

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

March 2020

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about the NHS and international trade.

Like you, I cherish our National Health Service and its guiding principles: that it is universal and free at the point of need. The Government has been repeatedly clear that our NHS will never be on the table in any trade agreements, a position I fully support.

Free trade is a driver of economic growth which can raise incomes, create jobs, and lift people out of poverty, which is why I am glad that outside of the EU the UK will be able to strike new trade agreements with countries across the globe. But more trade should not come at the expense of the high levels of quality and protection enjoyed in our country.

The UK will continue to ensure that the NHS is protected in all trade agreements it is party to, whether transitioned from an EU context or as a result of new negotiations. Indeed, outside of the EU, rigorous protections for our NHS will be maintained and included in any future trade agreement to which our country is party.

With specific regard to investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanisms in trade agreements, I understand the Government is considering the future approach. However, it is important to note ISDS does not, and cannot, force the privatisation of public services or oblige the Government to open the NHS to further competition.

I hope this reassures you that all future trade agreements will continue to protect our vital NHS.

Thank you again for taking time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris".

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY

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