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Dear Nick Timothy MP,

As the recently elected Conservative MP for the West Suffolk Constituency, I am writing to you on behalf of Suffolk West Federation of WIs members, to express our deep concern regarding the ongoing shortage of NHS dentists in our area. This issue is of paramount importance to WI members and many others in our community, and we are keen to understand your position and proposed solutions on this matter.

At the NFWI Annual Meeting in June 2024, WI members voted to pass a resolution on the chronic shortage of NHS dentists and the impacts this is having on wider health. The resolution was passed with a 95% majority and calls on the Government to increase investment in the training and retention of dentists, and to review current inadequate contracts, to ensure everyone can access an NHS dentist wherever they live.

The shortage of NHS dentists and the operation of the current dental contract is causing significant distress and inconvenience for countless individuals and families. Many people are unable to access essential dental care, leading to deteriorating oral health, increased pain, and, in some cases, serious medical complications. The situation has also put immense pressure on those few NHS dental practices that remain, resulting in long waiting times and reduced availability of appointments.

This crisis is not only a health issue but also a socioeconomic one. Those who cannot afford private dental care are disproportionately affected, exacerbating existing health inequalities. It is essential that steps are taken to ensure that everyone, regardless of their financial situation, has access to quality dental care.

Given the gravity of this issue, we would like to know how you and your party plan to address the shortage of NHS dentists. Specifically, we are interested in:

- Investment in NHS Dental Services: What measures will you advocate for to increase funding and resources for NHS dental services?
- The Dental Contract: How will you and your party reform the dental contract so that enough dental care is available to meet demand, support prevention, and to retain dentists in the NHS.
- Recruitment and Retention of Dentists: What strategies will you support to attract and retain NHS dentists, ensuring they are adequately compensated and supported?
- Training and Education: How will you work to expand training programmes and opportunities for new dentists to enter the NHS workforce?

Registered Charity Number: 1179294

Chairman: Maggie Glavin      Treasurer: Sue Archer  
Federation Secretary: Rachel Hows      Finance Assistant: Rachel Sparks

- **Accessibility and Affordability:** What policies will you propose to make dental care more accessible and affordable for all constituents?

We believe that addressing this issue is crucial for the well-being of our community and the overall health of our nation. We look forward to your response and hope to see strong, actionable plans that will ensure everyone has access to the dental care they need. Thank you for your time and attention to this urgent matter.

Yours sincerely,

**Gwen Williams**

Public Affairs Team Chair