



October 2020

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about cancer research and clinical trials.

Cancer survival rates have increased year-on-year over the past decade. I recognise the vital importance of investing in research as a way to drive up survival rates even further. That is why over £882 million in government funding has been spent on cancer research across the UK since 2010.

The Government funds ground-breaking medical research through the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). The NIHR does not allocate funding for specific disease areas, with the level of research spend in a particular area instead driven by factors such as scientific potential and the number and scale of successful funding applications.

I also recognise the indispensable contribution made by charities in driving forward research into cancer. Through the National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI), 19 major funders of cancer research across the UK – including the Government, and charities including Cancer Research UK – co-ordinate their research. This prevents unnecessary duplication and maximises the impact of research for cancer patients and the public. Figures from the NCRI show that these 19 partners have together spent over £4 billion on cancer research in the past decade.

The NHS Long Term Plan, launched in 2019 and based on a budget increase of £33.9 billion cash by 2023/24, is also seeking to expand participation in cancer research. This is related to the commitment by the NHS to routinely offer genomic testing to all people with cancer for whom it would be of clinical benefit.

In partnership with the charity sector, the Government will continue to fund ground-breaking research into cancer which will lead to new ways to drive up survival rates for these diseases even further.

The Cancer Research UK Clinical Trials Unit (CRCTU) at the University of Birmingham translates cutting edge science into improved patient care, both rapidly and safely, through the design and conduct of large multi-centre and international randomised trials as well as smaller more data intensive phase I trials of novel therapies. The Children's Cancer Trials Team is a part of CRCTU and works with early stage and late stage trials.



Chris Heaton-Harris

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In 2012 the Government announced a £250 million investment to build proton beam therapy (PBT) facilities at the Christie Hospital and at University College London Hospitals (UCLH). The Christie Hospital is already treating patients, and UCLH will shortly complete construction. PBT is a more directed form of radiation therapy, which means that higher doses can be delivered with fewer side effects and fewer long-term consequences, which is particularly important for paediatric patients.

I welcome the announcement that cancer diagnosis is at the heart of the long-term NHS plan. Over the next ten years, cancer screening and diagnosis will be overhauled with the aim of detecting 75% of cancers in the early stages compared to around 50% today. This will result in 55,000 more people a year living for at least five years following a cancer diagnosis.

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