



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

*Andrew Stephenson MP  
Minister of State*

*39 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0EU*

10 April 2024

Dear Mike

### **Update on Government Action to Improve Healthcare in Your Area**

I am writing to update you on how the Government has been improving health and care within your constituency and local area.

We are taking the action needed to make the system faster, simpler and fairer for patients, supported by record funding for our health and social care system. In your area, the North Central London Integrated Care Board has been allocated £3.05 billion for 2024/25. This is part of this Government's record of investing a record amount in the NHS.

We've been doing everything in our power to get more clinicians on the front line so we can get more people the care they need when they need it. In Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust, which serves your community, there were 70 more full-time-equivalent doctors and 137 more nurses in September 2023 than there were in September 2022. This is local delivery on this Government's commitment to recruit 50,000 more nurses.

We are also making it easier to get a GP appointment and end the 8am rush, by investing in technology and recruiting more staff to look after patients. In the North Central London integrated care system there were 38 more full-time-equivalent GPs in December 2023 than in December 2019 and 1,819,226 more appointments in general practice in the 12 months to December 2023 than in the 12 months to December 2019 – helping us to hit our target of 50 million more GP appointments.

In your Finchley and Golders Green constituency there were 69 more full-time-equivalent direct patient care staff working in general practice in September 2023 than there were in September 2019. This shows our commitment to getting more staff into the primary care workforce right across the country.

Each integrated care system receives a capital allocation for locally determined priority capital projects and the maintenance of their estate: the North Central London ICB was allocated over £181 million in 2023/24. We also make capital investment via a number of national programmes, for example:

- We are creating extra physical capacity to support elective recovery. This includes surgical hubs, additional beds, improved patient flow and separation of elective and emergency services. Chase Farm Hospital Elective Surgical Hub and Edgware Community Hospital Elective Surgical Hub are open within your local area, focusing on providing high-volume, low-complexity surgery, which is helping to tackle the elective waitlist.

- We are improving patient safety and dignity by eradicating all remaining mental health dormitory provision in the NHS estate and replacing dormitories with single rooms.

More than seven million tests, checks and scans have been delivered by Community Diagnostic Centres since July 2021, making it easier for people to get the care they need and helping to cut waiting lists. Such centres are open across England – including Finchley Memorial Hospital CDC in your local area.

London has a clinic for gambling-related harms, in which people with serious addiction issues can access cognitive behavioural therapy, family therapy, support groups and aftercare.

North Central London integrated care system has a targeted lung health check programme, in which current or former smokers aged 55 to under 75 years have their lung cancer risk assessed, and those at high risk referred for a CT scan. This programme will be rolled out nationally following a recommendation from the UK National Screening Committee. Around 35,000 people die and 48,000 people are diagnosed with lung cancer each year. It has one of the lowest survival rates of all cancers. This is largely because lung cancer tends to be diagnosed at a late stage, when treatment is much less likely to be effective. When fully rolled out, this new national screening programme will detect around 9,000 more cancers year at an early stage.

Through the National Institute for Health and Care Research, we have invested £96 million, in 93 NHS organisations across England, to pay for cutting-edge research equipment and technology. This includes organisations covering your area: Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust was awarded £3,933,570 to purchase equipment for a variety of clinical research areas. Some examples of the equipment requested and how they will support research include a low field MRI scanner will support a variety of research, particularly research for cardiovascular conditions and lung imaging and a system that will be fundamental for the development of advanced therapeutics, including gene therapy.

As you can see, this Government has taken bold action to support the NHS in your constituency and local area.

I hope that this letter has given you a useful update about the work that we have been doing. If you would like further details about any of these projects, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Steptoe', is positioned at the bottom of the page.

**THE RT HON ANDREW STEPHENSON CBE MP  
MINISTER OF STATE**