

## **Baroness Barker**



11<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Dear Members of the National Association of Care Catering,

I hope that this letter finds you safe and well in these most difficult times.

At 8pm every Thursday I joined neighbours of all ages, many of whom I do not know, to applaud the heroes and heroines. Like everyone else I thought of doctors, nurses, and care assistants, especially those from BAME communities whom we came to realise are at particular risk. Each week I did a mental walk through the hospitals and care homes which I know best, and starting from ambulance drivers and porters through administrators to lab staff and cleaners, I thought of all the people who work behind the scenes.

As your Patron I took time each week to think about your work. In March and April, you must have had to deal with disruption to your supply chains. At the same time life on wards and in homes would have changed in ways that you could not have foreseen. Those of you who work in care homes will have witnessed great anguish and distress. For those of you at the heart of community services such as meals-on-wheels, demand will have increased suddenly.

I know that in times of sadness and worry, something as simple as cup of tea, can make a world of difference. I know that you are not just professionals, you are people who care deeply about the people you serve and their families. In these dark times you will have been a source of comfort to people, many of whom you may not have ever met.

I imagine that you are all exhausted. I do hope that over the summer you get time to rest and spend time with your families and friends.

You too have been heroes and heroines.

Thank you.

*B. Barker*