



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Dr Carolyn Wilkins
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Our Ref: KHM/PARK02002/02150623

26 March 2015

Dear Dr Wilkins

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the Council's resolution on developing pressures in the NHS, received 9th March.

As a member of the Shadow Health Team and a member of the Bill Committees for the Health and Social Care Act and the Care Act, I have warned since my election of the damaging effects of the Government's reorganisation on the NHS, including the pressures that would be placed on A&E.

I visited Royal Oldham Hospital's A&E in January to see for myself the pressure staff were under. The full report on my visit can be found at <http://www.debbieabrahams.org.uk/2015/royal-oldham-hospital-visit-ae-staff-under-pressure>

I was very impressed with the staff I met in A&E especially the way they were coping with the increasing pressure, exacerbated by yet another winter crisis brought about by the Government's damaging health policies.

'Pressure' was the word that I heard again and again from staff at all levels. This is no surprise when you look at the data which shows an 11% increase in ambulance admissions; monthly surges with ambulance queues and a pressure on beds; increasing acute admissions of frail elderly people as a result of cuts to social care, surges of acute paediatric admissions in the evenings – the list goes on and on. The current situation in A&Es across the country is a year-round crisis of the Government's making.

Some staff did say that improved integration was required between primary, community and secondary care as well as social care. What they were describing is an integrated health and care system which is what Labour is advocating; this is starting to happen for example at the North Manchester site of Pennine Acute Hospitals Trust which is running an integrated care pilot at the moment and where they say they are coping more effectively.

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But we also need more staff. Labour will rescue the NHS with a £2.5 billion a year Time to Care fund – on top of the coalition Government’s spending plans – to fund new staff, including 20,000 more nurses, 8,000 more doctors and 5,000 extra homecare workers across the country.

Please be assured that I will continue do everything I can to protect and support the NHS and social care.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debbie Abrahams". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

DEBBIE ABRAHAMS MP
Oldham East and Saddleworth

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