



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON  
SW1A 0AA

**Nadhim Zahawi MP**  
*Member of Parliament for Stratford on Avon*

David Smith  
Chief Executive Officer  
Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group  
Jubilee House John Smith Drive Oxford Business Park South  
Oxford  
OX4 2LH

Our Ref: ZA17425

2 August 2016

Dear David

Re: Maternity Services at the Horton General Hospital, Banbury

I am writing on behalf of constituents who recently contacted me regarding contingency plans to downgrade services at the Horton to a midwife led unit which will mean women having to travel to the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford for prenatal care and delivery of their babies.

My constituents say they highly value the excellent services currently provided by the Horton and they are deeply concerned about the future provision of maternity services in the area if this change goes ahead. They tell me it is not reasonable to expect women to make the lengthy and often difficult journey to the John Radcliffe for pre-natal appointments and when going into labour. There is concern the long journey will lead to women missing essential appointments because they cannot afford to take time off work whilst women going into labour may end up giving birth en route to Oxford because they cannot get there in time. For women expected to have complicated deliveries and new born babies which need instant special care this plan is another worry at an already stressful time.

There is also concern about the limited public transport options available to women travelling to the John Radcliffe who do not have access to a car or can afford a taxi. Constituents say there is no adequate local bus service from the Shipston upon Stour, Tysoe and Brailes area and the cost of the fare will also be prohibitive for many women and for others with young children, poor mobility and other problems travelling by bus is not an option.

Constituents tell me the journey to the John Radcliffe means it will be less likely that family and friends will visit women who have just given birth and are staying in hospital for one or two nights. They say mothers can feel isolated and stressed at this time and need the support of families and friends.

Another concern is the ability of the John Radcliffe and the ambulance service to deliver services to all the women who would have gone previously to the Horton. Constituents say both are already often at capacity and the plans will only exacerbate these problems at a time when the local population is projected to continue to increase.

Constituents also say they are concerned this plan will lead to the reduction of remaining maternity services at the Horton whilst maternity services at other hospitals in the area will be put under increased strain.

I know my constituents would be grateful if their views were taken into account and this plan looked at again.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "N. Zahawi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nadhim Zahawi

Cc: Constituents

Cc: Victoria Prentis MP