

4th February 2020



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

To all Conservative MPs in England

Dear Colleagues,

THE NHS FUNDING BILL

On 15 January we introduced our NHS Funding Bill, the first in a series of legislative measures the Department of Health and Social Care is bringing before Parliament to deliver on our manifesto commitments.

This Bill will enshrine in law our clear commitment to providing the funds our NHS needs to secure it for the long term – an extra £33.9 billion a year by 2023/24.

The NHS is people's priority and this Government's priority. This Bill will guarantee frontline services the biggest cash boost in history and provides the NHS with the certainty it needs to deliver the transformational changes set out in the NHS Long Term Plan so that the NHS continues to deliver world-class care.

Importantly, the Bill does not limit the amount of funding we can put in our NHS, but instead sets that the budget must be "at least" what we have committed to.

The protection of NHS England revenue funding through this Bill, comes on top of recent pledges to build 40 new hospitals up and down the country, backed by £2.7 billion for the first six; and a further extra £1.8 billion for capital spending, including £850 million for 20 hospital upgrades, as well as £450 million for new scanners and the latest in AI technology.

On the specific amendments tabled today, while they cover vitally important matters, it is important to be clear that this Bill is not the right vehicle within which to address these. What is more, many are unnecessary given the progress we have already made.

On mental health funding, for instance, we have already committed spending on Mental Health Services to increase by at least an additional £2.3 billion by 2023/24 as part of the overall funding settlement which this Bill will enshrine in law. Further, we will explore non-legislative options to improve transparency on spending on mental health, including regular updates to parliament on our overall spending on mental health. We will also explore options to improve transparency on spending on children and adolescents' mental health funding.

I would be more than happy to meet with you to discuss this legislation in further detail. If any colleagues feel that would be helpful please contact my PPS, Steve Double MP, at steve.double.mp@parliament.uk.

Edward Argar

EDWARD ARGAR MP

MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH