



Chris Heaton-Harris
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Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about animal research and EDM 250 and 256. Please note that Members of the Government do not, by convention, sign any Early Day Motions, as doing so is likely to breach the Ministerial Code's rules on collective responsibility and I have never signed any Early Day Motions in my time in Parliament.

Animal research still plays an important role in providing vital safety information for potential new medicines. As a result of findings from animal studies, a large number of potential new drugs never get as far as being tested in humans. Some aspects of the toxicological assessment of new medicines cannot be adequately assessed in humans, and animal data will be the only kind available.

Without animal testing, a significant number of potentially dangerous new medicines would be tested on healthy volunteers and patients in clinical trials, and Ministers believe that this would be unacceptable. Animals are only used when there are no suitable alternatives, and by encouraging new cutting-edge approaches to science we will ensure that standards of animal welfare are improved.

I fully support all steps to establish new methods and to support the life sciences and research industry. However, existing scientific research methods ensure that, by the time medicines reach clinical trial, risks are significantly reduced.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY