

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

January 2017

*Dear Constituent,*

Thank you for contacting me about employment support for people with Multiple Sclerosis (MS).

Improving opportunities for people with health conditions and disabilities, including people suffering from MS, is a key priority for the Government. The aim of the Green Paper on work, health and disability which the Government has announced is to explore ways to help more people with long term conditions reap the benefits of work and improve their health.

I can assure you that the needs of people with MS will be considered very carefully as part of this. The Government has been clear that what we really need is a system which treats people as individuals, providing support based on what a person is capable of and how their condition affects their ability to work. That is especially important for people with a condition like MS, where the condition can differ greatly between people and can fluctuate over time.

As MS is on a spectrum, many people with MS will be in work. For those who are out of work and claiming Employment and Support Allowance, some will be placed in the Support Group. The Green Paper consults on how people placed in the Support Group can be better supported, to ensure they are able to access suitable employment and health support to fulfil their potential.

The MS Society has highlighted the report of the All Party Parliamentary Group on MS, 'Employment That Works'. The Government's Green Paper looks to address many of the recommendations of that report, such as working with employers to improve attitudes and build networks between employers, employees and charities. The report also calls for expansion of the Access to Work scheme; the Government has committed to help a further 25,000 people per year through the scheme by 2020-21, which will raise the number of people being helped each year to over 60,000.

The consultation runs until 17th February 2017, and I would encourage anyone to engage with it if they feel they have something to contribute.

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

Yours faithfully,

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY

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