

PETER GIBSON MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

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Dear Constituent

Thank you for your email me about private sector involvement in the NHS.

I fully believe in our NHS and its values, which is why I welcome that the Government has guaranteed that the NHS will always provide healthcare free at the point of delivery, regardless of ability to pay. While private providers do play a small role in improving the provision of health care, let me be abundantly clear: the Government will never privatise the NHS.

The use of private providers and the voluntary sector in the delivery of NHS services is not a new concept, with the previous Government introducing the independent sector and competition into the NHS between 1997 and 2010.

I firmly believe that the NHS is something to be valued and protected which is why I support the commitment to properly funding the NHS. Since 2010 the NHS budget has increased every year, and I am happy to say that despite challenging financial circumstances, the annual budget of the NHS is being increased by £33.9 billion in real terms by 2023/24.

As the son of a NHS midwife, who trained at Darlington's Memorial Hospital, I know how important the fantastic hospital is to our community. I have promised my constituents throughout my time as their MP that I will do everything in my power to preserve, protect and progress our precious memorial hospital, and by supporting this Government's record funding of the NHS, I am furthering that promise.

Competition in the NHS should act as a means to an end in improving services for patients, never as an end in itself.

Member of Parliament for Darlington

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While I acknowledge your concern about Centene's involvement in GP surgeries, patient care will not be affected, and all services remain free at the point of delivery. As with all GP services, those for which Centene is responsible will continue to be regulated and inspected by the Care Quality Commission. I understand that the CCGs where this has happened have followed the appropriate and robust processes prior to transfer of responsibility to Centene. The NHS has always involved a mixture of public and private provision, and it is absolutely not for sale to private providers.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to contact me and if I can ever be any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

*Yours Sincerely
Peter Gibson*

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