



Department
of Health &
Social Care

*From Helen Whately MP
Minister of State for Care*

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

13 January 2023

Dear Sir George,

Thank you for your correspondence of 13 December on behalf of a number of your constituents, about dementia.

NHS England has commissioned the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities' Dementia Intelligence Network to investigate variations in dementia diagnosis rates. The investigation includes assessing population characteristics such as rurality, ethnicity and age. The aim is to pinpoint the reasons for the variations and to provide local support to improve diagnosis rates.

The Government made £17million available to commissioners in 2021/22 to address dementia waiting lists and increase the number of diagnoses. Work was carried out to identify good practice in dementia diagnosis and pre/post diagnostic support. This will be shared with dementia clinical networks and stakeholders to encourage further improvement. To support the recovery in dementia diagnosis rates and implementation of the Dementia Care Pathway, NHS England has developed a 'dashboard' to provide commissioners and providers of memory services with appropriate data.

NHS England is funding pilots in 14 trusts of the Diagnosing Advanced Dementia Mandate (DiADeM) tool to improve diagnosis of dementia in care homes and to enable access to more support services. The plan is for the pilots to run for 12 months from 30 September.

NHS England is also working with GP IT providers to reproduce the Dementia Quality Toolkit, which includes system searches that GPs can use to identify people whose records suggest that they might have dementia, but who do not have a diagnosis. This has previously been shown to improve GP diagnosis rates. Publication of the toolkit is expected by April.

The Government is committed to research into new dementia medicines. The NHS's Accelerated Access Collaborative and Commercial Medicines Directorate examines emerging trends and developments. This ensures that there is awareness of promising new medicines that may provide future benefits to patients.

A number of medicines that possess similar traits to that of the experimental drug Lecanemab are being studied to determine whether their ability to bind to a particular type of protein may have a potential role in diminishing the progress of Alzheimer's disease.

Whether to approve these medicines for NHS use will take into account factors such as the quality of evidence to support a future licence for Lecanemab as a treatment for

Alzheimer's disease and if it they are deemed by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence to be safe and clinically and cost-effective.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Helen Whately', with a large, sweeping underline that loops back under the 'y'.

HELEN WHATELY