

From Phil Hope MP
Minister of State for Care Services

15 FEB 2010



Your Ref: WTC\280110\CRAD01001

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Richard Burden MP
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11 FEB 2010

Dear Richard,

Thank you for your letter of 28 January on behalf of a number of your constituents about the Autism Bill.

As you know, the Autism Bill received Royal Assent on 12 November 2009 to become the first ever piece of single impairment legislation.

The Autism Act 2009 commits the Government to publishing a strategy for adults with autism no later than 1 April 2010, and mandatory guidance for health and social care no later than 31 December 2010.

The Government's vision is that all adults with autism are able to live fulfilling and rewarding lives within a society that accepts and understands them, that they can access diagnosis and support as they need it, and that they can rely on mainstream public services to treat them fairly as individuals.

The Department of Health has been leading cross-Government work to develop the strategy. This work began in April 2008, and has been informed by a widespread public consultation from April to September 2009.

I met Mark Lever, Chief Executive of the National Autistic Society and Chair of the Department's External Reference Group for Autism, on 1 February. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the progress of the autism strategy. Work is continuing on the development of the strategy and we will be publishing it shortly.

I hope that this reply is helpful.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Phil Hope'.

PHIL HOPE

This reply has been approved by the Minister and signed electronically in his absence to avoid delay.

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