



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

March 2019

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about medicinal cannabis.

There is strong scientific evidence that cannabis is a drug which can harm people's mental and physical health, and damage communities. However recent cases have shown the need to look more closely at the use of cannabis-based medicine in the healthcare sector in the UK. This is why the Government decided it was appropriate to review the scheduling of cannabis.

The decision of the Home Secretary, Sajid Javid, to reschedule these products is welcome. This decision means that senior clinicians will be able to prescribe the medicines to patients with an exceptional clinical need. Following short term advice issued in September 2018 the ACMD are to review the current rescheduling and its appropriateness by November 2020 and provide further initial advice on synthetic cannabinoids by summer 2020.

It is crucial that this country keeps in step with the latest scientific evidence, so that patients and their families have access to the most appropriate course of medical treatment.

My colleagues have also been clear that given the nature of the medicine, it should only be prescribed by specialist doctors and on a case-by-case basis. I believe these strict controls are necessary to develop clinical expertise and an evidence base for this treatment's effectiveness.

The decision whether to prescribe an individual with medicinal cannabis is therefore not a political or financial decision, but a decision by a medical expert, who will have considered whether it is the most effective treatment based on an individual's particular condition.



I will continue to closely monitor the roll-out of medicinal cannabis.

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