Dear Mr Sheerman,

I am writing to you as a supporter of Forget Me Not, the children’s hospice in your constituency. The CEO, Luen Thompson has written to you several times of late about its funding position which is really tight. As you know, due to a lack of funding it recently closed its sister hospice in Bury and has been working very hard to protect the hospice in Huddersfield to ensure a sustainable future. So I was very pleased to hear about the £25m being pledged for hospices, adults and children’s alike last night by the Prime Minister.

I am writing to you to ask that you hold the government to account on this promise and ensure that Forget Me Not receives its fair share of any money as the funding formula is worked out. As you know, there has never been any parity in the monies given to adult and children’s hospices, with an adult hospice receiving typically 33% whilst Forget Me Not has this year had only 4.5%. In addition, there has been no parity between children’s hospices with some receiving up to 27% of their funding, whilst forget Me Not receives only 4.5%.

This has meant that in your constituency area children’s hospice services are almost entirely dependent on how much bric-a-brac this charity sells in its shops and how many buckets its supporters shake. This cannot be right.

I would also ask you please to push the government to consider demographics. In areas of deprivation and high ethnicity there is considerable data available to suggest the need for hospice services is higher. The demography of the area Forget Me Not serves, Kirklees, Calderdale, Wakefield, Bradford and Leeds have substantial BME populations and areas of significant deprivation. This also makes it harder to fundraise, since as a local charity it can only raise funds within the populations it supports.

Forget Me Not needs its fair share of this money more now than ever to protect its core services. We need to know that this is not a one off windfall and we need to know that this is not instead of the £25m promised earlier this year to children’s hospices in England by 2023/24.

Can I count on your support to answer these questions and secure the funding this vital children’s hospice needs to sustain services?

Thank you

Yours sincerely

(your name)

Supporter

Forget Me Not Children’s Hospice