



Craig Whittaker MP

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Response to Cancer Research – July 2017

Thank you for contacting me about cancer research. I recognise the great contribution made by charities such as Cancer Research UK in driving forward progress in this field.

This Government is committed to improving cancer outcomes throughout the UK, and Ministers recognise that investing in research is vital in order to increase survival rates.

Cancer survival rates are at a record high and we are on track to save an estimated 12,000 more lives a year for people diagnosed between 2011 and 2015. As of March 2017, figures show that at least 7,000 more people per year are surviving cancer than three years previously.

In light of this, it is encouraging that the National Institute for Health Research spending on cancer research has risen from £101 million in 2010/11 to £135 million in 2014/15. The Government along with Cancer Research UK, are jointly funding a network of 18 experimental cancer medicine centres aimed at driving the development and testing of new anti-cancer treatments.

The Government is working with the NHS, charities and patient groups to deliver the new cancer strategy developed by the independent Cancer Taskforce. It has committed to ensuring that by 2020, everyone referred with a suspicion of cancer will receive either a definitive diagnosis or the all-clear within four weeks. The Government is supporting this by investing up to £300 million a year by 2020 to increase diagnostic capacity, along with a national training programme for an additional 200 staff to carry out endoscopy tests by 2018.

I support the Government's commitment to the £1.2 billion Cancer Drugs Fund (CDF) which has helped 95,000 people to access the life-extending drugs they need. New arrangements have been introduced for the CDF to ensure that the most promising and new medicines get to patients as quickly as possible.

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend Cancer Research UK's Parliamentary drop-in session on Wednesday 12th July 2017 due to a prior diary commitment. However, I understand that it was a successful event.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP