

PETER GIBSON MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

July 2021

Dear Constitute

Thank you for your email about the Health and Care Bill.

I completely agree with you that the unprecedented threat of the COVID-19 pandemic reminded us how vital our health and care system is to all of us. I want to assure you that the NHS will always be free at the point of use, and any proposed reforms will aim to continue to improve the quality of these services and patient outcomes. I had the chance to talk about the new Health and Care Bill during the Queen's Speech debate in early May; you can see what I had to say here: <https://fb.watch/v/1UTCkgO0u/>

As we build back better from this pandemic, it is right and necessary that our health and care services are at the forefront. The pandemic underlined not only the dedication and skill of those in this sector, but also the necessity of a broader, more integrated health and care system. I welcome the intention to develop more joined up, integrated care between the NHS, Local Government and other partners including the voluntary and community sector, which will be vital in tackling the factors that affect the long-term sustainability of patient services. The Bill will make permanent some of the innovations we have seen as a result of the pandemic. I understand that these proposed reforms will also include proper accountability mechanisms, and give patients and the public the confidence that they are receiving the best care from their healthcare system.

In regards to ICSs, it is irresponsible scaremongering to suggest that ICSs are being used to support privatisation, or cuts to NHS funding. The NHS will always be free at the point of use, and I believe these reforms will continue to improve the quality of NHS services and outcomes for patients. Ensuring every part of England is covered by an ICS is a key way of promoting local collaboration.

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The measures set out in the Health and Care Bill deliver on the NHS's own proposals for reform in its Long Term Plan. I believe these proposals have been developed in consultation with key stakeholders in this sector, and I am encouraged by the preliminary positive feedback received. In particular, the comments from the Chief Executive of NHS England, who has said that this Bill "will support our health and care services to be more integrated and innovative so the NHS can thrive in the decades to come", are reassuring.

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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