

View from the House.

Questions to the Prime Minister are the highlight of the Political Week at Westminster. Each week MPs enter the shuffle and we are randomly selected to ask a question of the Prime Minister. Speaker Bercow aims to be fair and calls the parties in turn. Last week I was called at number 5 on the Order paper.

I have been trying to progress my Ten Minute Rule Bill on Epilepsy and Related conditions to ask for, in health, a tertiary referral to a specialist and in education, an assessment and additional support for children. The sad fact is that there are almost 1000 deaths from epilepsy related causes each year, and 400 of these are potentially avoidable.

I asked the Prime Minister to meet with me, the Prince of Wales Chair of Childhood Epilepsy Professor Helen Cross and the Joint Epilepsy Council. The Prime Minister gave me a wonderful response and agreed to meet to discuss these provisions. I received emails from people who told me their very moving stories living with this condition and the way they are treated. One woman was banned from a shop after she had a seizure.

To mark Carers Week (13th-19th June), I visited Patricia Rolston at her home in Bentley as she recounted in this paper. Patricia is an amazing mother. Her daughter Lyndsey suffers from severe learning difficulties and has frequent seizures.

During the visit, Patricia told me about the challenges she faces on a daily basis in caring for Lyndsey. I saw how she does this with good humour. She told me how she had to battle with the Council that despite Lyndsey's condition since she was 5 months old, she had to convince them Lyndsey was in the Critical Health Category .

I am so pleased Saga have recognized the work that Patricia does and have given her a holiday. The enormous contribution that carers make in the UK is underestimated. Both the Government and local authorities must make sure that hard-pressed carers do not have to bear the brunt of the spending cuts.

Diabetes UK raised awareness of the importance of exercise in controlling and even preventing the onset of diabetes. I launched the Walk around the Arboretum, and was delighted to complete the course along with Cllr Eileen Russell her daughter Hannah and my husband Paul. Despite the rain many people walked the course. My medal hangs proudly in my office.

Valerie Vaz MP

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