

Constituency office
31 Minto Street
Edinburgh
EH9 2BT

0131 662 4520
ian.murray.mp@parliament.uk
www.ianmurraymp.com



Jenni Minto MSP
Minister for Public Health and Women's Health
The Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

21 August 2023

Dear Minister

Re: Visit to Conan Doyle Medical Centre

I am writing to you concerning your visit to the Conan Doyle Medical Centre in Liberton on 24th August.

While I am grateful to you for taking time out of your day to come and visit the practice, I thought I would contact you to request that you reverse the Scottish Government's decision to pull funding for new GP practices in Liberton.

Many residents were dismayed when the Scottish Government froze funding in February, meaning that construction of new GP services on the new Liberton High School campus and at Gilmerton Gateway could not go ahead. NHS Lothian has a full business case approved and a draft business case approved respectively.

The pressure that new housing developments have added to public services in the area has been immense. While I have generally been in favour of new housing to take pressure out of our housing market, the lack of improvement in public services has left them fit to burst. We can't just keep having more and more houses without the infrastructure for new and existing communities. This is most acute in GP and dentistry services in the area.

Soon, 20,000 of my constituents will be left with no access to a GP. This is not only taking a huge toll on my constituents' mental and physical health but taking away access to primary care for many people in Liberton and Gilmerton will have a hugely damaging and costly effect on the NHS later down the line, particularly on the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary (ERI) A&E provision.

Many in Edinburgh South have been concerned for a long time that public services are not keeping up with housing development and many constituents are particularly angry that it is the Scottish Government that is driving approval of these

IAN MURRAY MP
Labour Member of Parliament for Edinburgh South

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developments at appeal.

NHS Lothian warned of the situation in 2012 and refreshed their warning in 2022 to say GP services locally would “fail” without Scottish Government intervention. Nothing has happened to help the situation.

Thank you for making the time to come and visit the Conan Doyle Medical Centre but both my constituents and hard working NHS primary care staff in Edinburgh want to see action on GPs from this Scottish Government rather than another ministerial visit that merely achieves a photograph and a nice press comment.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Murray". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish at the end of the name.

Ian Murray MP
Member of Parliament for Edinburgh South
Shadow Secretary of State for Scotland