



### In 2018 my constituency priority will be working on the NHS

#### King's in Crisis

King's College Hospital is enormously important. It is a centre of international excellence and of local necessity. It sits at the heart of GP services, social care services and mental health services. It is a pivotal part of the local community and we are proud of the 15,000 dedicated staff who are on the frontline 24/7 including treating victims from the Westminster and London Bridge terror attacks and Grenfell Tower fire.

The Government have been imposing cuts at King's. They set them an unachievable target for making "savings", which are cuts, when more patients are coming through the door and there is less money per person. In the last 2 years, King's has already cut £80 million, double the average rate of other hospitals, and in 2013 took on 2 hospitals from an ailing trust to help out the wider NHS —(the Princess Royal University Hospital and Orpington Hospital).

You do not improve an organisation by cutting it to the bone. The government needs to provide it with the resources for a world-class major teaching hospital which is also at the heart of a diverse community. Standards of care at King's remain very good, but we must ensure cuts do not take us back to the situation we had under the last Tory Government in the 80s, when people routinely spent all night on trolleys in King's accident and emergency. Years of Labour investment from 1997 transformed King's so that by 2010 it was meeting all of its main waiting time targets, but once again now:

- In 2016/17 King's failed to meet the 4hr waiting time target in A&E, almost 1 in 5 patients were not seen within 4 hrs;
- Last year at King's 928 operations were cancelled for non-medical reasons —4x as many as in 2009;
- Last year King's met its cancer target of holding 93% of people's first consultant appointment within 2 weeks of GP referral, but since 2015 they've missed the other key cancer target of starting treatment for 85% of cancer patients within 2 months of GP referral.
- King's is regularly more than 100% full, with meeting rooms and storage space used for beds.



For every delayed or cancelled operation there is a human impact. The Prime Minister talked about cancelled operations being "part of the plan". We can never let there be a plan with cancelled operations as part of it. For the individual concerned, there is the psychological impact of gearing themselves up for an operation and then finding it cancelled, everything is organised around it, including time off work, their family taking time off work or coming to stay when they are recovering. Prompt treatment allows people to get on with their lives.

On [12th December in my Urgent Question](#) to the government on Lord Kerslake's resignation as Chair of King's and on [16th January in the debate called by Helen Hayes MP, on King's finances](#), I spoke in Parliament to stress that the problem at King's is not the leadership, or the growing number of patients, or the dedicated staff, it is about lack of money. I am dismayed the government has allowed a tone of blaming King's leadership to creep into debate. I thank Lord Bob Kerslake for his work as chair, and I am disappointed that because of the circumstances he felt he could not stay on and resigned on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2017. I will meet the new interim chair, Ian Smith, on 23rd January. The government must make it clear to everyone at King's that we are on their side and want to help them, not make an example of them.

#### Staff cuts in local mental health services

South London & Maudsley Trust is a pioneering organisation providing vital mental health and drug and alcohol abuse services in the hospital and in the community. But deep Tory cuts since 2010 have left the Trust with 112 fewer mental health nurses and a 23% staff shortage, with over 1,000 vacancies. Mental health services are essential in preventing children and adults reaching crisis point. These cuts will cause more distress and end up costing the taxpayer more by increasing pressure on A & E departments as people have to go to hospital to get help. Prevention is not only better for patients, it is cheaper and I am backing Labour's call for the government to ring-fence mental health budgets to protect patient care.

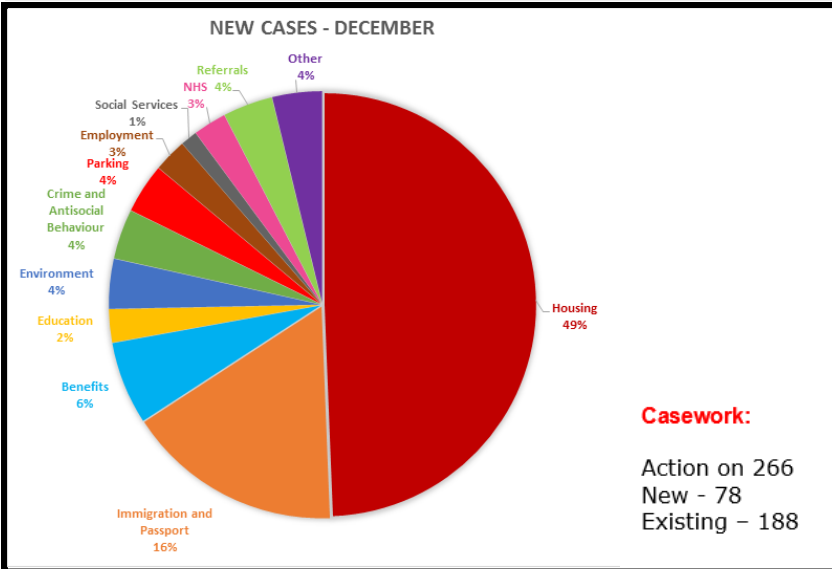
#### Difficulty in getting a GP appointment

A concern people in Camberwell and Peckham often raise with me is their inability to get timely access to GPs. From May to August 2017 Healthwatch Southwark visited all 44 GP practices in Southwark, ran a survey which received responses from 39 Practice Managers, interviewed 50 receptionists, and talked to 550 patients about their experiences of GP appointment systems. Although the overwhelming response was positive and care is very good, almost 1 in 4 people said they found it 'difficult' or 'very difficult' to see their GP. I will be working with Southwark Clinical Commissioning Group, the council and Labour colleagues to help ensure people can access a GP when they need it.

**Please contact me at [harriet.harman.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:harriet.harman.mp@parliament.uk) to share your experiences—good or bad—of the NHS, or those of your family and friends. I am seeing the new interim chair of King's College Hospital, Ian Smith on Tuesday 23rd January and will raise these with him then.**

## Tackling unequal pay

On 9th January I spoke in Parliament to praise Carrie Gracie, the former China Editor at the BBC, for the principled stand she has taken in denouncing unequal pay on behalf of women not just in the BBC and broadcasting but in workplaces up and down the country. Under Labour's Equality Act 2010, from April 2018 all organisations with more than 250 employees will be required to publish their gender pay gap every year. The exposure of the persistence and extent of the pay gap will anger women employees. But it is important that this information is the spur for change. It is crucial that a woman at work is able to see clearly how the pay gap in the organisation for which she works compares with other similar organisations and is able to track the progress their organisation is making in narrowing the pay gap year on year. It is crucial for the government and local government to see the regional pattern of the pay gap. The Equality and Human Rights Commission has the responsibility to monitor this, to ensure companies publish their pay gaps and to set targets for companies to close the gap. But in order to ensure that the EHRC are able to carry out this important task. It is vital that the government gives them the money they need. I am demanding the government reverse the cuts of almost 70% to the Equality and Human Rights Commission so they have the funds to tackle the pay discrimination which is now laid bare. You can watch the debate [here](#).



## Protecting funding for domestic violence refuges

Refuge provision is critical to the safety of women fleeing domestic abuse and their families. Yet since 2010 funding for DV refuges has decreased by 25%. I have made an FOI request to every local authority in England and Wales to ask them how much they have spent on DV refuges each year and how many refuges have closed since 2010, and will compile a report. I am working with Dame Vera Baird QC, Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner and former Labour MP and Solicitor General, to draft an amendment to the forthcoming Domestic Violence and Abuse bill to guarantee national funding for refuges to allow these vital services to grow and develop and prevent anymore from closing. Warm words are not enough, the government can't praise the sector whilst slashing their budgets to pieces.

## Helping constituents with their problems

A woman from Camberwell contacted me because her 85 year old mother who is registered disabled had a stair lift in her home which has been broken for four months and she had difficulty going upstairs and downstairs. I wrote to Southwark Council to ask them to replace the stair lift and a new stair lift has now been installed.

A women with epilepsy came to see me because when the government had moved her onto Universal Credit the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) failed to pay her rent to her landlord. This has pushed her into arrears and she was worried about being evicted. I asked the DWP to investigate and pay the outstanding Universal Credit money to her landlord urgently. I am currently waiting for a response.

A woman suffering from cancer and living in temporary accommodation in Peckham contacted me for help because when the government moved her onto Universal Credit it cut the amount of money she received. Last month she got £700 in Universal Credit but her rent alone is £800 per month. I wrote to the DWP demanding an urgent review. The DWP replied the next day to say they had reassessed her claim and the amount she received was being raised to £1,142 a month.

A woman in South Camberwell came to see me because Guy's Hospital told her the exploratory throat surgery she has been waiting for since September 2017 would be delayed until February 2018. I have written to Guy's Hospital and asked them to bring the surgery forward. I am waiting for their response.

A mother from Camberwell with 2 autistic teenage sons who is caring for her disabled husband came to see me because their flat is on the second floor of a block with no lift and this has left her husband housebound. I wrote to Southwark Council to ask them to take into account their medical needs and review her band on the housing list for bidding on a new home. I am currently waiting for a response.



**Contact  
Harriet**

**Post**  
House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA

**Email**  
harmanh@parliament.uk  
**Online**  
www.harrietharman.org

**Phone**  
0207 219  
4218