



Department
of Health &
Social Care

*From Will Quince MP
Minister of State for Health and Secondary Care*

*39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU*

3rd August 2023

Dear Julia,

Cutting waiting lists is one of this government's top priorities. We are making good progress on tackling the longest waits, to ensure patients get the care they need when they need it. The elective recovery plan set clear ambitions to eliminate long waits for planned NHS treatment. The NHS continues to focus on its target to eradicate waits of longer than a year for elective care by March 2025.

As you are aware, the NHS had ambitions to virtually eliminate waits of 78 weeks or more by April 2023. Thanks to the incredible work of NHS staff, official NHS England statistics show that by May 2023 the total number of patients waiting more than 78 weeks was 11,450, a reduction of over 94% from the peak of almost 125,000 in September 2021.

Most patients need a diagnostic test, and our ambition is that 95% of patients needing a diagnostic test will receive it within 6 weeks by March 2025. Community Diagnostic Centres (CDCs) will focus on treating patients closer to home that feature most predominantly on the elective and cancer backlogs including those with breast, prostate, lung and bowel cancer. These make up around half of all new cancer cases, and our CDC rollout is supporting earlier diagnosis, ensuring that patients more quickly get the care they need. These new CDCs will also, where possible, prioritise pre and post operative testing for patients treated in our expanding number of surgical hubs, to further drive elective activity and cut waiting lists.

I am pleased to tell you that **St George's CDC on Suttons Lane, Hornchurch (RM12 6RS) will be opening in your constituency.** The CDC will increase diagnostic capacity and reduce waiting times, with state-of-the art equipment to deliver CT, MRI, ultrasound, X-ray, echocardiology, ECG, spirometry and FeNO tests and scans. Activity will be delivered from December 2023. This will be a permanent location in the community, connected to a hub CDC at Barking Community Hospital. Once fully operational, the CDC will have capacity to deliver up to 38,166 checks, tests and scans a year, tailored to meet the needs of your constituents.

114 of our new CDCs are currently operational across the country and have delivered **over 4.6 million** checks, tests and scans since July 2021, as part of the biggest recovery programme in history. Some of these CDCs may already serve your area. A full list will be published in due course. Over the next couple of years, we plan to invest £2.3 billion, taking the total number up to 160 CDCs, to help tackle

the COVID-19 backlog. These will deliver a projected 17 million additional checks by March 2025, having added capacity for around 9 million more tests a year.

Since the Covid-19 pandemic, we have developed new, innovative ways of working to tackle the backlog in elective care. To continue this momentum, I am glad to announce the approval of **13 new CDCs**, which will all be delivering much needed activity by the end of this year.

We must continue to work together to build a health and social care system for the long term. I am grateful for your continued support as we continue to tackle the COVID-19 backlog and deliver the biggest catch-up programme in our history.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Will Quince', is centered on the page.

Will Quince MP

Minister of State Health and Secondary Care