Sarah Wollaston (Totnes, Conservative) Click here to see Sarah Live

My hon. Friend has twice quoted the Royal College of Psychiatrists and asserted that there is a much higher rate of mental illness after termination of pregnancy, but the RCP has made it clear: any Member can look online at the draft of its very comprehensive evidence review that we have to compare like with like. In other words, we have to make a comparison with rates of mental illness after unwanted pregnancy. Looking at the rates after unwanted pregnancy, we see that there is no difference between the rate of mental illness after termination of pregnancy and live birth. Indeed, the biggest predictor of mental ill health after a termination of pregnancy is whether somebody was suffering with problems beforehand.

Nadine Dorries (Mid Bedfordshire, Conservative)

The hon. Lady makes the assumption that I want women to continue with unwanted pregnancies. That is not the case. I have made the point that abortion is here to stay for any woman who wants an abortion. The amendment simply proposes that any woman who feels that she wants or needs counselling can be offered it: that is all. I find it very difficult to understand why the hon. Lady would feel that anybody in a crisis pregnancy should not be offered counselling. Why should they not?

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