



The Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
Department of Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

22 July 2025

Dear Secretary of State,

As a cross-party group of Members of Parliament, we write today on behalf of our constituents, specifically daughters and granddaughters, who believe they were exposed to the anti-miscarriage drug Diethylstilbestrol, commonly known as DES.

Between 1939 and 1973, DES was widely prescribed to hundreds of thousands of women to prevent miscarriage, treat pregnancy complications, and suppress lactation. Despite mounting medical concerns raised as early as the 1950s, DES continued to be administered for another two decades. It was eventually withdrawn when robust evidence linked it to a range of serious health conditions, including cervical, vaginal, and breast cancers. Despite this, campaigners have uncovered evidence suggesting that some women may have received DES as late as 1978.

The legacy of this drug has been devastating. The harmful effects are not limited to the women who were prescribed DES, but extend across generations, affecting their daughters and granddaughters. Many have endured lifelong health challenges, including infertility, anatomical abnormalities, increased cancer risk, and pregnancy complications. Some men have also been affected, with fertility issues linked to in utero exposure.

Our constituents have shared harrowing personal stories. Jan Hall, 75, from Bournemouth, believes her mother was prescribed DES during three pregnancies. Jan's mother, Rita, died from breast cancer at age 32, when Jan was just a toddler. Jan herself was later diagnosed with cervical cancer in her twenties and has suffered a lifetime of health complications. Her daughters, Beth and Hannah, have also experienced gynaecological problems, including abnormal smear results, pre-cancerous cervical cells, and repeated miscarriages. Despite these alarming symptoms, both women have encountered medical professionals who were unaware of DES or its implications.

Tragically, many individuals may never be able to confirm a definitive link between DES and their health issues. Yet the scientific connection between DES exposure and increased risks of gynaecological cancers, reproductive anomalies, premature births, and infertility is well established. Despite this, awareness of DES remains strikingly low across the UK's medical community. There is no formal recognition of those at risk, no enhanced screening protocols, and no systematic approach to monitoring those potentially affected.

Other countries, such as Australia, have implemented early screening and monitoring programs for DES-exposed individuals, particularly women under 25. Here in the UK, victims are calling not only for recognition, but for action, most urgently in the form of greater protections and enhanced awareness among healthcare professionals.

We respectfully urge the Government to consider the following measures:

- A formal apology to the victims of DES, particularly for the prolonged use of the drug after credible evidence of harm had emerged.
- A commitment to advancing research into the long-term and intergenerational effects of DES.
- An information and training campaign across the NHS to ensure that healthcare professionals are aware of DES and its risks.
- An assessment of the feasibility of tracking and notifying individuals who may have been exposed to DES in utero, given that many remain unaware of the drug or its consequences.
- Implementation of targeted, advanced screening and monitoring for cancers and fertility complications associated with DES exposure.

This issue is both urgent and time-sensitive. Many affected individuals are now in later life, and countless others remain undiagnosed or unmonitored. It is vital that the Government acknowledges this historic medical injustice and takes swift action to mitigate its continuing impact.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



Jessica Toale MP

Member of Parliament for Bournemouth West

Bell Ribeiro-Addy MP

Member of Parliament for Clapham and Brixton Hill

Tonia Antoniazzi MP

Member of Parliament for Gower

Paula Barker MP

Member of Parliament for Liverpool Wavertree

Olivia Blake MP

Member of Parliament for Sheffield Hallam

Chris Bloore MP

Member of Parliament for Redditch

Julia Buckley MP

Member of Parliament for Shrewsbury

Dawn Butler MP

Member of Parliament for Brent East

Irene Campbell MP

Member of Parliament for North Ayrshire and Arran

Juliet Campbell MP

Member of Parliament for Broxtowe

Steve Darling MP

Member of Parliament for Torbay

Paul Davies MP

Member of Parliament for Colne Valley

Shaun Davies MP

Member of Parliament for Telford

Neil Duncan-Jordan MP

Member of Parliament for Poole

Sorcha Eastwood MP

Member of Parliament for Lagan Valley

Kirith Entwistle MP

Member of Parliament for Bolton North East

Allison Gardiner MP

Member of Parliament for Stoke-on-Trent South

Tracy Gilbert MP

Member of Parliament for Edinburgh North and Leith

Rachel Gilmour MP

Member of Parliament for Tiverton and Minehead

Jodie Gosling MP

Member of Parliament for Nuneaton

Amanda Hack MP

Member of Parliament for North West Leicestershire

Sharon Hodgson MP

Member of Parliament for Washington and Gateshead South

Liz Jarvis MP

Member of Parliament for Eastleigh

Carla Lockhart MP

Member of Parliament for Upper Bann

Adam Jogie MP

Member of Parliament for Newcastle-under-Lyme

Lillian Jones MP

Member of Parliament for Kilmarnock and Loudoun

Satvir Kaur MP

Member of Parliament for Southampton Test

Brian Leishman MP

Member of Parliament for Alloa and Grangemouth

Rachel Maskell MP

Member of Parliament for York Central

Layla Moran MP

Chair, Health and Social Care Select Committee

Member of Parliament for Oxford West and Abingdon

James Naish MP

Member of Parliament for Rushcliffe

Manuela Perteghella MP

Member of Parliament for Stratford-on-Avon

Joani Reid MP

Member of Parliament for East Kilbride and Strathaven

Sarah Smith MP

Member of Parliament for Hyndburn

Alex Sobel MP

Member of Parliament for Leeds Central and Headingley

Rachel Taylor MP

Member of Parliament for North Warwickshire and Bedworth

Michelle Welsh MP

Member of Parliament for Sherwood Forest