



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
Department of Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0EU

3 November 2022
PD42214

Dear Steve

We wish to congratulate you on your appointment, once again, as Secretary of State for Health. It is reassuring for us to see you back in this post given your previous decisive support for the Hospital Transformation Plan for acute hospitals in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin, which also serve mid-Wales. This is progressing at pace to the next phase of approval of detailed plans next June. We are writing to raise a different challenge.

The provision of health and social care services within NHS Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin reflects the national challenges but is magnified by our specific circumstances: a split town & rural community, a growing, ageing population, enhanced difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff into the sector and the legacy of our historical estate. All partners across the health and care system are working relentlessly to ensure our citizens are cared for in the most appropriate setting

Nevertheless, the impact of our circumstances – and particularly the difficulty in recruiting people into all care services – can result in delays in patients being cared for in the right place. This has multiple effects, including delays to ambulance handovers into the emergency departments and patients waiting too long to access care. As importantly, patients can end up being cared for in a bed in a hospital or care home, when their best place may be back home. This can have a very real impact on the quality of life for patients requiring support

We regularly have approximately 150 people waiting to access social care, including domiciliary and residential care, in a system already providing care to more patients with more complex needs than ever before. The local NHS (via the Integrated Care Board) has invested an additional £10m into the two local authorities which is targeted at supporting timely discharge from hospitals. This is over and above the BCF contributions through the NHS and local authorities. Allocation of the additional social care funding will help support recruitment into the system to build capacity in domiciliary care and other areas of social care provision and allow for our residents to be cared for in the most appropriate setting improving outcomes for all.

We are writing to request sympathetic consideration of the needs of the Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin health area when allocating available funds for this winter and addressing social care pressures. Funding formulae regularly under-allocate to rural areas in general and to Shropshire in particular. We would be grateful if you could take steps to reverse this when allocating the latest £500million provided to your department by HM Treasury to assist with the current pressures.

Yours sincerely

Rt Hon Philip Dunne
MP for Ludlow

Daniel Kawczynski
MP for Shrewsbury

Helen Morgan
MP for North Shropshire

Rt Hon Mark Pritchard
MP for Wrekin