



April 2021

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about brain tumour research.

Brain cancer has blighted so many lives: every year around 11,400 people in the UK are diagnosed with a brain tumour and just 14% of people survive their disease for 10 years or more. Dame Tessa Jowell's campaigning in her final months, to shine the light on actions needed to improve research and care for people with brain cancer, was inspiring and selfless. I welcome the Government's determination to take her work forward.

In May 2018, the Government pledged £40 million investment over the next five years for brain tumour research, as part of the Dame Tessa Jowell Brain Cancer Mission. Funding will be invested through the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) to support a wide range of research and help translate laboratory discoveries into useable treatments and better care for patients. Researchers are encouraged to submit application building on recent initiatives and investments, including the recommendations of the Task and Finish Working Group on Brain Tumour Research.

Brain cancer is the most common cause of cancer-related deaths in children and young people under 19. Baroness Jowell called for all patients to benefit from 5-aminolevulinic acid, or "pink drink" as it is otherwise known: a dye that makes cancerous cells glow under ultraviolet light, thereby making it easier for surgeons to target the right areas. Trials have shown that, when the dye is used, surgeons can successfully remove a whole tumour in 70% of cases, compared to 30% of those without. This ground-breaking treatment aid has been rolled out across England, with the potential to save the lives of 2,000 patients every year. This procedure will now be expanded to every neurological centre in England.

The UK is at the forefront of cancer research. The Government provides £1 billion funding each year to the NIHR, with cancer making up the largest proportion of this in terms of disease area. In 2018, the Government made an unprecedented £40 million available to fund cutting-edge research of new treatments and drugs. That funding was further enhanced by Cancer Research UK committing an additional £25 million to support brain tumour research. The NIHR Clinical Research Network has over 800 cancer trials and studies in progress or in set-up, and the proportion of patients entering cancer clinical trials and studies is more than double that in any other country for which data exists, including the United States. The UK also hosts the world's largest set of cancer genome sequences, which will be central to our ability to better understand and fight cancers in the future.



**Chris Heaton-Harris**  
Member of Parliament for Daventry  
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA  
Tel: 020 7219 7048

Of course, more can still be done, and the Government is putting cancer diagnosis at the heart of the new long-term plan for the NHS, being made possible by the £33.9bn the Government is investing in the NHS.

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**