



Department
of Health &
Social Care

*From Sajid Javid
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care*

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15 June 2022

Dear Karen,

Thank you for your letter of 23 May regarding the Department of Health and Social Care's performance in responding to written parliamentary questions. I'm grateful for your Committee's continued focus on this crucial element of parliamentary scrutiny and recognise the vital role you play in holding the Government to account on it.

In your letter you recognise that, despite the surge in Covid-19 cases due to the Omicron variant, the Department's performance in responding to written parliamentary questions improved between January and March this year, increasing to 68.2%. I'm pleased to be able to inform the Committee that, since then, the Department has seen a significant improvement in performance, with 79% of the 639 PQs due in May 2022 answered on time.

The Department continues to receive a huge number of PQs – 3,507 between January and April 2022 compared to 2,266 for the same period in 2019. Over that period, we answered more questions on time than were received in total by any other Department. Many of the PQs which we receive concern the Covid-19 pandemic or its residual effects on health and care services.

Our PQ Recovery Plan continues to focus on:

- Ensuring the Department has the right capability across the system, through providing training and guidance to policy teams.
- Continually reviewing the end-to-end process, and ensuring we have an effective process. This is done to ensure faster answers for MPs and Peers.
- Increasing accountability for performance improvement across the Department.

PQ recovery remains a high priority for me. I am proud of the improvements we have made thus far and am confident of meeting our target of answering 85% of PQs on time given our current trajectory. If, however, you still feel that ministerial attendance before the Committee is required, Minister Argar, as Minister responsible for PQ performance in the Department, would be delighted to attend.

Yours ever,

RT HON SAJID JAVID MP