

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

17th May 2018

Dear Coniferent,

RE: BREXIT AND NHS WORKERS FROM THE EU.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of the effects of leaving the EU on the NHS.

I appreciate that leaving the European Union poses uncertainty to our country's future, and our public services. I would like to pay tribute to the 62,000 EU nationals who work in the NHS, and commend the care and compassion they provide.

I believe we must do all we can to support the NHS, and I have the utmost confidence in my ministerial colleagues in their efforts to ensure that the UK not only concludes an excellent deal with our European partners, but also maintains this country's reputation as a fantastic place to live and work.

I read with concern reports that the numbers of EU nationals working in the NHS has recently fallen. However, I understand that in the year following the EU referendum, the number of EU nationals working in the NHS actually increased by 5 percent. I note that, unfortunately, there was a small fall in the number of nurses and health visitors from the EU during this time; however, there are a variety of factors which could account for this, notably the introduction of a new English language test for NHS staff from the EU, and falling unemployment in countries such as Spain and Poland, which had previously contributed many nurses to the NHS.

The Government has been embarking on one of the largest recruitment drives in the NHS. Today, there are over 14,000 more nurses and over 11,000 more doctors in NHS wards than in 2010, as well as a further 50,000 nurses in training. Furthermore, the Government recently announced an extra 1,500 training places for doctors, and over 5,000 more trainee nurses; a 25 percent increase. I believe that these efforts will significantly support NHS staffing, and safeguard the NHS for the future.

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

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