

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

13th March 2019

Dear ConStuent,

RE: EDM 2069 - HCPC REGISTRATION FEES.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of EDM 2069 and HCPC registration fees; your comments upon which I read with great interest.

With regards to EDMs in general, I prefer to raise concerns such as these with Ministers rather than signing EDMs, as I have general concerns about the effectiveness and expense of the EDM system. I enclose a copy of an excellent article written by my colleague, Chris Heaton-Harris MP, which I feel succinctly sets out those concerns. I hope that this will be of interest to you.

First, I would like to recognise the important work done by independent regulators like the HCPC. These organisations help to protect the public and ensure high levels of service and professionalism.

As I understand it, the proposals put forward by HCPC would increase renewal fees from £90 per year to £106 per year (on the basis that that payment is only taken once every two years; this works out at an increase from £180 to £212 every other year). While this does represent an increase of 18 percent, my understanding is that this fee remains the lowest among all regulators of health and care professionals overseen by the Professional Standards Authority. This increase has been precipitated by a number of factors, including the need to reduce the likelihood of fitness to practice cases through earlier engagement, to keep pace with the cost of inflation, and to offset the impact of the establishment of Social Workers England in 2019 and the subsequent decrease in subscribers. HCPC has also taken steps to reduce their internal costs in response to these changes.

Although I recognise that any increase in subscription can have an impact on the individuals required to pay for membership in order to work, the importance of an independent regulator in this sector cannot be underestimated and helps to protect workers as well as the British public. These fees are tax deductible, and the fee rise will amount to just over £1 a month extra for most of HCPC's registrants.

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

Chris Heaton-Harris: Why Early Day Motions are politically impotent

Writing exclusively for PoliticsHome, Conservative MP Chris Heaton-Harris describes Early Day Motions as 'politically impotent', and warns he is 'not going to waste time and money on sponsoring or signing EDMs'.

Since being elected last year, a number of my constituents have asked me to sign Early Day Motions (EDMs). I'm afraid I haven't signed any yet and don't plan on changing that in the future as I think they are pretty much politically impotent and too costly in their current form.

I'm not alone either, quite a number of the 2010 intake all independently decided to do the same thing and I would imagine that if the rules around EDMs don't change at the next election, even more MPs will join the "just say no" bandwagon.

Supposedly EDMs cost around £500 a go and we have already had 2423 tabled in this Parliament. Looking through the titles of the EDMs you'll see many a worthy political cause being lauded, people recently passed away remembered and an abundant amount of motherhood and apple pie. Yet even the most benign EDM rarely gets more than 50 signatories; indeed, many barely scrape into double figures.

I really do think that we need to change how EDMs can be sponsored before too many MPs decide to call it a day on them. Surely a sensible solution would be to say that an individual Member should not be allowed to table an EDM? We should at least try to separate the more popular ones by asking that there be at least ten MPs proposing for it to be accepted as being tabled and thus, opened up for others to sign.

Considering there are MPs out there who tend to sign a large number of EDMs (Sir Peter Bottomley and Alan Meale, please take a bow) surely setting an entry point of ten signatures is not an oppressive barrier if you really do care about a subject?

One of the main reasons (if not the main reason) why so few people sign EDMs is that in the last few years they have turned into the tool of the crap lobbyist. Sitting in a meeting room trying to work out how to justify their Client's retainer, many believe that if they can get a few signatures on an EDM he has done his or her job. Even better if you can persuade your client to run a campaign to get more MPs to sign up; more money for you to set up pointless meetings to talk about a pointless campaign to try and get more than a dozen signatures for a pointless motion that will be ignored by Government and just about everyone else too.

If you are a business, charity or NGO and your Public Affairs outfit recommends an EDM - fire them immediately! Few people take any notice of them and so they are really no more than political graffiti.

So, to my Constituents I say if you are writing to me, please don't ask me to sign an EDM. I'll happily raise subjects with Ministers, ask questions in the House or try to have a Westminster Hall debate - in other words, do things that actually count - but I'm not going to waste time and money on sponsoring or signing EDMs.