

FOI sent 26 January 2018

Dear Department of Health,

Mr Chris Philp MP has sent me an apparently standard Department of Health reply to letters concerning homeopathy, which states that 'I believe that the Government has a duty to make sure that NHS funds are spent on the most effective treatments.'

NHS data from 2009 (published in The Lancet) stated that there was no evidence for the effectiveness of over half of the 3,000 most commonly used treatments in the NHS. Recent FOI requests have revealed that over one trillion pounds has been spent by the NHS over the past twenty years, indicating expenditure of over half a trillion pounds on ineffective treatments.

Please list for me the treatments identified as ineffective in 2009, and tell me which of these treatments are still in use now.

Yours faithfully,

Paul Burnett, Representative of Homeopathy International.

REPLY

Our ref: DE-1117037

Dear Mr Burnett,

Thank you for your correspondence of 26 January about complementary or alternative medicine (CAM) treatments.

I have been asked to reply.

I would like to confirm that the Department of Health and Social Care does not maintain a position on any particular CAM treatments, including homeopathy. It is the responsibility of local NHS organisations to make decisions on the commissioning and funding of any healthcare treatments for NHS patients, such as homeopathy, taking account of issues to do with safety, clinical and cost-effectiveness and the availability of suitably qualified and regulated practitioners.

As you will be aware, last year, NHS England launched a three-month consultation on the draft guidance on low-value prescription items, which was based on the latest clinical evidence, including that from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence.

On 30 November, NHS England published its guidance, and further information can be found on its website at [1]<https://www.england.nhs.uk/2017/11/presc...>

I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Spencer