



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

11th May 2021

Dear Confrontant,

RE: INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE (IBD) CARE.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) and for sharing your personal experience with this disease.

I know IBD can have a deep and lasting impact on quality of life, and it is essential that those living with this condition are aware of the specialist services available from the NHS.

You may know that IBD affects over 300,000 people in the UK, but there is relatively low public awareness, which poses difficulties for sufferers. I am pleased to see that NHS Choices, and charitable organisations such as Crohn's and Colitis UK, are working tirelessly to improve public awareness, and provide useful information on the symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment for IBD.

The National Institute for Health & Care Excellence has published guidance for the management of IBD, which states that sufferers should receive treatment from a local Multidisciplinary Team, comprising of a range of experts, from dieticians to specialist clinical nurses. I am also glad that the guidance states that patients considering, or undergoing surgery, should receive information about their treatment from a specialist.

The Department of Health & Social Care funds research through the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). NIHR welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including Crohn's, IBS, and Ulcerative Colitis.

I appreciate that long-term conditions like IBD can affect a person's ability to work. Patients may be entitled to reclaim hospital travel costs through the Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme, available on the NHS Choices website (www.nhs.uk) and those too ill to work may receive benefits. Information about financial assistance for sufferers of disabling long-term conditions can be found, here: www.gov.uk/financial-help-disabled.

I have been most interested to learn more about the impacts of IBD through IBD UK's report '*The Hidden Cost and a Vision for Change*' that you mention and I was pleased to learn that 72 percent of respondents rated the quality of their care as excellent, very good, or good. I would certainly be happy to work to raise awareness of the symptoms among the public and among healthcare professionals to assist with more swift diagnosis, and to learn more about the other recommendations in the report.



While I understand that progress on the inflammatory bowel disease 'RightCare' scenario has been delayed owing to COVID-19 pressures, a working draft has been reviewed and commented on by NHS England and NHS Improvement's working group and by Crohn's and Colitis UK and I know that NHS England and NHS Improvement are in the process of updating the original working draft based on these comments. It is anticipated that a revised version will be ready to be shared with IBD UK and their partner organisations for consultation in May, and I look forward to having the opportunity to review this document at the earliest opportunity.

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**