Sarah Wollaston (Totnes, Conservative) Click here to watch Sarah speak

May I welcome the Secretary of State's statement and pay tribute to all the staff who are giving him professional detailed scientific advice? I join him in paying tribute to all the NHS personnel, our forces personnel and diplomatic staff putting their own lives at risk in west Africa.

I am particularly pleased to hear that those individuals returning to the UK or coming to the UK from west Africa will be able to access support in a timely manner and in a manner that does not put other individuals at risk in crowded health care settings. Will the Secretary of State say more about the testing arrangements, which I hear are going to be at Porton Down? Does he have any plans to make further testing centres available so that testing can happen more rapidly?

Jeremy Hunt (The Secretary of State for Health; South West Surrey, Conservative)

I thank my hon. Friend for her comments and her support for the statement. I want to pay particular tribute to the chief medical officer and Dr Paul Cosford at Public Health England, who have done an enormous amount to make sure we develop the right policies, which are both proportionate and enable us to prepare for the future. The Government are hugely grateful for their contribution.

We are satisfied that the testing arrangements at the PHE facility at Porton Down are adequate to the level of risk, but one of the reasons why I wanted to announce to the House the current estimate of the number of Ebola cases we are dealing with in the UK was to make the point that we will continually keep those arrangements under review should the situation change. We need to recognise in a fast-moving situation such as this that it might well change, and I will keep the House updated, but in such situations the resilience of all those very important parts of the process will be checked.

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