



Chris Heaton-Harris
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Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about the obesity strategy and people with eating disorders.

With eating disorders on the rise, please let me assure you that tackling these disorders through early and effective treatment remains a key priority of our NHS.

I know that my colleagues in the Department of Health and Social Care recognise concerns people with eating disorders may have on measures to reduce obesity and I support their commitment to striking a careful balance between enabling people to make healthier food and drink choices whilst not negatively impacting on those with or recovering from an eating disorder.

I completely appreciate and understand your concerns about calorie labelling at large out-of-home businesses with 250 or more employees. Alongside work to develop the obesity strategy, an equality assessment was undertaken to understand the impact of these proposals, including on people with eating disorders. My understanding is that, although some research has shown that label use on packaged foods was related to engagement in some unhealthy weight behaviours, there is a larger likelihood of participants engaging with healthy weight control behaviours.

With more than a third of children leaving primary school overweight or obese, and nearly two thirds of adults, it is vital that we equip people with the information to make decisions about their food intake. Information on the energy content of food and drink is already widely available in supermarkets through mandatory nutrition labelling requirements on pre-packaged foods and some restaurants. I know that the Government is committed to striking a careful balance between informing and educating people to make healthier choices, while not negatively impacting people with eating disorders or those in recovery from eating disorders. This issue will, of course, require careful monitoring, and I will certainly keep a close eye going forwards.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY