Sarah Wollaston (Totnes, Conservative)

I warmly welcome the Secretary of State's statement, which will help health professionals to get on with their jobs and improve openness and transparency across the NHS. I particularly welcome his recognition of the important role played by the 1.3 million health care assistants across health and social care. In implementing the vetting and barring scheme, will he ensure that individuals looking after people at home or in outside institutions can access that list to ensure that they have health care assistants who comply with the fundamental standards?

Jeremy Hunt (South West Surrey, Conservative)

That is a very good point. I will take it away and look at whether that will be possible, because there is a powerful logic behind making that happen. As my hon. Friend has mentioned health care assistants, I would like to highlight the brilliant work they do, along with so many NHS staff. It has been a very challenging year for them to read about these examples of poor care, which are as shocking to them as they are to us. I agree that now is the time to get behind the people on the front line, who really want to change the culture for the better.

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