

PETER GIBSON MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

July 2022

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for your email about so called 'conversion therapy', or as I consider it 'Abuse'.

I take this issue very seriously and have worked with a team of Conservative MPs on this since arriving in Parliament. I know that my colleagues in the Equalities Office remain committed to tackling conversion therapy in the UK. I am absolutely clear that this practice has no place in civilised society.

I am encouraged that this view is shared by the head of the NHS, the Royal College of Psychiatrists, the UK Council for Psychotherapy, the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy and the British Medical Association. Each of these bodies have concluded that such therapy is unethical and potentially harmful.

The Government Equalities' Office commissioned a large-scale LGBT survey in 2017. Sadly, two per cent of respondents to the national LGBT survey said they had undergone conversion therapy in an attempt to 'cure' them of being LGBT. Unfortunately, in this survey, what conversion therapy entailed was not defined, nor were the respondents asked whether or not the conversion therapy referred to in their answer was offered in the UK.

I very much welcome the fact that the Government is delivering on its promise and will legislate to ban conversion therapy to protect LGBT people from this harmful practice.

I understand that the Government launched a consultation on how Ministers are planning to ban practices of so called 'conversion therapy'. The consultation was extended until February 2022 to allow for ample opportunity for all those to contribute their views including faith groups, LGBT organisations, counselling bodies and charities.

I am aware that the Government is proceeding with its legislative proposals to ban conversion therapy for lesbian, gay, and bi-sexual individuals. Alongside this, I have been assured that the Government is carrying out separate work on the issue of transgender conversion therapy, this is to ensure that any legislative measures brought forward will not have any unintended consequences. I understand that this is a legally complex area, and as such the Government have a responsibility that any of these unintended consequences are not written into legislation, particularly in the case of under eighteens.

I would like to reassure you that the results will be analysed and will inform the Government's next steps in preparing legislation shortly.

I am positive about the steps that have been made so far in the UK to achieve LGBT equality, and am confident that this good work will continue. Rest assured as a member of the LGBT community, I personally am committed to seeing all forms of abuse for LGBT people banned and will continue to work towards that in Parliament.

Member of Parliament for Darlington

Telephone: 020 7219 3077 Email: peter.gibson.mp@parliament.uk

Website: www.petergibson.org  www.facebook.com/gibbo4darlo

On Monday 13th July I took part in a Westminster Hall debate on e-petition 613556, which related to transgender conversion therapy. My speech sets out my views on this matter in detail and you can watch the whole debate here:

<https://parliamentlive.tv/Event/Index/734dd338-e431-46a2-abd1-7e33be586f63>

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peter Gibson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

PETER GIBSON MP