



## Craig Whittaker MP

CALDER VALLEY

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### Response to Lung Disease – March 2017

Thank you for contacting me about lung disease.

There are currently no plans to set up a taskforce on lung health. However, I know that the Government has instructed NHS England to achieve a significant reduction in avoidable deaths by 2020. Reducing premature mortality rates among patients with lung disease will play an important part in this. There are a range of initiatives being taken forward that will support reducing mortality rates amongst patients with lung disease.

Early diagnosis of lung disease is important as timely treatment can help slow down its progression. I am encouraged that in March 2016, the NHS concluded a national pilot programme which aimed to improve speed and accuracy of diagnosis in patients experiencing the symptom of breathlessness, test new models of care in various settings and improve the outcomes of patients experiencing breathlessness.

I am aware that the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has recently updated its advice on the management of acute and chronic breathlessness, including the identification of patients who may require emergency admission.

I know that NHS England's National Clinical Director for Respiratory Disease, Professor Mike Morgan, continues to work on improving outcomes for lung disease with charities such as the British Lung Foundation. I understand that work is also being carried out on how to share best practice in order to address variation in care.

NHS England also funds the Respiratory Futures programme, which is a resource to support innovation and sharing of best practice on respiratory conditions.

A recent Be Clear on Cancer campaign took place to raise awareness of respiratory symptoms, including breathlessness or a persistent cough, which can be a symptom of lung disease. This will help support increased early identification and diagnosis of patients suffering from possible lung disease.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Craig Whittaker'.

Craig Whittaker MP