

4<sup>th</sup> September 2019

Dear Constituents,

Thank you for contacting me about the NHS and international trade.

Like you, I cherish our National Health Service and the role it plays in ensuring that no-one is denied medical treatment because they cannot afford it. The Government has been repeatedly clear that our NHS will never be on the table in any trade negotiations, a position I fully support.

Free trade is a driver of economic growth which can raise incomes, create jobs, and lift people out of poverty, which is why I am glad that outside of the EU the UK will be able to strike new trade agreements with countries across the globe. But more trade should not come at the expense of the high levels of quality and protection enjoyed in our country.

In the EU trade agreements to which our country is currently party, our NHS is protected by specific exceptions and reservations. Outside of the EU, rigorous protections for our NHS will be maintained and included in any future trade agreement to which our country is party.

Following the US state visit, I welcomed President Trump's clarification to his remarks about a potential US-UK trade agreement, in which he stated: "*I don't see it [the NHS] being on the table*" in negotiations.

I hope this reassures you that all future trade agreements will continue to protect our vital NHS.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



**Alok Sharma MP**