



HOUSE OF COMMONS

3rd March 2020

Dear local resident,

Thank you to those who have contacted me about mental health.

I agree with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care that, while it is hugely welcome that we are on the road to parity of esteem, there is still more to do. I am, therefore, encouraged that, as part of the five-year funding offer that will see the annual NHS budget grow by over £33.9 billion, mental health services will receive a budget growth of £2.3 billion. This is the fastest ever uplift in funding and will enable further service expansion and faster access to community and crisis mental health services for both adults and particularly children and young people.

I am also pleased that a new mental health crisis service with comprehensive mental health support will be available in every major A&E, alongside new children and young peoples' crisis teams across the country. The additional funding will also deliver more mental health ambulances, "safe havens" in the community, and a 24-hour mental health crisis hotline when people are in urgent need of help. I hope these new services help end the stigma surrounding mental health, offering crucial support to people suffering from crisis and those who have suffered in silence for too long.

With regards to reforming the Mental Health Act, in 2017, Professor Sir Simon Wessely, who is a former president of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, led an Independent Review of the Act. The review's final report made it clear that the Act must be modernised to ensure that patients' views are respected and that patients are not detained for longer than is absolutely necessary. I welcome that reforms to the Act formed part of the Queen's Speech and the Government has said that it will publish a White Paper as soon as possible which will set out its response and proposals for reform. I will continue to follow this matter closely.

I hope that this information is reassuring. If you have any further concerns about this, or any other issues, please do get back in touch.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jane Hunt'.

Jane Hunt MP