



Free prescriptions for cancer patients



Cancer patients in Corby and East Northamptonshire are to be given free prescriptions from 1 April, and can apply for an exemption certificate from this week.

The new scheme, announced by the Prime

Minister in September last year, extends exemption from NHS prescription charges for everyone undergoing treatment for cancer, the effects of cancer, or the effects of cancer treatment saving them as much as £100 a year in prescription charges.

Patients can collect an application form from your GP surgery or oncology clinics. The form must be countersigned by their GP, hospital doctor or service doctor.

This new scheme gives people living with cancer and related conditions one less worry at such a difficult time. So I would urge cancer patients to make an appointment with their GP to talk about applying for their exemption certificate.

Protecting the NHS's future

The NHS Constitution launched this week brings together in one place what staff, patients and public can expect from the NHS. This is the first time this has been done in the 60 year history of the NHS, and will safeguard the future of the NHS for generations to come.

It will form the basis of a new relationship between staff and patients - a relationship based on partnership, feedback, respect and shared commitment where everyone knows what they can expect from the NHS and what is expected from them.

For patients, the Constitution collects together important rights around access to drugs and treatments, health services, information, quality of care and environment, dignity & respect and complaint and redress.

The NHS is one of our country's proudest achievements and it is too important to be left to chance. That is why I will support this Constitution.

Boosting bank lending

The Prime Minister and the Chancellor have this week announced new measures to bring stability to the banking sector and ensure the resumption of lending to families and businesses across the UK.

With continuing global economic uncertainty, our priorities have been to prevent the collapse of the banking system; to stimulate the economy and to ensure we get lending going again.

Labour are taking action to give real help to families and businesses now and for the future. By contrast, the Conservatives will do nothing.

This week we announced further

measures, not only to support the banking sector, but to safeguard the millions of jobs that would be put at risk by the continuing difficulties in the financial system.

These are comprehensive measures focused on one purpose: increasing the amount of lending that is available to families and to the businesses who are the backbone of our country and who want to invest and create jobs.

This announcement is designed to address the barriers that are preventing UK banks from expanding their own lending.

The Government intends to negotiate with each bank a lending agreement, to cover lending made available to businesses and people.