



February 2024

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about medicine and medical equipment.

I note your concerns over reducing waste in the procurement and use of medicines and equipment in the NHS.

I would like to reassure you that existing NHS England guidelines advise NHS Trusts to reuse medical equipment when safe and appropriate to do so. For example, Trusts are encouraged to reuse crutches, frames and walking sticks to help improve access for patients and save money. This also provides an excellent opportunity for carbon savings due to the high greenhouse gas intensity of aluminium manufacture.

Trusts are also encouraged to set up dedicated walking aid return and reuse schemes. This will ensure that walking aids are only returned to a designated walking aid drop off location where they can then be assessed using a simple procedure of checks, parts replacement and cleaning to ensure they are safe for reuse.

The Medical Technology Strategy, published in February 2023, committed to developing an environment to deliver value for money and affordability across the whole patient pathway for medical supplies and equipment.

As part of this commitment, the Department is working closely with NHS England and NHS Supply Chain alongside industry and patient groups to develop a consistent methodology for assessing value in terms of outcomes and not just unit cost, which will be adopted at both a national and local level.

It is crucial that checks and balances are put in place to ensure money for the NHS is spent prudently. The public rightly expects every penny of funding that goes to the NHS to be spent well, which is an expectation I share. It is welcome that the NHS is already working to be more efficient and cut waste and has pledged to make savings while still boosting productivity by at least 1.1% a year.

Looking ahead, I know that there will be many opportunities in Parliament to scrutinise the NHS funding and spending and I can assure you that I will be playing my part in doing so. The Health and Social Care Select Committee, the Public Accounts Committee and the National Audit Office all work to scrutinise health and social care spending.



Chris Heaton-Harris
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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