



Department
of Health &
Social Care

*From Lord Markham CBE
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State*

*39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU*

Your Ref: MG19901

PO-1414753

The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
By email to: michael.gove.mp@parliament.uk

31 January 2023

Dear Michael,

Thank you for your further correspondence of 27 July on behalf of Mr Neil Dardis about Frimley Park Hospital. Please accept my sincere apologies on behalf of the department for the lengthy delay in replying to you. I have highlighted the importance of timely responses to officials and regret any inconvenience this delay has caused you.

I am afraid that there is not a great deal that I can add to our reply of 28 February (our ref: PO-1384654). Please allow me to reiterate that the Government fully recognises the need to invest in improving health infrastructure across the country, and I can assure you that we are committed to all the schemes we have announced as part of the New Hospital Programme.

I know that there are concerns about the reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) used in certain hospitals, which needs urgent attention. The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care raised this with the NHS workforce at the NHS Providers conference in November, where he acknowledged the challenges for trusts in maintaining their existing estates and investing in new facilities. I am most certainly aware that in the short-term, remediation action must happen to avoid the risk of the failure of these planks, to protect both patients and staff and avoid any unnecessary closure of care facilities.

I understand the seriousness of this issue and I am dedicated to delivering the Government's commitment to eradicating RAAC from the NHS estate. That is why Frimley Park Hospital was allocated £8.1million at the autumn 2021 spending review to meet the plans it set out to NHS England for the 2022/23 financial year. This builds on the £7.5million the hospital received in the last financial year to address the most immediate RAAC issues.

We are currently working to see how we can meet the need to eradicate RAAC in the worst-affected trusts by 2030, and you will be aware that we are already holding discussions with the relevant trusts on a standardised approach to do so, and how this will fit with the New Hospital Programme.

Additionally, and as set out in our previous reply, Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust is currently being provided with funding for a variety of issues, including risk mitigation and replacing outdated equipment.

I hope this reply is helpful.

With my very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'M. Markham', written in a cursive style.

LORD MARKHAM CBE