

15th July 2020

Dear Constituents,

Thank you for contacting me about care for people with terminal illnesses.

I agree that we must ensure that people receive the most appropriate care personalised to their individual needs as they approach the end of their life.

The NHS Long Term Plan, prepared by the NHS and published in 2019, builds on previous commitments made by the Government to personalise care through informed conversations between healthcare professionals and dying people. Part of this is a commitment to help people to live independently for longer, as well as a promise to give more people more say about the care they receive and where they receive it, particularly towards the end of their lives. I believe empowering people with terminal conditions in this way will better enable them to access palliative care when and where they most need it.

The NHS must meet these commitments, and new measures are being developed to ensure local health and care leaders are meeting the high standards expected of them.

I am pleased to say that the National End of Life Care Programme Board is implementing the Government's ambitions, in partnership with all relevant arm's length bodies, to ensure action and accountability. A report was published in August 2017, which highlights the professionalism and compassion throughout the Specialist Palliative Care (SPC) sector, but recognises that there are improvements to be made. You may be reassured to know that, whilst SPC services do not receive a rating from the Care Quality Commission (CQC), they are accountable to the CQC's inspectors, who are committed to enforcing rigorous standards of care throughout the NHS.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Alok Sharma MP