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

Today's debate sends a very powerful message, and I congratulate Gavin Barwell on choosing to present such an important Bill. It sends a message about recovery: that if a person has experienced a mental health problem in the past, that does not make the person unpredictable or dangerous, and that there should be no barrier to his or her full participation in public life or, indeed, any part of life. However, I think we also need to issue a call to arms. If we are to make people more confident about coming forward and seeking help at an early stage—confident that they will not be discriminated against later in life—we must ensure that primary care in particular is ready for them: that people who present their doctors with a mental health problem are taken seriously, and are given the support and help they need.

This has been a big week for mental health in Parliament. We have seen the launch of the Government's strategy on suicide prevention as part of their overall mental health strategy, and we should pay tribute to that very effective strategy, which, again, sends a positive message. We should remind GPs, when thinking about suicide and depression, to ask their patients, "Are you depressed?", to take the issue seriously and ask patients specifically whether they have had any suicidal thoughts, and then to deliver an effective treatment for them.

To anyone following this debate, I would say the same as my hon. Friend Mr Walker and Mr Jones: "You will find that people will feel positive about you and will encourage you, so do have the confidence to seek help and tell your friends; and when you have recovered, make sure that you tell other people that you have recovered, and support them so that they too can seek help."

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Sarah Wollaston (Totnes, Conservative)

Does my hon. Friend agree that this matter is the responsibility not just of Government, but of non-governmental organisations? Only this week, the Health Committee saw the disappointing example of how the chair of the Care Quality Commission and that organisation sought to stigmatise a member of their own board with regard to what they alleged to be a past episode of mental illness.

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