Department of Health & Social Care

From Alison McGovern MP
Minister of State for Social Care

39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

PO-1726300

Dr Anne Finucane
Co-Lead
Mental Health and Wellbeing in Advanced Illness Network (MAIN)
By email to: a.finucane@ed.ac.uk

16 October 2026

Dear Dr Finucane,

Thank you for your correspondence of 18 September, co-signed by the members of the MAIN Steering Group, about palliative and end-of-life care.

I appreciate your shared concerns, and I would like to thank you for your continued work to improve the mental health and wellbeing of people living with advanced illness and those important to them.

I am also grateful to you for taking the time to set out MAIN's recommendations and share evidence on the importance of psychological wellbeing and mental health support for people living with life-limiting illness, as well as their families and carers.

The Government recognises that palliative and end-of-life care should be personalised and holistic, addressing physical symptoms as well as psychological, social and emotional needs. We know that psychological distress can have a significant impact on quality of life, care experiences and outcomes for patients and those close to them.

The modern service framework for palliative and end-of-life care will be a clinically led, evidence-based framework to support sustained improvement in outcomes for patients and carers, including by systematically identifying, measuring and reducing health inequalities, and reducing unwarranted variation in access, experience and outcomes. Our goal, which is being developed with partners, is that every person who needs palliative care or care at the end of their life will have equitable access to high-quality support, shaped by what matters to them, and to their families and carers.

We have published an interim update on the modern service framework in the form of a written ministerial statement, which can be found at questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2026-06-04/hcws88. We will publish the full framework later in the year.

Your correspondence has been shared with the officials from the Department and NHS England who are leading the development of the modern service framework, so that your views can be considered as this work progresses.

I also welcome MAIN's continued commitment to supporting this work through research, evidence and expertise. Stakeholder engagement remains an important part of the modern service framework's development, and we have engaged with a wide range of organisations, clinicians, researchers, people with lived experience and voluntary sector partners throughout the process.

I hope this reply is helpful, and I would be grateful if you could share it with your co-signatories.

Yours sincerely,



ALISON MCGOVERN