



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

October 2018

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about care for people with terminal illnesses.

I agree that we must ensure that people receive the most appropriate care personalised to their individual needs as they approach the end of their life.

In 2014, the Government commissioned the Choice in End of Life Care Programme Board to report on how end of life care services could be supported to enable people's choices to be delivered. The Board published its findings in February 2015 in A Review of Choice in End of Life Care.

In July 2016, the Government outlined six commitments to the public to improve end of life care nationally by 2020. These are: honest discussions between care professionals and dying people; dying people making informed choices about their care; personalised care plans for all; the discussion of personalised care plans with care professionals; the involvement of family and carers in dying people's care and a key contact so dying people know who to contact at any time of day.

The NHS must meet these commitments, and new measures are being developed to ensure local health and care leaders are meeting the high standards expected of them.

The National End of Life Care Programme Board is implementing the Government's ambitions, in partnership with all relevant arm's length bodies, to ensure action and accountability. A report was published in August 2017, which highlights the professionalism and compassion throughout the Specialist Palliative Care (SPC) sector, but recognises that there are improvements to be made.

You may be reassured to know that, whilst SPC services do not receive a rating from the Care Quality Commission (CQC), they are accountable to the CQC's inspectors, who are committed to enforcing rigorous standards of care throughout the NHS.



I agree that palliative care services must be properly funded. Hospices receive their funding from charities as well as the NHS. The commissioning of services like hospices is a local matter, and the responsibility of clinical commissioning groups (CCGs). Therefore, I cannot say what portion of future NHS investment will be spent on hospices and palliative care. I know that, on average, hospices receive 30 per cent of their funding from NHS sources, and I am happy to say that this year, children's hospices will receive £11 million from NHS England. However, I believe the level of hospice funding is best decided by local health commissioners, who have the best understanding of the needs in their areas.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Chris".

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY