

Member of
Parliament for
North Durham



Newsletter

Parliamentary Report

E-petition launched to tighten up cosmetic surgery insurance laws

In November, I backed an e-petition calling for tougher laws affecting cosmetic surgery procedures, having made a bid in the House of Commons last year to improve the regulation of the cosmetic surgery industry.

The e-petition, launched by North Durham resident Dawn Knight, will be considered by Parliament if it reaches the required number of signatures. Dawn was the victim of a botched facial surgery procedure, performed by an uninsured cosmetic practitioner, and has campaigned for a change in the law ever since.

Practitioners who choose to operate without relevant insurance and who make mistakes are costing the NHS millions of pounds for putting right botched operations. Rogue practitioners currently do not face the threat of criminal action if they don't have adequate insurance in place.

The past ten years has seen a significant increase in cosmetic procedures carried out in the UK within an industry which remains largely unregulated. Consequently, there has also been an alarming increase in patients using NHS services to correct failed cosmetic procedures as a result of under-insured and uninsured practitioners.

This issue needs to be looked at by Parliament and the Government and we need the public to get behind this petition to prevent more lives from being ruined and to stop the cost to the NHS for putting right botched operations from mounting.

Please sign the petition: <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/203687>

Mental health and Autism Diagnosis

On 30 November, I spoke in a House of Commons debate on mental health within the autism community.

Having recently raised with the Health Secretary and Prime Minister the issue of waiting times for autism diagnosis in North Durham, this was another opportunity to speak about a serious ongoing issue affecting families.

In North Durham, we currently have a two-year waiting list for autism diagnosis. I have tried to get to the bottom of why that is and it is only when you meet some of the parents of the young people that you see what a tragedy it is.



Kevan visited If U Care Share's new premises with Cllr Tracie Smith



Kevan and Biff visited Year 6 Pupils at Catchgate Primary School in Annfield Plain to Celebrate Parliament Week



Kevan met with the National Education Union in Parliament to highlight cuts to local schools

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In the debate, I told ministers that the pressure on those families is so great that I suspect some are developing mental health issues. I am really concerned about the lost opportunity for those children, because everyone only gets one chance at education, and there are cases where children have been out of school for nearly a year, waiting for diagnosis.

The Government also needs to look at health funding. The system that was set up under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 makes it more difficult for the money that goes in at the top to get to where it is needed on the ground. Clinical commissioning groups are taking money that should be going to mental health and diverting it towards other priorities, which I accept they see as important, but it means that many families here in North Durham affected by autism are suffering as a result.

Please click on the following link to read the speech in full: <https://goo.gl/ZnokoG>

EU Withdrawal Bill

I accept and respect the result of the EU referendum, and whilst the UK's future now clearly lies outside the EU, I strongly believe we need to get the best deal for the British people and economy. It is now essential that the Government works towards negotiating favourable terms that give the UK access to the European single market.

The UK's departure from the EU must not lead to any drop in workers' rights and protections, and powers should be brought back to Parliament and local communities.

I believe we need a Bill that respects the referendum and enhances, rather than undermines, our democracy. As the current Bill passes through Parliament, I intend to support amendments aimed at addressing the concerns I have mentioned.

Parliament, not Government Ministers, should have the final say on whether to approve the withdrawal agreement and how best to implement it.

Defence and Aerospace debate

On 16 November, I took part in a debate on the importance of the defence and aerospace sectors to the UK economy, held by the Labour MP Ruth Smeeth.

In the debate, I outlined the importance of this industry to the UK economy and the funding crisis that is now faced by the country's armed forces. I asked the Minister a simple question that I often try and repeat – does Government want strategic capability for fast jets and certain other sectors? This Government, through multiple cutbacks, is now threatening the UK's sovereign defence manufacturing sector.

This short-sighted Government is making lots of promises about equipment, but in practice, those promises are not being funded. The problem facing our industry is that, once we get rid of those skills, we cannot turn them back on again like a tap when we require them. We will be out of this industry for good.

Please click on the following link to read the speech in full: <https://goo.gl/aMh7tP>



Kevan visited Chester-le-Street and joined in with The Great Tesco Walk



Kevan visited The Village Fryer in Fencehouses to meet with Staff during one of his Street Surgeries



Kevan visited Stanley Indoor Bowls with the Mayor of Stanley to celebrate the Club's 40th Birthday



Kevan visited the Waddington Street Centre to support their AGM

Add Kevan on Facebook: @Kevan4NDurham

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Finance Bill 2017

In the Finance Bill debate I raised a number of concerns, particularly around tax avoidance and fraud.

It concerns me that when wealthy individuals are found wanting in their tax affairs a deal is often done with HMRC to pay a certain amount to cover the liability. Such arrangements would never be open to many of my constituents and average taxpayers on pay-as-you-earn, and who therefore pay their fair share of tax.

In the debate, I questioned whether it is fair that such deals are agreed by HMRC, which I think should be published, if we are going to get fairness into the system.

Adjournment debate on the mental health of pharmacists

On 25th October, I held an Adjournment Debate on the mental health of pharmacists.

This was to draw attention to the pressures faced by pharmacists and broader concerns about mental health issues.

In the debate, I spoke about how it is clear that there are increasing demands on pharmacists, not only in terms of workload, but also because of staff cuts.

Despite the increased strain on pharmacists, many choose not to complain because of fear of reprisals. The fear most pharmacists have is that if they raise concerns about their mental health, their fitness to practice is questioned.

There is already an NHS GP Health Service which helps doctors with issues relating to a mental health concern and I believe a similar system needs to be created for pharmacists.

Please click on the following link to read the speech in full: <https://goo.gl/qcHUA6>

APPG Shipbuilding

Following the resumption of Parliament, after the summer recess, I re-launched the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Shipbuilding & Ship Repair.

The Group has now begun an inquiry into the Government's National Shipbuilding Strategy, taking evidence from a range of maritime security stakeholders and industry, and aims to publish a report into its findings in spring 2018.

There has been no credible industrial strategy presented for the continuation of a sovereign UK shipbuilding industry.

The UK has a fantastic opportunity to secure tens of thousands of highly skilled jobs in shipbuilding. The building blocks are there in the shape of the Royal Navy's ships on order that need to be built, but the solution the MoD are proposing is just wrong.

If the Government is serious about creating prosperity through manufacturing, they should have set out a plan to invest in a future credible Royal Navy fleet that would have put the UK in a strong position to win export work.



Kevan visited a toddler group at Holyoake Community Centre in Chester-le-Street with Cllr Tracie Smith



Kevan visited the Grange Villa Community Engagement event with Cllr Alison Batey



Kevan joined the Friends of Congburn Woods on their litterpick in Chester-le-Street



Kevan visited Santa's Grotto at Pelton Police Station with Sgt Mick Richardson, Durham PCVC Ron Hogg and Cllr Danny Wood

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Dogs Trust puppy smuggling campaign

Earlier in the year, Dogs Trust launched their [Puppy Smuggling: A Tragedy Ignored](#) investigation into the pet travel scheme. Puppy smuggling is a growing problem and in Parliament I have suggested that HMRC could play a greater role in cracking down on this cash-based trade, often under the control of organised criminals.

Upcoming Surgery Dates:

- **Saturday 6 January** - Monthly Advice Surgeries
- **Saturday 20 January** – Street Surgery – Meeting at 10am in Tesco Car Park, Annfield Plain, Stanley, Co Durham, DH9 7UZ
- **Saturday 3 February** – Monthly Advice Surgeries
- **Saturday 17 February** – Street Surgery – Meeting at 10am outside of Park View School, Lombard Drive, Chester-le-Street, DH3 4BB
- **Saturday 3 March** – Monthly Advice Surgeries
- **Saturday 17 March** – Street Surgery – Meeting at 10am in the car park of Lumley Community Centre, Great Lumley, DH3 4JD
- **Saturday 7 April** – Monthly Advice Surgeries
- **Saturday 21 April** – Street Surgery – Meeting in the car park of Pelton Community Centre, DH2 1DE
- **Saturday 5 May** – Monthly Advice Surgeries

If you can attend any of the above Street Surgeries please let me know using the contact details below. Further details about my Monthly Advice Surgeries are available online at www.kevanjonesmp.org.uk.

GET IN TOUCH

Please feel free to contact me about any issue, and I'm always happy to arrange tours of the Palace of Westminster.

Constituency Office: 0191 371 8834

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Email: kevanjonesmp@parliament.uk

Website: www.kevanjonesmp.org.uk



Kevan has visited Jobcentres in Stanley and Chester-le-Street to speak to staff about the rollout of Universal Credit



Kevan visited Holy Trinity Church in Pelton to celebrate their 175th Birthday with local historian Dorothy Rand



Kevan with County Councillor Lynn Boyd and Stanley Town Cllr Tommy Armstrong at Stanley Branch's Christmas Party

