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Diabetes Care and Prevention:

Diabetes is one of the most serious public health challenges: five million people are affected and millions more are at increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Action is needed to improve care, treatment and prevention, and ensure better access to technologies that will support self-management.

In its 2023 survey, Diabetes UK observes a third of people find it difficult to make appointments, almost half experience difficulties managing their diabetes, and many people who are eligible for diabetes technologies are missing out, due to variation in provision across the country.

The Government said it is supporting the NHS and is committed to reducing backlogs. But our health service is under immense pressure. Despite the best efforts of staff, NHS waiting lists have risen to 7.7 million and staff shortages stand at over 121,000.

In my view, we must build an NHS fit for the future - providing it with the staff, technology, resources, and reform it needs - to improve diabetes care and ensure all patients get the support they need.

The immediate priority must be tackling waiting lists. I support an ambitious plan to enable the NHS to deliver an extra two million operations, scans and appointments a year, supported by an additional £1.1 billion investment to provide NHS staff overtime to work evening and weekend shifts, so procedures can be carried out. This plan comes alongside a new Fit for the Future fund; a £171 million a year investment to arm the NHS with state-of-the-art equipment and new technology to cut waiting times and speed up diagnosis and treatment. Fully funded by ending the non-domiciliary tax status.

More widely, I support measures to speed up adoption and spread of technology in the NHS. Working with industry, patients and local commissioners, the plan will reform procurement, cut bureaucracy, improve incentives and accountability, and end the postcode lottery so that patients across the country can get faster access to safe and effective new technologies to help manage their condition.

Longer term, I believe we need to change and modernise our NHS to meet the health challenges of the 21st century: shifting the focus of care out of hospitals and into the community; bringing back the family doctor to ensure continuity of care; and delivering a 'prevention first' revolution, working to improve the wider determinants of health and reducing the inequalities that drive poor health.

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