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The RT Hon Victoria Atkins MP  
The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

6 December 2023

Dear the Secretary of State,

**Re: Petition calling for a Public Inquiry into pre and post diagnosis support for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**

I am writing to respectfully ask you to revise your Department's response to the [petition](#) calling for a Public Inquiry into pre and post diagnosis support for ADHD.

As I'm sure you are aware, in February 2023, the Government committed to addressing years-long waiting lists for ADHD and Autism assessments in a Parliamentary debate.

The situation has worsened since then, with assessments being denied in areas such as Yorkshire and a National Patient Safety Alert relating to ADHD medication shortages in the UK, leaving people without access to vital medication, which is expected to continue until at least April 2024.

The petition was made to address this, calling for a co-ordinated Public Inquiry into the provision of pre and post diagnostic support.

In responding to the petition, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) acknowledged that people are experiencing 'long waits' for an assessment of ADHD, but declined to hold any inquiries. They said 'we expect ICBs to commission healthcare in line with clear NICE guidelines to improve diagnosis and support.'

In May 2023, the Government's own broadcaster televised a BBC Panorama show questioning industry practices in relation to ADHD. This followed the Government recognising that 'there is clearly a systemic failure at the heart of

ADHD and Autism diagnosis', as said by Elliot Colburn MP in the Parliamentary debate. The NICE guidelines have not been updated since 2018.

At the LMC Conference on 23 November 2023, England's GP leaders collectively called for urgent action from NHS England to remedy this crisis.

**Why has the DHSC recognised the failures in the provision of healthcare relating to ADHD by ICBs and professionals in following NICE guidelines, yet declined to take any action to address this?**

During the Parliamentary debate in February, the Shadow Minister for Mental Health, Dr Rosena Allin-Khan MP, said, 'for ADHD assessments, there is no NHS waiting time standard. How can it be right that we have no idea of the number of people waiting for assessment? Without routinely published figures, we cannot get a handle on the scale of the issue.'

The Covid-19 pandemic demonstrated the dangers of not coordinating the collection of vital health information. Your Department stated that the National Institute for Health and Care Research has recently commissioned a project to provide 'initial insights into local ADHD diagnosis waiting times data collection', whilst recognising that data may already be held locally by NHS Trusts or ICBs.

Without a national, coordinated data collection strategy centralised within the Government, this data will continue to be fractional. This seems to be contrary to your Department's aim of 'improving data on ADHD', which 'will be an important first step in determining where further action may need to be taken to support people.'

Your Department referenced the new national five-year suicide prevention strategy for England in reference to the fact that the suicide risk is 5 times higher for those with ADHD. However, your suicide prevention strategy does not mention adult ADHD at all.

**How much of the 'additional £2.3 billion per year into mental health services by March 2024' will be related to neurodivergent conditions such as ADHD?**

I am asking you to please revise your response to the petition and hold a Public Inquiry into pre and post ADHD diagnosis support.

Yours sincerely,

**[insert your name]**



