



## Committee of Public Accounts

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Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP  
Secretary of State  
Department of Health  
Richmond House  
79 Whitehall  
London SW1A 2NS

21.07.2016

Dear Secretary of State

I write to express dismay that you published your Department's accounts today - the day that Parliament rises for summer recess.

This does not allow MPs to consider the accounts before recess and smacks of an underhand attempt to cover up the poor state of finances in your department.

The Public Accounts Committee, as you will know, has held regular hearings in 2015 and 2016 which have highlighted budget problems across health bodies. Trusts deficits have increased at a staggering rate.

The accounts show that your Department received an extra £417 million from the National Insurance Fund. You did not notify the Treasury of these extra receipts which means Parliament has not been able to consider whether to reduce any funding that it had voted for your Department. Without these extra receipts, the Department would have exceeded its voted resource budget.

I am concerned that the NAO has concluded that the measures you have taken to balance the books for 2015/16 have been short term measures and do not provide a good basis for a sustainable long term budget.

Local NHS trusts ended the year with a combined deficit of £2.45 billion. Problems are not confined to non-foundation trusts and all providers are experiencing growing demand coupled with rising costs as our hearings and recent reports underline.

I am copying this letter to the Speaker of the House of Commons; Sarah Wollaston MP, Chair of the Health Select Committee; Andrew Tyrie MP, Chair of the Treasury Select Committee and the Comptroller and Auditor General.

I look forward to your response.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Meg Hillier". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**MEG HILLIER MP**  
**CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS**