Dear [Name],

E-cigarettes
Thank you for your letter of 12 February and my apologies that I have not been back in touch sooner.

I very much welcome your personal commitment to tobacco control and of the need for the Government to take the necessary action to reduce the prevalence of smoking further—smoking is the primary cause of preventable illness and premature death, accounting for about 79,000 deaths per year in England so we must do all that we can to reduce smoking rates.

In your letter you explain that “with regard to smoking shelters being rebranded as smoking and vaping shelters, it is for each NHS organisation to introduce their own vaping policies”. You then direct employers, including the NHS, to Public Health England’s guidance on setting vaping policies in the workplace. That guidance seeks to be non-prescriptive but sets out the principles that employers should follow when setting policies relating to e-cigarettes, including:

- **Make clear the distinction between vaping and smoking**: “NICE guidance for NHS secondary care recommends that estates should become completely smokefree, indoors and outdoors. Managers should seek to develop approaches to e-cigarettes that support smokefree sites”; and

- **Support smokers to stop smoking and stay smokefree**: “To support smokers to stop smoking and stay smokefree, a more enabling approach may be appropriate in relation to vaping to make it an easier choice than smoking. In particular, vapers should not be required to use the same space as smokers, as this could undermine their ability to quit smoking and stay smokefree, particularly among those most heavily addicted”

If, as the British Lung Foundation have previously told me, smoking shelters in hospitals are being rebranded as smoking and vaping shelters, it seems clear that the Public Health England guidance that you highlighted to me is not being reflected in their policies by NHS Trusts. I would therefore be grateful if you could set out in further detail:
what proactive steps are being taken to encourage hospitals to design evidence-based policies based on Public Health England's guidance on setting vaping policies in the workplace; and

- what information you have on the number of hospital sites that have combined smoking and vaping shelters.

I would be grateful, if at all possible, if you could provide a response to this letter by Tuesday 30 April. I am copying my letter to Professor Stephen Powis, National Medical director, NHS England, should NHSE wish to respond to these concerns, or contribute to your reply.

Rt Hon Norman Lamb MP
Chair