



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

25th January 2023

Dear Government,

RE: EVERYDOCTOR'S #REVIVETHENHS CAMPAIGN

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of the Every Doctor's #ReviveTheNHS campaign. I have read your comments with interest.

First, I would like to thank all NHS workers, especially those working in Corby and East Northamptonshire, for their service in immensely challenging circumstances over the last two years.

I completely recognise the urgency behind Every Doctor's campaign and the challenges facing NHS staff on the frontline. Whilst I cannot commit to signing the #ReviveTheNHS pledge, I know that the Government is taking steps to address the issues highlighted by the campaign, to help improve the experience of staff and patients in the NHS.

Given the pressures that NHS staff face daily, it is vital that everyone has access to comprehensive mental health support in their workplace. Over the last few years, forty dedicated support hubs have been established across the country to offer staff access to mental health services. These services can be accessed over the phone with onward referral to online and one-to-one expert help from qualified mental health clinicians, therapists, recovery workers and psychologists.

Through the Energy Bill Relief Scheme, hospitals across England will be able to receive support with energy bills this winter. It is my understanding that the support will be automatically applied to all eligible businesses, but if there are healthcare settings in our local area struggling to access this support, please provide further details and I would be happy to follow this issue up with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

I also accept that we need to reduce barriers to senior NHS staff remaining in the workforce, which includes addressing issues around pay and pensions. While the Government does not support removing the locum cap and providing ringfenced funding for locums in secondary care, I understand that trusts can override rules on agency staffing on exceptional patient safety grounds. Caps on locum pay rates do not apply in primary care and Integrated Care Systems are able to access up to £120,000 to support their recruitment in general practice.

The service of retired and partially returned staff was crucial to the NHS during the pandemic, and the Government has consistently extended the suspension of NHS Pension Scheme restrictions and the temporary amendments to NHS Pension Scheme regulations.

Following a recent consultation, these arrangements will now continue until the 31st March 2023.



The contribution of healthcare professionals from overseas will be crucial to expanding the NHS workforce and improving access to primary and secondary care. Since the Health and Care Visa was introduced in 2020, the Government has expanded the number of occupations to help make it quicker and cheaper for healthcare professionals to work in the NHS.

Finally, the Government is working to increase the number of GP practices registered as Home Office sponsors, so that international medical graduates are able to renew their visa while living in the UK and qualify for permanent settlement in due course.

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 be 'T. Pursglove', with a horizontal line underneath.

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**