



July 2023

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about the #CatchUpWithCancer campaign, and access to cancer/radiotherapy treatment.

Thank you for inviting me to attend the Westminster Hall debate on Tuesday 18th July about the accessibility of radiotherapy. Whilst the Government has invested around £162 million since 2016 to upgrade or replace around 100 radiotherapy machines, I fully recognise that many patients continue to face challenges in accessing the treatment they need. I regret that I cannot attend the debate due to my other parliamentary duties, but I would be interested in receiving a briefing from Radiotherapy UK about these important issues.

The Prime Minister has made it clear that one of the top priorities for this Government is to see waiting lists for cancer treatment and care, including radiotherapy, significantly reduced over the next few years.

Over the last year, the Government has provided funding to help recover cancer services, and a plan that outlines how that funding will be spent effectively.

It is right that this funding comes with high expectations for reducing cancer waiting times. By March 2024, the NHS has set an ambition for 75% of patients who have been urgently referred by their GP for suspected cancer to be diagnosed or have cancer ruled out within 28 days. Some progress is being made towards diagnosing patients earlier, with the NHS meeting the Faster Diagnosis Standard for suspected cancer for the first time in February 2023.

Tackling major conditions that cause ill-health - including cancer - provides an opportunity to improve the lives of millions of people. That is why a Major Conditions Strategy is being developed to outline how outcomes in six major condition areas will be improved, including all cancers.

In the meantime, I understand that the payment arrangements for radiotherapy have been reviewed to ensure providers can increase access to new treatments and upgrade and replace equipment. These arrangements came into effect in April 2023.  
Reinforced



**Chris Heaton-Harris**

Member of Parliament for Daventry  
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA  
Tel: 020 7219 7048

by £6 billion of capital investment in the 2021 Spending Review, the NHS is also gradually reducing the number of linear accelerators aged 10 years or over.

Thank you 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**