



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

*From Neil O'Brien MP  
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Rt Hon Caroline Nokes MP (Chair of the Women and Equalities Committee)  
House of Commons,  
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By email: [womeqcom@parliament.uk](mailto:womeqcom@parliament.uk)

28 March 2023

Dear Caroline

Thank you for your correspondence of 12 October about the publication of the Health Disparities White Paper. I apologise for the delay in replying.

This government recognises that the gap in the number of years people live in good health is stark and unacceptable. That is why the government committed to improving healthy life expectancy by five years by 2035 and reducing the gap between areas where it is highest and lowest by 2030 in the Levelling Up White Paper

In addition, on 24 January 2023, the government announced that it will publish a Major Conditions Strategy. An interim report will be published in the summer. The strategy will set out a strong and coherent policy agenda that sets out a shift to integrated, whole-person care. Interventions set out in the strategy will aim to alleviate pressure on the health system, as well as support the government's objective to increase healthy life expectancy and reduce ill-health related labour market inactivity.

The strategy will tackle conditions that contribute most to morbidity and mortality across the population in England including, cancers, cardiovascular disease, including stroke and diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, dementia, mental ill health and musculoskeletal conditions. Health disparities exist across a wide variety of conditions from cancer to mental health, and contribute to this variation in life expectancy.

The Major Conditions Strategy will apply a geographical lens to each condition to address regional disparities in health outcomes, supporting the levelling up mission to narrow the gap by 2030. As material for the Major Conditions Strategy will therefore cover many of the same areas as the Health Disparities White Paper, we will no longer be publishing it.

I hope this reply provides assurance of this government's commitment to continue addressing health disparities.

NEIL O'BRIEN

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Neil O'Brien', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**NEIL O'BRIEN MP**