Sarah Wollaston (Totnes, Conservative)

Does my hon. Friend agree with me and my constituents with children using these important assisted technologies that what matters is not just providing the equipment, but the cost of providing training and support, without which children and adults cannot benefit fully from these important technologies?

Paul Maynard (Blackpool North and Cleveleys, Conservative)

I thank my hon. Friend for that perceptive contribution. The concern is that NHS England's budget for AAC will not be sufficient for training. The only way that the hub-and-spoke model can work effectively is if the hub can train up more people in the spokes to deliver the more complex tools. Complexity is at the heart of the problem in the structure. AAC is one of five areas for which complex disability equipment is to be commissioned; incidentally, another is artificial eyes, the national centre for which is based in my constituency. It would be remiss of me not to congratulate that centre during an Adjournment debate on a parallel issue. As I was saying, though, complexity is the key: it determines whether a patient is treated at the hub or at the spoke.

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