

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

23rd March 2023

Jean Gauthier

RE: A&E WAITING TIMES

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of your concerns about Accident and Emergency (A&E) waiting times. I have read your comments with interest.

I am aware that A&E services are strained, and am conscious of the enormous pressure this puts on staff and patients alike. Please be assured that the Government will make improving ambulance waiting times, and reducing the backlog of care, a key priority over the coming months, which will reduce the pressure on A&E services.

NHS England and Improvement announced steps to help the NHS prepare for winter 2022/23, by increasing hospital bed space and increasing the number of NHS 111 and 999 call handlers. In particular, I want to highlight that the NHS is increasing the number of general and acute beds by 7,000, which includes new hospital beds and virtual wards where patients are treated at home with NHS equipment or assistance.

The Government has also committed to urgent action to free up beds and reduce long waits in A&E through the £500 million Adult Social Care Discharge Fund. An additional £200 million has been allocated to help the NHS buy up beds in the community, so that thousands of patients can be safely discharged from hospital. This will help free up hospital beds so that people can be admitted quicker from A&E to wards, reducing pressure on emergency departments.

The Government has recently published its 'Urgent and Emergency Care Plan' alongside an investment of £1 billion to deliver 5,000 more hospital beds compared to the numbers originally planned for 2022-23, and to put over 800 more ambulances on the road. This will speed up discharges from hospitals, free up beds for patients needing urgent and emergency care and, ultimately, reduce pressures on hospitals.

I can assure you also that I take the matter of healthcare provision in our area very seriously. I have long since campaigned for improved services and regularly meet with health officials locally to understand service provision on an ongoing basis and consistently press for better access. For example, I have had success over the years in securing more GP appointments, helped keep the Corby Urgent Care Centre open, been part of securing the commitment to constructing new, modern buildings on the dilapidated Kettering General Hospital site, and only a few weeks ago, the Government announced a new Community Diagnostic Centre for our area at Cottingham Road in Corby. All of these are key interventions to help with addressing the central issue you raise of reducing A&E pressures.



Finally, thank you for the invitation to the Emergency Care Summit on Tuesday 28th March. Unfortunately, owing to other parliamentary duties, I am unable to attend, although please rest assured that I will continue to follow the issues raised closely.

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 'Tom Pursglove'.

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