Sarah Wollaston Chair, Health Committee

I welcome greater integration, but the Minister will be aware that there are grave concerns about the effect of cuts to social care on the NHS. More and more patients are spending greater time in more expensive settings in hospital when they could be better looked after in their own homes or in the community, but cuts to social care make that impossible. Will the Minister set out what appraisal the Government are making of the effect and the damage to the NHS of cuts to social care?

David Mowat The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health

My hon. Friend is right: social care funding is tight. It is also true to say that those parts of the country that do the best in this regard—the ones that do considerably better than others—have integrated social care and health most effectively. On the budget itself, there is some disparity among different local authorities. About a quarter of local authorities have increased their adult social care budget by 5% or more this year.