



Department
of Health

From the Rt Hon the Earl Howe P.C.
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Quality (Lords)

22 JAN 2015

Lord Saatchi
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Dear Maurice,

I understand there has been continued discussion on social media consultation on the Medical Innovation Bill. I would suggest that those involved in this debate read the summary of the consultation responses:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/338274/medinnbill_response.pdf

As this document explains:

Responses could be submitted online at <http://medicalinnovationbill.dh.gov.uk> (where others could see and read them), or sent electronically or by post to DH. By the end of April 2014, comments from 70 people had been published online, and a further 100 responses to the consultation had been sent directly to DH.

In addition, Lord Saatchi's team created an on-line petition which collected over 16,000 signatures, supplemented in over 2,000 cases by additional comments, and an embeddable web form, which was hosted on various websites and collected over 2,000 responses. Lord Saatchi's team provided the comments that had been collected in these two ways to DH at the end of the consultation.

In addition, four consultation events were held during the course of the consultation:

- on 12 March 2014, at the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges in London;
- on 18 March 2014, at the National Assembly for Wales in Cardiff;
- on 2 April 2014, at DH's offices (Quarry House) in Leeds;
- on 10 April 2014, at DH's offices (Skipton House) in London.

The purpose of the consultation was not to discover the numbers of those supportive or opposed, it sought instead to reveal the diversity of views on the topic.

It was agreed in advance with the Department that views captured through the on-line petition and the embeddable web form would be considered. A number of respondents, particularly those responding to the online petition, did not provide detailed responses (often just a yes/no indication of support/opposition). These opinions should not be ignored as they provide an indication of support/opposition to the Bill. Neither, however, can they be treated in the same way as a detailed consultation response from an organisation speaking for thousands of members.

We are grateful to all who responded to the consultation. We welcome the fact that responses came both from organisations and from individual members of the public, and from a variety of backgrounds, including medical, legal, patient, research, science and industry.

The debate on the Bill has moved on greatly since the time of the consultation. The current Bill, which will be debated at third reading in the House of Lords has been helpfully amended and improved from the version that was consulted upon.

I am happy for you to share this letter more widely, if you wish.

Yours ever,

Freddie

EARL HOWE