

The Rt Hon. Wes Streeting MP
Department for Health & Social Care
39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

22nd January 2025

An Open Letter to the Secretary of State for Health, the Rt Hon. Wes Streeting MP

Dear Secretary of State,

Last week, NHS patients across North Devon, Torridge and North Cornwall received the grim news that the new government will delay plans to rebuild North Devon District Hospital beyond 2035.

This is an utterly devastating blow to our hospital, and comes after five agonising years of undelivered promises to the NHS by the last Conservative Government.

The New Hospital Programme should have been a lifeline. North Devon District Hospital is the remotest acute hospital in mainland England, with operating theatres and intensive care (ICU) facilities that are approaching 50 years old, over-capacity, and already declared end-of-life with a mounting backlog of maintenance costs.

The Government has set a target of over 1,000 additional homes for North Devon per year, and if investment is not made now, there is a risk that critical care will fail. Unlike in many cities, the next nearest trauma unit is over 40 miles away, or several hours round trip, for many of my constituents.

This is immensely close to my heart: my children were born at NDDH, and I worked alongside countless colleagues there for many years. The staff are incredible, but can only work with the facilities we give them.

At a recent briefing I attended, some of your New Hospital Programme team appeared to be unaware that North Devon's Future Hospital Programme could be delivered in phases.

In the House of Commons last week, I asked if the government would make its first Ministerial visit to North Devon District Hospital - which you accepted.

We, the undersigned, would challenge you to honour that pledge in person, and visit North Devon District Hospital with me, to see the extent of the challenge first-hand.

Yours sincerely,



Ian Roome
MP For North Devon