

ELLIOT COLBURN MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon. Matt Hancock MP
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
Department of Health and Social Care
Ministerial Correspondence and Public Enquiries Unit
39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

12 May 2020
Ref: TG/EC2017

Dear Matt,

I have been contacted by the Royal College of Occupational Therapists regarding community rehabilitation and the #RightToRehab campaign that they are spearheading.

As you know, rehabilitation in the community will be hugely important for those affected by the coronavirus outbreak, and the road to recovery for many people will involve complex, ongoing, individual rehabilitation. Whilst there are areas where there are excellent examples of strong rehabilitation across the UK – both within clinical care and in the community – there are some that are already stretched, including physiotherapists and occupational therapists.

The concern from the Royal College is that additional pressure created by the COVID-19 crisis may prove impossible to manage without a detailed roadmap strategy for investment and services. This was highlighted by Baroness Hollins, the President of the Royal College, in a recent parliamentary debate, and I know that the *Community Rehabilitation: Live Well for Longer* report calls for improved community rehabilitation for everyone who needs it.

The Royal College has identified a number of areas of focus for the strategy, and feel that these must include:

- Provisions to ensure enough staff capacity to meet rising needs, particularly where many occupational therapists and support workers have been redeployed away from rehabilitation.
- Provisions to prioritise the 1.5 million people who have had to self-isolate for the (minimum) 12 week period, many who will be unable to access rehabilitation in their conventional way and will need new support.
- Plans to recruit and retain the multi-disciplinary rehabilitation workforce to deliver

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ongoing rehabilitation.

- Guarantees that people being discharged from hospitals will have timely access to rehabilitation services and that these services will be personalised to meet people's individual needs.
- Assurances that the needs of those suffering from non-Covid-related conditions are not compromised as a result of the increase in Covid-19 rehabilitation needs.

I should be grateful if you could consider these points, and provide me with a response to allow me to report back to the Royal College and to my constituents for whom this is a priority area.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elliot Colburn', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Elliot Colburn

Conservative Member of Parliament for Carshalton and Wallington