



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

From Edward Argar MP  
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Iain Stewart MP  
By email to: [iain.stewart.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:iain.stewart.mp@parliament.uk)

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Dear Iain,

Thank you for your correspondence of 22 October on behalf of your constituents, about the Health and Care Bill 2021-2022. I apologise for the delay in replying.

While I appreciate your constituents' concerns, I believe that this Bill will achieve the reforms set out in the *NHS Long Term Plan*, and the vast majority of it reflects what the NHS has asked for. It will make permanent some of the innovations that we have seen implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Bill is designed to improve our health and care system, level up health outcomes across the country and enable people to live longer and healthier lives. It will also incorporate the lessons learned from the pandemic.

As I set out in committee, we believe that the current provisions in the Bill are clear. However, given the often misleading claims that we intended for private companies to sit on the boards, we have also amended the Bill at the House of Commons Report Stage to put beyond doubt that Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) will not be controlled by the private sector. ICBs are NHS bodies guided by the NHS Constitution and with the values of the NHS at their heart. This amendment makes clear that no one may be appointed to an ICB who would undermine the independence of the NHS, either as a result of their interests in the private healthcare sector, or otherwise.

I hope this reply is helpful.

EDWARD ARGAR MP