



August 2021

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about baby loss and parental bereavement.

This issue unfortunately affects many people, and I offer my sympathy to those who have suffered miscarriages, stillbirths, or the loss of child throughout their lives. You may be aware that I have been involved with issues around this subject for most of my time as your MP and one of the first debates I held in Parliament was on baby loss.

I applaud my colleagues who have recounted this difficult experience in their lives in Parliament to raise awareness of baby loss and inspire changes in policy to reduce the number of stillbirths in the UK, which is higher than in other similar countries.

One of the key commitments in the NHS Long Term Plan published in 2019 is to make the NHS one of the safest places in the world to give birth. The Department of Health and Social Care has set out a range of new measures to deliver its ambition to halve the rates of stillbirths, neonatal deaths and brain injuries that occur during or soon after labour, and maternal deaths by 2025, through the Saving Babies' Lives care bundle, an updated version of which was implemented in March last year.

I warmly welcome £2.45 million of new funding which will benefit NHS maternity staff and improve the safety of the women and babies they care for. The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) has been awarded almost £2 million to lead the first phase of the Avoiding Brain injuries in Childbirth (ABC) collaboration and £450,000 to develop a new workforce planning tool to improve how maternity units calculate their medical staffing requirements, to better support families and babies.

All parents who experience pregnancy and baby loss and would like specialist psychological support should be able to access it. In view of this, I welcome the commitment through the NHS Long Term Plan to increase mental health support funding by £2.3 billion per year by 2023/24. As part of this I know that care provided by specialist perinatal mental health services will be available from preconception to 24 months after birth.

I fully support the Government's collaboration with charities, such as Sands, Bliss, Tommy's and others. This will raise awareness of the preventative measures, and support all those families experiencing baby loss.



Chris Heaton-Harris
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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