

## Tuberculosis

Sarah Wollaston Chair, Health and Social Care Committee, Chair, Liaison Committee (Commons)

I thank my right hon. Friend for his very powerful speech. Further to his points about the importance of public health, would he urge the Government, in their future strategy, to make sure that we look at NHS public health and social care as part of a single system?

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Nick Herbert Conservative, Arundel and South Downs

Yes. My hon. Friend is probably aware that there is a collaborative TB strategy that was introduced by the Government, urged by the all-party parliamentary group on global TB, which the hon. Member for Ealing, Southall and I co-chair. That strategy shows very promising signs. It represents exactly the kind of partnership that we need between Public Health England and NHS England. I commend the Government for having introduced that partnership.

Most people do not realise that there is no vaccine for tuberculosis. There is a child vaccine, BCG, that some of us had when we were young, but there is no adult vaccine that works for tuberculosis—and no epidemic in human history has been beaten without a vaccine. The reason there is no vaccine is that there is market failure. Unlike HIV/AIDS, this is primarily a disease of the poor. With HIV/AIDS, there were people dying in western countries as well. The pharmaceutical companies do not have a commercial incentive to invest in the new tools that we need—better drugs, better diagnostics and a vaccine. Without partnership funding that comes from the Government, and Governments around the world who can afford it, we will not develop these new tools and we will not beat TB in the requisite timeframe.