



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

March 2019

*Dear Constituent,*

Thank you for contacting me about the cost and availability of medications through pharmacies.

I fully appreciate your concerns and I would like to assure you that the Government is committed to making sure the supply of medicines to the NHS is as competitive as possible. Community pharmacies and NHS hospitals are encouraged to buy their medicines for the lowest possible cost. If pharmacies are struggling to obtain products at or below the reimbursement price in the 'Drug Tariff', they should notify the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee so that they can apply on their behalf for a concessionary price from the Department of Health and Social Care so that pharmacies are not dispensing at a loss.

The Department has a dedicated team which deals specifically with medicine supply problems arising both in the community and hospitals. It works closely with the Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency, the pharmaceutical industry, NHS England and others operating in the supply chain to help prevent shortages and to ensure that the risks to patients are minimised when they do arise.

I can assure you that the implications of leaving the EU on the pharmaceutical supply are being considered as a high priority. I believe that it is important to minimise the risk of disruption and that is why the Department for Health and Social Care has asked all pharmaceutical companies to ensure that they have at least six weeks' supply of medicines in place by 29th March in addition to their usual operational reserves. I am assured there has been a very good response from the industry and these stocks will be in place.

My colleagues are also working with the devolved administrations to achieve a seamless supply of medicines in all areas of the country, including in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.



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**