



Department
of Health &
Social Care

*From Maria Caulfield MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Primary Care and Patient Safety*

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The Rt Hon Sir George Howarth MP
By email to: george.howarth.mp@parliament.uk

14 June 2022

Dear Sir George,

Thank you for your correspondence of 3 May to Sajid Javid on behalf of a number of your constituents, about Leukaemia Care's Left to #WatchWaitWorry campaign. Please accept my sincere apologies for the delay in replying.

The Government and the NHS are committed to ensuring that all cancer patients get access to holistic needs assessments and personalised care interventions. These will ensure that care focuses on what matters most to each person, while empowering them to self-manage where appropriate and providing a route back into the system if they notice any worrying changes or need to seek help.

In March 2021, data from Cancer Alliances showed that, despite the pandemic, approximately 83 per cent of all multi-disciplinary cancer teams had implemented personalised care and support planning based on holistic needs assessments.

The NHS is supporting adults with cancer with the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) programme, which provides evidence-based mental health services for people with anxiety and depression. The IAPT pathway has been identified as a priority to support the integration of mental and physical health services for people with long-term conditions such as cancer.

The success of the COVID-19 vaccination programme has meant that the requirement to identify people who are clinically extremely vulnerable is no longer necessary. However, there remain a smaller number of people whose immune system means that they are at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19, despite vaccination.

For this group, we have introduced clinical protection for those most vulnerable to COVID-19, including prioritisation for vaccination and boosters and for access to new treatments. Eligibility for this additional protection is based on clinical advice about who would benefit most.

Further guidance for this group, which includes public health advice and information about vaccines and treatments, can be found at www.gov.uk by searching for 'Guidance for people previously considered clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19'.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maria', with a stylized initial 'M' and a cursive 'a'.

MARIA CAULFIELD