



Chris Heaton-Harris
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Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about the provision of early medical abortion. I completely understand that this can be an incredibly emotive issue and can fully appreciate the strength of your feelings on this matter. Given the sensitivities and as with other matters of conscience, the Government adopts a neutral stance on abortion, allowing Conservative MPs to vote freely according to their moral, ethical, or religious beliefs. This is a convention which I support wholeheartedly.

In March 2020, the Government put in place a temporary measure in England, enabling women to take both pills for early medical abortion up to ten weeks (nine weeks and six days) gestation in their own homes, following a telephone or e-consultation with a clinician, without the need to first attend a hospital or clinic. This measure was put in place to reduce the risk of transmission of Covid-19 and ensure continued access to abortion services. Following consultation, the Government announced a six-month extension to the temporary arrangements, with the intention of returning to pre-Covid arrangements on 29th August.

An amendment was tabled to the Health and Care Bill, currently progressing through Parliament, to reverse the Government's decision and make permanent these temporary measures. Following a free vote, MPs voted in favour of the amendment to make the provisions permanent. I voted against the amendment.

The Health and Care Bill has now returned to the House of Lords for further scrutiny, and I will follow its progress carefully.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY