



Department
of Health &
Social Care

From Maria Caulfield MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Primary Care and Patient Safety

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Iain Stewart MP
By email to: iain.stewart.mp@parliament.uk

25 March 2022

Dear Iain,

Thank you for your correspondence of 22 October on behalf of a number of your constituents, about community rehabilitation for intensive care patients. Please accept my sincere apologies for the delay in replying.

I appreciate your constituents' concerns and I would like to thank them for bringing this issue to your attention.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has published guidance on intermediate care, including reablement. Intermediate care provides support and rehabilitation to people at risk of hospital admission or who have been in hospital. A range of community-based NHS services are commissioned in line with this guidance. Work undertaken during the development of the *NHS Long Term Plan* suggests that, while intermediate care services are effective in supporting people to recover in their communities following or as an alternative to a stay in hospital, the service capacity for these services needs to double, and there needs to be more timely access. To achieve this, the *NHS Long Term Plan* sets out an intention to boost out-of-hospital care, including community-based services. This is underwritten by the guarantee of a £4.5 billion real-terms increase in funding for primary medical and community health services from 2019/20 to 2023/24.

Working directly alongside primary care teams, a new community health services programme is now being established with a clear focus on urgent community response (UCR) services. The UCR service model aims to improve the quality and capacity of intermediate care for people with complex conditions, including frail older people and those with cognitive disorders. The service will support people to maintain their independence, reduce the need for unnecessary admission for acute hospital care and facilitate faster discharge after admission for acute hospital care. The NHS' ambition is to reduce the duration of patients' hospital stays. The reasons for this ambition is to ensure that people are receiving treatment in the most appropriate environment, to free up bed capacity and improve patient flow through hospitals.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

MARIA CAULFIELD