



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

11th June 2021

Dear Constance,

RE: DEMENTIA CARE.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of social care reform, particularly in relation to the quality of care for those suffering with dementia. I have read your comments on this issue with interest and I recognise the very sincere place from which these views come.

I can imagine just how challenging it must be for families caring for loved ones during this pandemic, particularly those who have needed to take on extra responsibilities, and as we emerge from this past year I would like to reassure you of the Government's manifesto commitment to improve the quality of care for those suffering with dementia.

I believe increasing public awareness and understanding of dementia among the wider public is vital to ensuring that people are supported to live well with the condition and I am encouraged that there are over three million 'Dementia Friends' - of which I am proudly one - who help to raise awareness and understanding, so that people living with dementia can continue to live in the way they want to.

Research is crucial to understanding and tackling dementia and in 2017 the Government launched the UK Dementia Research Institute, in partnership with the Alzheimer's Society and Alzheimer's Research UK, with £290 million of funding; the single biggest investment ever made in the UK in this field.

Under the 'Challenge on Dementia 2020 Strategy', the Government committed to spend over £300 million on dementia research between 2015 and 2020 and this was met a year early, with £341 million being spent by March 2019 through the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy and the Department of Health & Social Care. The Government is also supporting the £79 million 'Accelerating Detection of Disease' (ADD) challenge; a project that brings together the NHS, industry and leading charities to support research into the early diagnosis of disease, including dementia.

By the end of 2020, all relevant staff will be expected to have received appropriate dementia training, including training relevant staff to be able to signpost interested individuals towards research via the Joint Dementia Research Service. I understand that good progress has been made against this goal, and more options are currently being reviewed to increase the take-up of more advanced training among those who need it.

Furthermore, in May 2020, the National Institute for Health Research published a framework to support restarting research, including dementia research, paused owing to COVID-19, which can be found here: <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/restart-framework/24886>



In addition, the 'NHS Long Term Plan' (LTP) made a range of commitments related to better supporting people suffering with dementia. Over the past decade the NHS has successfully doubled the dementia diagnosis rate and halved the prescription of antipsychotic drugs, as well as improving public awareness and professional understanding. The LTP committed to providing better support for people with dementia through a more active focus on supporting people in the community through enhanced community multidisciplinary teams and the 'NHS Comprehensive Model of Personal Care'. The NHS will continue to work closely with the voluntary sector, including supporting the Alzheimer's Society to extend its 'Dementia Connect' programme, which offers a range of advice and support for people following a dementia diagnosis.

Looking ahead, I understand that later this year the Government plans to bring forward proposals for a new dementia strategy, which will set out how the Government will continue to support people living with dementia and their unpaid carers in England for future years. I look forward to learning more about this in due course.

Ultimately, with 70 percent of people in care homes suffering from dementia or severe memory problems, I understand that improvements to our social care sector is an extremely important consideration for people suffering with dementia, and their loved ones, and I really welcomed the renewed commitment in the recent Queen's Speech to bring forward proposals to reform social care during this Parliament.

In the Conservative Party Manifesto, on which I was proud to stand, we set out our aim to build the same level of consensus on social care that we have already built on the NHS, across political parties, so that an answer can be brought forward that solves the problem, commands the widest possible support, and stands the test of time. I firmly support, and eagerly anticipate, taking part in a national conversation about establishing a care system fit for the 21st Century that takes into account the experiences of those suffering from dementia and their loved ones.

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**