

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

25th January 2017

Jean Constituent,

RE: NHS.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of your concerns about the NHS.

I believe in the NHS and its values and I will always hugely appreciate the brilliant care afforded to me and my family by local NHS staff over the years. I recognise that the NHS has been under sustained pressure with the number of people aged 80 and over rising by 340,000, and life expectancy rising by 12 months in the last six years alone. As a result, the NHS is facing an unprecedented demand. However, I know that the Government is determined to protect the service through this challenging period and ensure its future sustainability.

This winter, the NHS has made more extensive preparations than ever before, and there are now 11,400 more doctors and 11,200 more hospital nurses in the NHS since 2010. To support the NHS, investment of £350 million was included in local Clinical Commissioning Group budgets in 2016/17 for resilience planning, and £50 million was made available for national initiatives. The NHS also assured the winter plans of every NHS Trust, launched the largest ever flu vaccination programme – something I have actively supported locally - and bolstered support outside A&Es, with 12,000 additional GP sessions offered over the festive period.

As a consequence of this preparation and, most importantly, the hard work of frontline staff, the system overall is coping and even performing slightly better than last year. Earlier in December, it treated a record number of patients within four hours and we are seeing 2,500 more patients within the four hour standard every single day compared with 2010.

However, I am aware that there are a number of NHS Trusts where the situation has been extremely fragile and NHS England is considering a series of further measures to be taken forward on a temporary basis at the discretion of local clinical leaders. Taken together, these actions will give the NHS additional flexibility to take further measures at a local level, if appropriate.



Furthermore, despite tight public finances, the Government has actively supported the NHS' own plan for the future. That is why it is providing the additional £10 billion of investment per annum in real terms by 2020/21 - compared to 2014/15 - requested by NHS England, to fund a transformation in care. I know also that the Government recognises the current pressures facing local areas. That is why Ministers are giving local authorities additional funding and flexibility so that they will have access to an additional £3.5 billion by 2020 - providing a real terms increase in social care funding by the end of this Parliament.

The Government is also committed to maintaining and delivering the vital four hour A&E standard to patients. It is widely understood that too many people are going to A&E unnecessarily, and therefore we must look at ways to protect the four hour target for those people who need it most. This will be done through triaging more people at the 'front doors' and pointing them towards more appropriate services, as well as giving more information to the public so they can make the right decisions about the services they need to access.

It is for these very reasons that I continue to campaign hard for the new Urgent Care Hub at Kettering General Hospital, which will bring many important services under one roof, improving patient experience and relieving pressures on the A&E. We also know this model to work, as proven by the hugely successful Corby Urgent Care Centre, which was delivered by Conservatives in Government, working with the NHS locally, back in 2012.

In closing, I can assure you that the Government remains committed to ensuring that the NHS offers the safest, highest-quality care available anywhere in the world, and as your local MP, I will continue to campaign hard for the right investments in health services here in Corby and East Northamptonshire.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

with best wishes,

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**