

13 July 2026

Dear Secretary of State,

In 1994, then Health Minister John Bowis MP described neurology as the NHS's 'Cinderella service' because it was underfunded and under-resourced. More than 30 years later, the 1 in 6 people affected by neurological conditions continue to face fragmented care, long waits and unacceptable variation in access to support.

Successive governments have not addressed the severe shortages in the specialist workforce that is needed by the growing number of people with neurological conditions. Families are being pushed to breaking point by delayed diagnosis and treatment – a human tragedy that also carries a massive £96 billion price tag for the UK economy.

With the NHS 10 Year Workforce Plan due to be published shortly, we, as a coalition of patient, research and health professional organisations, urge your government to be the one that finally grips this issue.

We need your government to take three urgent actions. First, a thorough plan for neurological conditions (or a modern service framework) that provides clarity on what works and what a 'good' service looks like. Second, an urgent assessment of capacity and capability across the specialist workforce to ensure the right staff are in the right place to meet people's needs both

now and over the next decade. And finally, a census of specialist staff every 5 years to support workforce planning now and in the future.

Achieving this demands leadership and resources, but the opportunity is with you. Your ambitious vision in the NHS 10 Year Health Plan can only be achieved for people with neurological conditions if the right workforce is in place to provide high-quality care wherever a person lives and when they need it. Success would have wider benefits and could deliver an annual saving of £30 billion to the UK economy, while also reducing the growing pressure on social care.

Your government has the opportunity to transform lives for millions of people – we stand ready to work together to deliver on it. The solutions are known, the rewards are clear. Now is the time to act.

Yours sincerely,

1. Georgina Carr, CEO, The Neurological Alliance
2. Alexandra Holden, Chief Executive Officer, Overcoming MS
3. Allison Watson, Chief Executive Officer, Ring20 Research and Support UK CIO; Chair, UK Rare Epilepsies Together
4. Andrew Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer, Muscular Dystrophy UK
5. Andy Barrick, Chief Executive Officer, Multiple System Atrophy Trust
6. Aneeta Prem MBE, Chief Executive Officer, Trigeminal Neuralgia Association UK
7. Austin Willett, Chief Executive Officer, Different Strokes
8. Caroline Russell, Chief Executive Officer, Parkinson's UK
9. Cath Stanley, Chief Executive Officer, Huntington's Disease Association
10. Colin Morris, Director of Communications, Headway
11. Dr Neil Robertson, President, Association of British Neurologists
12. Dr Phil Yates, Chair, Division of Neuropsychology, British Psychological Society
13. Emma Livingstone, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Up Movement
14. Helen Matthews, Chief Executive Officer, Cure Parkinson's

15. Jasbir Singh, Chief Executive Officer, The National Tremor Foundation
16. Karen Cockburn, Charity Director, Nerve Tumours UK
17. Katherine Dew, Policy and Public Affairs Manager, Brain Tumour Research
18. Kim Rosser, Chief Executive Officer, FND Action
19. Kripen Dhrona, Chief Executive Officer, British Polio Fellowship
20. Lesley Pope, Chair, Independent Neurorehabilitation Providers Alliance
21. Marc Smith, Chief Executive Officer, Myaware
22. Mark Jackson, Director of Policy and Influencing, PSPA
23. Ceri Smith, Head of Policy, MS Society
24. Philip Levine, Executive Director, British Paediatric Neurology Association
25. Professor K P Sivaraman Nair FRCP, President Elect, British Society of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine
26. Rebecca Middleton, HBA Support
27. Rebekah Smith, Chief Executive Officer, Epilepsy Action
28. Rich Collins, Chief Executive Officer, Inflammatory Neuropathies UK
29. Rob Music, Chief Executive Officer, The Migraine Trust
30. Rosemarie Pardington, Chief Executive Officer, Epilepsy Research Institute UK
31. Sara Garland, Chief Executive Officer, The Daisy Garland
32. Simon Bull, Chief Executive Officer, CMT UK
33. Simon Parritt, Chair, Polio Survivors Network
34. Sue Millman, Chief Executive Officer, Ataxia UK
35. Sue Ricketts, Executive Information and Development Manager, Nystagmus Network
36. Tony Lloyd, Chair, West Berkshire Neurological Alliance
37. Vicky Burford, Chief Executive Officer, PANS PANDAS UK