

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

29th May 2018

John Confront

RE: MENTAL HEALTH FUNDING.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of mental health funding.

I agree that tackling poor mental health must be a priority and Ministers have legislated to treat it with the same importance as physical health. Progress is being made with more Government investment in mental health and an estimated 1,400 more people accessing mental health services every day compared to 2010, as well as around 750,000 more people accessing talking therapies since 2009/10.

In February 2016, an independent Mental Health Taskforce published a new national strategy, setting out an ambitious vision for mental health services. To make these recommendations a reality, the Government will spend an additional £1 billion on mental health by 2020-21 so that people receive the right care, in the right place, when they need it most. This includes increasing the number of people completing talking therapies by 600,000 per year, and helping 20,000 more people to find or stay in work through individual placement support and talking therapies. To help meet these ambitions, the Government is increasing the number of mental health professionals in the NHS by 21,000.

A further £1.25 billion will be invested into perinatal and children and young people's mental health services. This will help professionals to intervene early and more than double the number of pregnant women or new mothers receiving mental health support; and, will fund the training of around 1,700 new therapists. To support teenagers with eating disorders, the Government is investing £150 million.

The Government has also introduced the first-ever mental health access and waiting time standards, so that 75 percent of people referred for talking therapies to treat common mental health problems, such as depression and anxiety, start their treatment within 6 weeks, and 95 percent within 18 weeks. These targets have been met and the latest data shows that in May 2016, 84 percent of people waited less than 6 weeks and 97 percent of people waited less than 18 weeks. Also, patients experiencing psychosis for the first time must be treated within two weeks.

I am encouraged to note that the Government has announced reform to mental health policy in the latest Queen's Speech, in order to continue to reduce the number of people detained in police cells under the Mental Health Act. You may be pleased to know that in October 2017, the Prime Minister announced that the Government



would embark on a comprehensive review of the Mental Health Act, which has remained unchanged for more than three decades. This review will examine existing practices, and address the disproportionately high rates of detention of people from ethnic minorities. I am happy to note that the review will be led by Professor Sir Simon Wessely, a former president of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, and he will consider the needs of all users of mental health services and their families, and improve the system's support for those during a mental health crisis.

I understand that the Government is working to ensure that mental health spending is invested throughout the whole country. Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) are required to achieve the Mental Health Investment Standard, to demonstrate that they have increased their mental health spending in line with the growth in their overall budgets. I am happy to note that in 2016/17, 85 percent of CCGs achieved this standard, and NHS England continues to work with CCGs to improve this figure. You may also be encouraged to hear that in the Autumn Budget, an extra package of investment was announced to provide the NHS with vital funding throughout the winter. Of this, up to £18 million is to be made available to mental health services.

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

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