



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

January 2017

*Dear Constituent,*

Thank you for contacting me about second stem cell transplants for blood cancer patients who have relapsed.

I understand your concerns over the decision not to consider second bone marrow transplants for routine commissioning this year.

Although the overall budget for specialised services in England is considerable, at around £14 billion per year, NHS England has to make difficult decisions on behalf of tax-payers about how to prioritise the funding that is available. To ensure that investment decisions are affordable and offer value for money NHS England has established an annual prioritisation process led by clinical experts.

Unfortunately, during the last year's annual prioritisation process by the Specialised Commissioning Oversight Group (SCOG), out of twenty two proposals considered, second bone marrow transplants for patients with relapsed disease was one of four treatments with the lowest cost/benefit priority. This means that it will not be considered for routine commissioning this year. Decisions by SCOG are based on expert recommendations made by (Clinical Priorities Advisory Group) CPAG which uses a defined process to prioritise treatments.

However, all of the policies will be considered again in the prioritisation process for 2017/18 and this review will consider any additional new peer-reviewed publications.

The Department of Health continues to invest to improve the provision of stem cells for patients requiring a transplant. In 2016, the Department of Health has invested over £2.5 million to enable our delivery partners NHS Blood and Transplant and the charity Anthony Nolan to collect umbilical cord stem cells and recruit adult donors from communities currently under-represented in the donor register.

Since 2011 the Department has invested over £19 million to improve the provision of stem cells for patients requiring a transplant. This investment has significantly



increased the chances of patients finding a suitable matching donor and established a single UK register of donors.

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

Yours faithfully,

**CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP**  
**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY**