



July 2023

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about independent sector providers and the NHS.

The Government is clear that the NHS will always provide healthcare free at the point of delivery, regardless of ability to pay. This principle applies whether NHS-funded care is being delivered by an NHS, voluntary or independent healthcare provider.

Under the NHS Constitution, patients have “the right to access certain services commissioned by NHS bodies within maximum waiting times, or for the NHS to take all reasonable steps to offer you a range of suitable alternative providers if this is not possible.”

As we seek to reduce the treatment backlog built up during the Covid-19 pandemic, independent providers have a valuable role to play in reducing NHS waiting times, by allowing patients to be treated in a private healthcare setting whilst being funded by the NHS, freeing up capacity in NHS hospitals.

The Government is ensuring the NHS has the necessary investment to deliver better care for patients, providing an extra £45.6 billion in funding for health and social care to 2024-25.

As set out in the 2021 Spending Review, NHS England’s day-to-day budget is set to grow by 3.8% on average up to 2024/25, supporting the NHS to tackle the treatment backlog, and deliver its Long Term Plan. A further £2.8 billion in funding has been provided to support adult social care and discharge.

In addition, the Government is making the largest health capital investment in a decade, including the hospital rebuilding programme, and funding for new community diagnostic centres, surgical hubs and mental health urgent and emergency care facilities.

Procurement and commissioning processes are vital to ensure that the NHS provides the best possible care, including the adoption of innovation and efficiency. The Health and Care Act 2022 made changes to the requirement for local health bodies to competitively tender for some health care services “where it adds no or limited value”.



**Chris Heaton-Harris**  
Member of Parliament for Daventry  
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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**