

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

10th November 2020

Dear Constance,

RE: NHS TEST & TRACE SYSTEM.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of your concerns regarding the NHS Test and Trace services; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

As part of an unprecedented response to this pandemic, my colleagues in the Department of Health & Social Care have drawn on the expertise and resources of a number of public and private sector partners to support our NHS and social care sector. The Government has been guided by the science throughout, consulting with a range of experts in each field, and has made significant progress in testing capacity and analysis. Testing and NHS Test & Trace services are being provided through the NHS, and I am confident that these providers will be held to the highest standards to ensure that the best service possible is delivered.

The COVID-19 Test & Trace Taskforce ensures that, when someone develops COVID-19-like symptoms, they can rapidly have a test to find out if they have the virus, and people who they've had recent close contact with can be alerted and provided with advice. Part of the tracing effort includes the voluntary NHS contact tracing app - this helps to increase the speed and effectiveness of the tracing effort. Around 18,000 additional contact tracers are being deployed to support the programme, 6,000 of whom will be supporting local test and trace teams.

The Department of Health & Social Care has outlined that granular data is being made available to specialist teams through local dashboards, and that this service has been expanded to provide more data for local areas.

I agree that it is absolutely crucial to continue working to improve the NHS Test & Trace system; speeding up turnaround times and growing capacity. Further, it is critical that a higher percentage of close contacts of those with a positive test are contacted, and as quickly as possible, to enable them to self-isolate and to restrict the spread. As cases continue to spike, it is more crucial than ever that the NHS Test & Trace organisation functions as smoothly and effectively as possible, and I believe more can be done to ensure this.



I know that NHS Test & Trace has now reached more than half a million people, while the COVID-19 app has already been downloaded more than fourteen million times. That being said, we can do more to improve the current system and rest assured that I will continue to monitor progress in this area closely over the coming weeks.

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**