

BREAKING THE AUSTERITY MYTH CONFERENCE

Notes from Workshop: THREATS TO THE NHS

JANET COBB introduced herself, she has a long nursing career at a senior level.

1. Health and Social Care Act 2012

Talked about how the Health & Social Care Act which became law in 2012 brought about two critical results:

- a) The Secretary of State for Health (Jeremy Hunt) is no longer responsible for provision of a comprehensive and universal NHS across England. CCGs now have responsibility for provision but not 'comprehensive' or 'universal'. This means some more vulnerable groups could find themselves excluded from CCG provision.
See
- b) The ACT strengthened the internal market in the NHS and means CCGs are obliged to tender out services to any qualified provider thus opening up the NHS to privatisation.

For more information see:

- <https://www.opendemocracy.net/ournhs/ournhs/brand-new-nhs-reinstatement-bill-from-allyson-pollock-gives-hope-to-campaigners>
- <http://selloff.org.uk/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ro-oU0u8Jos>

2. Private Health care companies

There is a private health company (Malling Health) behind the two urgent care centres at both of Shropshire's hospitals. Many private health care companies are involved in tax avoidance schemes. In a nutshell public money paid by ordinary taxpaying citizens in the UK for the NHS is flowing into offshore tax havens.

For more information see:

- <http://www.unitetheunion.org/news/tax-avoidance-at-the-very-core-of-firms-bidding-for-major-nhs-contracts-unite-reveals/>
- <http://www.nhsforsale.info/private-providers/private-provider-profiles-2/virgin.html>

3. Private Finance Initiatives (PFI)

PFI payments are crippling the NHS and cost the NHS upwards of £2 billion a year.

For more information see

- <http://www.nhsforsale.info/privatisation-list/surgery/the-great-pfi-swindle.html>

4. From 2017 Student nurses will pay university fees like all other students.

The purpose of student loans is so that the treasury can show them as *off balance sheet* therefore not shown on the Government deficit in other words an accounting trick.

For more information see

- <https://www.rcn.org.uk/nursingcounts/student-bursaries>
- <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/health/news/11908146/Nurses-could-be-forced-to-pay-tuition-fees-under-new-Treasury-proposals.html>

5. Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs)

STPs are the biggest threat to the NHS since the Coalition's Health & Social Care Act (2012)

It splits England into 44 areas called 'Footprints' which will be the basis for how the NHS will be run in future.

These plans need to be agreed with NHSE before any funding can be released. The NHS is being systematically drained of finance, the *Nicholson Challenge* which ran up until 2015 took £20 Billion out in 'efficiency savings' the current Government is attempting to take out a further £22 billion. By 2020 £42 Billion pounds will have been stripped from the NHS – no wonder there is a funding crisis!

For more information see:

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicholson_challenge
- <http://www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk/our-work/projects/state-nhs-finances-and-%C2%A322bn-efficiency-challenge>
- <http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/topics/integrated-care/sustainability-transformation-plans-explained>
- <http://keepournhspublic.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/KONP-TFS.pdf>
- <http://nhap.org/the-biggest-attack-on-the-nhs/>

6. A&E and Primary care

Closing A&E departments without boosting primary care and GPs are disasters in the making across the country where these plans have been implemented neighbouring hospitals are completely overwhelmed.

For more information see:

- <http://blogs.deloitte.co.uk/health/2015/01/a-winters-tale-whats-really-causing-the-ae-crisis.html>

7. What can people do?

- Write to MPs especially Philip Dunne with concerns
- Write letters to the press
- Join Shropshire NHS Defend (contact Gill George gill@gillgeorge.net)
<https://shropshiredefendournhs.org/>
- Join the local Labour Party

Questions

Q What percentage of NHS is currently privatised?

A Difficult to ascertain but we know privatisation is accelerating see <http://www.nhsforsale.info/privatisation-list.html>

Q Will it be wrecked beyond repair due to public apathy?

A To stop this happening people MUST be more active in getting information to the public

Q Why isn't Labour more vocal on this?

A The Labour Party under Jeremy Corbyn is supporting the reinstatement of the NHS Bill

See <http://www.nhsbill2015.org/category/news/>

<http://keepournhspublic.com/news-events/is-labour-taking-the-nhs-bill-seriously-at-last/>

Q What happened to Labour, allowing this to happen?

A The Blair years although did many good things to support the NHS failed to reverse the marketisation and undertook many PFI deals. Jeremy Corbyn wishes to reinstate the NHS

GILL GEORGE Shropshire NHS Defend and professional background as a speech and language therapist

- Don't just analyse – ACT.
Gill gave the Poll Tax situation as an analogy (people rose up and defeated not only the poll tax but Margaret Thatcher in the process).
- She enlarged on two issues: funding and the rapidly changing events in Shropshire over the last two weeks.
Funding: We are told that huge cuts have to be made and that the way forward is self care, apps on smartphones, prevention, community resilience and social capital instead of statutory services. Social Care Workers are to signpost people to “appropriate” care provision from the foregoing. Shropshire Health is in financial freefall and we are told that there is not enough money to meet winter pressures at two hospitals so one must close. How is this going to solve the problem?
- Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group is failing.
- Community Health Trust refuse to sign off Social Care via Sustainability & Transformations Plan as it undermines their work.
- Last two weeks: There have been constant changes to the health and care situation in Shropshire over the last two weeks with Future Fit finally being given another twenty eight days to find a solution over A & E's and hospitals (after almost reaching collapse).
- A new boss has been installed at the Clinical Commissioning Group, which makes the 4th in less than a year.
- Gill urged people to be active: put a question to your local council and attend the meeting where it is discussed.
- Put a question to the Health and Wellbeing Board and attend that meeting.
- Write to Philip Dunne and ask him about healthcare in Shropshire, also make an appointment to see him and ask him face to face about it.
- Visit the Health Forum on his website and leave feedback.

3. JOYCE BRAND local campaigner

- Joyce talked about her childhood in Shropshire and how there were two hospitals in Ludlow then. Now, we have one and staff there are being made to feel unhappy so that they'll leave and agency staff brought in.
- There has been a reduction of beds in the hospital and the ward dedicated to elderly dementia patient has closed.
- When the hospital finally closes the land will be sold off for house building.
- She thought that the Council are not interested as they have their own agenda but it is vital that people fight the cuts (in her opinion, by whatever means).
- In next year's local elections only by supporting Labour or the Greens will the issue be addressed.
- Joyce recommended the book “NHS SOS” by Jacky Davis & Raymond Tallis as her bible on the subject <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Nhs-Sos-How-Betrayed-Save/dp/1780743289>