



**Chris Heaton-Harris**  
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*Dear Constituent,*

Thank you for contacting me about Integrated Care Boards and private sector providers.

I welcome the intention, through the Health and Care Bill, to develop more integrated care between the NHS, local government, social care providers and other partners to deliver better integration of health and care services on the ground. The reforms proposed in the Bill will continue to improve the quality and sustainability of NHS services and outcomes for patients.

Service provision by the independent and voluntary sectors has been, and continues to be, an important and valuable feature of our healthcare system, which I fully support.

Safeguards are already in place to ensure that the interests of the public and the NHS are always put first. The ICB chair would have the power to veto members of the board and there are robust requirements on ICBs to manage conflicts of interests.

I do appreciate that there are concerns about private sector involvement in ICBs. It is important that people are assured that the work of ICBs will be driven by health outcomes, not by profits.

The Bill does not allow private sector providers to influence, or to make, decisions on spending, but it is welcome that the Government has committed to putting that beyond doubt. They will bring forward an amendment at the next stage of the Bill's passage through Parliament to protect the independence of ICBs by preventing individuals with significant interests in private healthcare from sitting on them. I know that ministerial colleagues will be working to ensure that any amendment is appropriately worded and does not have any unintended consequences. I look forward to seeing their proposed amendment in due course and can assure you that I will scrutinise its contents closely.

It is irresponsible scaremongering to suggest that Integrated Care Boards and Partnerships are being used to support privatisation, or cuts to NHS funding. The NHS will always be free at the point of use, and I believe these reforms will continue to improve the quality of NHS services and outcomes for patients. Ensuring every part of England is covered by an Integrated Care Board and Partnership is a key way of promoting local collaboration.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

**CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP**  
**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY**

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