

# ELLIOT COLBURN MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Jo Churchill MP  
Minister for Prevention, Public Health and Primary Care  
Department of Health and Social Care  
39 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0EU

25 January 2021

Our Ref: EC10550

Dear Jo,

**RE: NHS Dental Services**

I met recently with the Chair of the Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth Local Dental Committee, Dr Dharmen Patel, as well as Dr Martin Skipper who is the Head of Policy for the LDC Confederation.

As part of the wider conversation we had regarding the pressures being faced by our local dental practices and the support they require moving forward, both Drs Patel and Skipper raised a number of concerns about decisions taken for dental services during the pandemic.

Whilst I was unable to attend the Covid-19: Dental Services debate on 14 January due to prior commitments, I followed it after-the-fact and I share the concerns raised by colleagues across the House, including on our own benches, that dentists are currently being expected to hit 45 per cent of pre-pandemic activity. Indeed, as the Member for Don Valley, and others, highlighted, if activity falls below 36 per cent, practices will have to return the majority of the NHS funding they receive in the first three months of this year, and this runs the real risk of NHS dental practice closures in my constituency.

Drs Patel and Skipper have noted that, during the debate, you committed to maintaining this 45 per cent target for dental practices in the final quarter of this financial year, despite the strenuous objections of the profession.

They also mentioned that the LDC Confederation has written to you three times since May 2020 but has received no acknowledgement or reply from your office. I have attached copies of their correspondence and would welcome a reply I can share with Dr Patel as Chair of the LDC in my area. You may also be interested in this article, recently published by the Confederation, on the issues with the 45 per cent target and its potential ramifications:

<https://primarycarejournal.co.uk/newsdit-article/c7b60f256ca9d2b7f71367ce12399a15/>

As I know you will appreciate, I have had a number of constituents contact me directly on this issue, and they have asked me to seek your assurances that no dental practices currently providing NHS dental care in Carshalton and Wallington will be forced to close or lose their contract, or suffer unmanageable financial penalties as a result of missing this target.

I should be very grateful if you could consider these points and provide me with a detailed response that I may share with Dr Patel and those constituents who have raised it with me.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Elliot Colburn', written over a white background.

**Elliot Colburn**

Conservative Member of Parliament for Carshalton and Wallington

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