



**Craig Whittaker MP**

**CALDER VALLEY**

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### **NHS Mandate and Waiting Times**

Thank you for contacting me about the NHS mandate and waiting times targets for the coming year.

As our population ages, demand for the NHS continues to rise. I would like to commend the dedication and compassion of our NHS staff, and assure you that the Government is taking clear steps to support the NHS, and ensure it offers the world's finest healthcare.

I appreciate your concern about waiting times in the NHS. Many NHS trusts have faced difficulty in meeting their waiting time targets thanks to acute challenges this winter. The NHS sets exceptionally high waiting time standards, and the Government works with bodies like NHS Improvement to make sure they are delivered throughout the health service. The NHS mandate has set clear goals for the health service, and I am confident that they will be achieved.

Not only is the Government increasing NHS investment by over £8 billion this parliament, it is making progress on reforms which will reduce waiting times, and alleviate pressures on the NHS. Through the £3.6 billion investment in the Better Care Fund, and the NHS's continuing implementation of its own plan for the future, the Five Year Forward View, I believe the proper integration of health and social care over the next three years will be of huge benefit to the NHS and patients alike. Excellent progress is being made. Compared to five years ago, nearly half a million more people are treated within 18 weeks of referral; and I am happy to say that safety in the NHS continues to improve.

I believe this mandate will uphold the founding ideals of the NHS as it reaches its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and provide the health service with the resources and guidance to face the challenges of today's ongoing social, demographic and technological change.

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