



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

February 2016

Dear Constituents,

Thank you for contacting me about pharmacy funding.

Community pharmacies are important community assets. The Government is therefore consulting on how best to introduce a Pharmacy Integration Fund to transform the way community pharmacy operates in the NHS, bringing clear benefits to patients and the public.

The Government believes there is real potential for far greater use of community pharmacy and pharmacists in England in the prevention of ill health, support for healthy living, support for self-care for minor ailments and long-term conditions and medication reviews in care homes, and as part of more integrated local care models.

We need a clinically focused community pharmacy service that is better integrated with primary care and public health in line with the NHS Five Year Forward View. This will help relieve the pressure on GPs and A&E departments, ensure better use of medicines and better patient outcomes, and contribute to delivering seven-day health and care services. The Department of Health is therefore consulting on how best to introduce a Pharmacy Integration Fund to help transform the way pharmacists and community pharmacy will operate in the NHS, bringing clear benefits to patients and the public.

Spending on health continues to grow, with a £10 billion real terms increase in NHS funding in England between 2014/15 and 2020/21, of which £6 billion will be delivered by the end of 2016/17. We want to focus spending on lifesaving treatments and cures and we expect to be spending up to an extra £2 billion per year on the new drugs that patients need by the end of 2020.

In the Spending Review the Government re-affirmed the need for the NHS to deliver £22 billion of efficiency savings by 2020/21 as the NHS itself set out in the Five Year Forward View. Community pharmacy is a core part of NHS primary care and has an important contribution to make as the service rises to these challenges. This will involve



reductions in the amount of NHS funding for community pharmacies in England, as we ask the pharmacy sector to make savings in line with those elsewhere in the NHS. Next year, we will still be spending £2.63 billion on the sector in 2016/17 compared with £2.8 billion in 2015/16.

Our aim is to ensure that those community pharmacies upon which people depend continue to thrive and so are consulting on the introduction of a Pharmacy Access Scheme, which will provide more NHS funds to certain pharmacies compared with others, considering factors such as location and the health needs of the local population.

The Government wants to transform the system to deliver efficiency savings and ensure the model of community pharmacy reflects patient and public expectations and developments in technology. This is the time to embrace developments in technology to provide the best possible service. Prescription journeys are still too often slow and awkward. We want to promote the use of online, click and collect or home delivery models, to help patients to get their prescriptions in a way that fits into their lifestyle. This is about ensuring we have a modern, efficient community pharmacy sector offering patient choice and easier access and which is fit for the future as well as today.

The Government is in detailed discussions with the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee and is consulting with the pharmacy sector and with patient and public organisations over the coming months on how to deliver these savings and achieve a new, modernised and integrated service.

Further information about the proposals can be found at the following address:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/putting-community-pharmacy-at-the-heart-of-the-nhs>

I trust you will find the further detail provided in these publications helpful in setting out the Government's aims and objectives for community pharmacy, as well as our commitment to work collaboratively with the sector during the consultation period to ensure we deliver a final set of proposals that transforms community pharmacy to the benefit of patients and the public.

Once again, many thanks for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY