



HM Treasury, 1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Tim Farron MP
Chair of the APPG for Radiotherapy
House of Commons
London
SW1H 9NB

25 January 2023

Dear Tim,

RADIOTHERAPY ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

Thank you for your letter of 16 December. In your letter, you set out the arguments for increased use of radiotherapy, and request a meeting with senior Treasury officials.

The Government shares your view that early diagnosis and treatment of cancer, including through radiotherapy, is vital to improving cancer survival rates. Though cancer diagnosis and treatment were prioritised throughout the pandemic (over 515,000 people started cancer treatment between March 2020 and November 2021), fewer people than usual came forward for cancer diagnoses. That has unfortunately increased waiting times.

The most recent data shows that tens of thousands more people got the diagnostic tests and checks they needed in October with over 63,000 more compared to the previous month. In the Elective Recovery Plan, recommitted to at Autumn Statement, the NHS set out their ambition that by March 2024, 75% of patients who have been urgently referred by their GP for suspected cancer are diagnosed or have cancer ruled out within 28 days.

To support this aim £2.3bn of capital funding has been committed over the next 3 years to transforming diagnostics and increasing capacity through the provision of Community Diagnostic Centres. This builds on £325m which was invested in 2021-22 including £32m specifically for Linear Accelerator radiotherapy equipment, recognising the importance of this treatment to cancer outcomes.

As the lead department, I suggest that the Department for Health and Social Care are best placed to assist you with the points that you raise. I am copying in the Minister for Health and Secondary Care.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy'.

RT HON JEREMY HUNT MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer