

## Youth Parliament Debate

I was asked by our members of the Youth Parliament to chair what was an insightful and well-engaged debate on mental healthcare provision in Milton Keynes.

Tackling poor mental health in MK and across the UK must be a priority and ministers have legislated to ensure it is treated with the same importance as physical health. Whilst there is undoubtedly more to be done, progress is being made with more Government investment in mental health than ever before.

From correspondence with constituents, I know one of the main issues was regarding the delay between their initial contact with a GP and any sort of specialist intervention. Last year, the Government introduced the first-ever mental health access and waiting time standards to ensure that 75% of people referred for talking therapies to treat common mental health problems start their treatment within 6 weeks, and 95% within 18 weeks.

An estimated 1,400 more people are accessing mental health services every day compared to 2010 - up 40 per cent. The Government has also pledged to spend an additional Â£1 billion on mental health by 2020-21 to improve access to services, and I will be doing what I can to ensure MK gets its fair share of this funding.