

24th March 2015

Dear Constituents,

Thank you for your email asking where I stand on the NHS.

Put simply, I believe the NHS should be valued, protected and improved.

However, you can only have a strong NHS if you have a strong economy. The Government's long-term economic plan means we have been able to increase the annual NHS budget by £12.9 billion during this Parliament. This helps pay for more doctors, nurses, GPs and midwives than ever before, who are treating patients in cleaner, safer hospitals – with the dignity they deserve.

I am backing Conservative Party plans in the next Parliament to:

- Increase spending on the NHS every year in real terms
- Improve GP access so everyone will be able to see a GP seven days a week by 2020

With regards to the use of private companies within the NHS, I believe that local GPs and health specialists are best placed to decide what treatments and which providers are best for their patients and I do not believe that politicians should dictate to local clinical commissioning groups where they commission services. What I believe is important is that the NHS remains free at the point of use and I can assure you that I would fight any proposal which sought to erode this founding principle.

I know that concerns have also been raised about the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and the impact this could have on our NHS. Given that a written agreement has not yet been reached on this free trade agreement between the EU and the United States, any suggestion that it would have a negative impact on our health service is simply dishonest and amounts to scaremongering.

When an agreement is eventually reached, the UK Parliament will have an opportunity to scrutinise its content and can ultimately veto the agreement. If TTIP were to violate the integrity of our NHS, I would of course oppose it. However, the EU already has a number of free trade agreements with countries other than the US, which have been in place for many years and have not had a negative impact on the NHS, so it would be surprising to me if this treaty was any different.

I hope that you find this reassuring and thank you once again for contacting me.

Yours sincerely,



Alok Sharma MP