

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

12th July 2018

New Constituent,

RE: PRESCRIPTION CHARGES FOR PEOPLE WITH LONG-TERM CONDITIONS.

Thank you for contacting me recently about prescription charges for people with long-term conditions; your comments upon which I read with great interest.

Firstly, I understand that the prescription charge has recently increased by 20 pence, from £8.60 to £8.80 for each medicine or appliance dispensed. However, there is also an extensive system of prescription charge exemptions in England. This includes provision for people on low incomes, who can apply for free prescriptions through the NHS Low Income Scheme, or who get free prescriptions due to the receipt of certain benefits. The system of exemptions, taken as a whole, means that 90 percent of prescription items are dispensed without charge.

However, it is also the case that prescription charges generate a valuable income to the NHS budget of several hundred million pounds per year – money contributing to patient care, that would have to be found elsewhere if these charges were abolished.

The Government currently has no plans to make any amendments to the list of medical conditions which provide exemption from the prescription charge.

You may be interested to know that there is already a provision in place for people who require multiple prescriptions, such as those with long-term conditions who have to pay charges. The Prescription Prepayment Certificate (PPC) allows holders to pay no further charge at the point of dispensing, with no limit on the number of items which can be obtained under the certificate. The Government has supported this scheme by freezing the cost of the PPC for another year, meaning that a holder of a 12-month PPC can get all the prescriptions they need for roughly £2 per week. I believe these are constructive measures to help those most in need.

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