES islands, or is established and working as a speech therapist, ergotherapist, kinesiologist, podiatrist or dietician.

For further (general) information about the registration of care providers on the BIG register and declarations of professional competency to care providers with foreign qualifications who wish to work in the Netherlands or on the BES islands after the transition date, we would like to refer you to the website www.bigregister.nl.

In the near future, the Dutch BIG Act will be introduced on the BES islands in an amended form, and the same conditions will then apply for registration as apply to medical practitioners who graduate in the Netherlands or elsewhere in the EU.

Yours sincerely,


Ab Klink
Minister of Health, Welfare and Sport


Marja van Bijsterveldt-
Vlegenthart
State Secretary of Education,
Culture and Science