



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

September 2018

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about blood cancers.

With around 13,000 people dying from leukaemia, lymphoma, or myeloma each year across the UK, please allow me to assure you that improving outcomes for patients diagnosed with blood cancers remains a key NHS priority.

Early diagnosis of blood cancers can be difficult with symptoms, for example back pain or tiredness, often misdiagnosed. That is why I am glad that guidance for clinicians on diagnosing blood cancer has been set out by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). Moreover, I am hopeful that the £200 million announced in transformation funding to encourage new and innovative ways to diagnose cancer earlier will help to speed up diagnosis of blood cancers.

Stem cell transplants are a key treatment for blood cancers, with over 2,000 people a year across the UK requiring a bone marrow or stem cell transplant. As such I am pleased that a unified UK stem cell registry has been established - the Anthony Nolan and NHS Stem Cell Registry - streamlining the provision of stem cells for transplant. This has helped increase the number of registered blood stem cell donors from 770,000 in 2010 to over 1.4 million as of 2017.

I am confident that continued investment into ways of diagnosing blood cancers earlier, as well as increasing the pool of available stem cell donors, will help to drive up survival rates of leukaemia, lymphoma and myeloma up even further.

Finally I was pleased to visit the Blood Cancer Centre in Northampton General Hospital earlier in the year. We are lucky to have such a facility with such caring and capable staff on our doorstep.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris'.

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY