

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

6th November 2020

Dear Constance,

RE: ANIMAL RESEARCH – EDM 256.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of animal research, with specific reference to EDM 256; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

Notwithstanding the fact that as a Government Minister I am unable to sign Early Day Motions (EDMs), in any event, I have general concerns about the effectiveness and expense of the EDM system, and I think it is much more effective to raise concerns directly with Ministers, both verbally, and in writing, rather than signing EDMs. With that in mind, I have spoken to Ministers about your concerns.

Animal research still plays an important role in providing vital safety information for potential new medicines. It is worth remembering that, as a result of findings from animal studies, a large number of potential new drugs never get as far as being tested in humans. Some aspects of the toxicological assessment of new medicines cannot be adequately assessed in humans, and animal data will be the only kind available.

Without animal testing it is highly likely that a large number of potentially dangerous new medicines would be tested in healthy volunteers and patients in clinical trials, and I know Ministers believe that this would be quite unacceptable. However, animals are only used when there are no suitable alternatives, and by encouraging new cutting-edge approaches to science we will ensure that standards of animal welfare are improved.

I fully support all steps to establish new methods and to support the life sciences and research industry to progress this important work. However, existing scientific research methods ensure that, by the time medicines reach clinical trial, risks are significantly reduced.

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,
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom'.

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

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