

SUPPORTING THE NHS

An election briefing for Haringey candidates in the May, 2018 elections put together by Haringey Keep Our NHS Public (KONP), part of a network of national and local groups campaigning to save the NHS from marketisation, privatisation and cuts

Current plans to reorganise the NHS and integrate health and social care mean that for the first time local councillors have much more influence over NHS provision in Haringey.

With this in mind we thought you might be interested in a back-ground briefing on the more immediate threats to the NHS and some suggestions for what you can do – as councillors - to help defend it.

1. FUNDING.

Health services in Haringey are run by Haringey Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). In 2016 this was bundled with CCGs in Enfield, Barnet, Camden and Islington into what's known as the North Central London Sustainability and Transformation Partnership [NCL STP]. There are 44 STPs covering the country.

STPs are designed to improve the co-ordination of local health services and encourage greater co-operation between the NHS and local authority social care services, putting hospitals, GPs, public health and community services under a single “administration.”

The government hopes this arrangement will improve services *and* save money by taking pressure off expensive hospital provision and increasing ‘cheaper’ social care.

To this end the NCL STP has been told it will be expected to make savings of nearly £700 million over the next four years - roughly a ten percent annual cut in its budget.

Social care however as it currently stands is *not* cheaper. It's estimated the NCL STP area will need to invest an extra £247 million by 2020/21 in preventative and early intervention services *before* savings can be made. With local authority budgets across London facing cuts of 40 percent there's no sign of this happening.

As a result an internal NHS document leaked to the *Guardian* in June 2017 admitted the NCL STP was already £183.1 million off its savings target – *just for the current financial year*, and went on to propose 'drastic' and 'unpopular' cuts in services including increased waiting times for operations and A&Es and the closure of some maternity units.

NHS officials denied the report but some of these drastic rationalisations are already feeding through.

2. RATIONING SERVICES.

Late last year the NCL STP announced plans to declare a number of common medical practices of 'questionable clinical benefit' and proposed GPs should be banned from requesting them on behalf of their patients.

They include early intervention for back pain, postponing a range of knee, hip and shoulder operations, cataract surgery and the treatment of varicose veins and relatively benign skin complaints.

The policy, known as 'PoLCE' or 'Procedures of Limited Clinical Effectiveness', is expected to take effect later this year. There has been virtually no public consultation.

It means the people of Haringey will be provided with a service that is *below* the national level recommended by the Government's own National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE).

We urge candidates and councilors to resist any rationing of health services in Haringey

But Haringey KONP believe 2018 will be dominated by two even bigger concerns.

3. PRIVATISATION

In the second half of last year NHS England announced it would begin trials of so-called Accountable Care Organisations or ACOs in eight areas of the country.

These are essentially STPs designed to encourage the integration of the health and caring services but with one big difference: they do not have to be run by public bodies. Contracts to run ACOs will be put out to competitive tender and private health companies encouraged to bid for them. The private sector will be brought into the heart of the NHS.

Jeremy Hunt has already extolled the virtues of two multinational health corporations as examples of good practice in integrated health care. They are:

- *The Ribera Salud Group in Spain, currently under police investigation in Spain for corruption and overcharging 2.6 million euros in emergency assistance. Ribera Salud have already won a preliminary contract to run an ACO in the Nottingham area.*
- *California based Keiser Permanente which recently clocked up the highest number of fines for breaches of contract of any company in the State of California. It's claims to be a not-for-profit organisation but in 2016 Kaiser senior executives were handed five-figure bonuses on top of their \$1 million plus salaries.*

Our health and social care system has many faults but out-sourcing to private contractors is not a solution.

4. SELLING THE NHS ESTATE or the "FAMILY SILVER".

Meanwhile the government has begun to look at another controversial source of extra money. In March 2017 the anodyne sounding Naylor Report into the NHS's buildings and estate was published. It argues the rapid disposal of 'surplus' NHS property could bring in between £20bn and £30bn by 2021/22.

It sounds a sensible move. But Naylor raises several thorny issues:

- It wants to do this in a hurry *before* there has been a comprehensive appraisal of the long term property needs of the health and caring services.
- There is no recognition the NHS estate is a public asset built up over decades, even centuries, often with the support of voluntary and/or charitable contributions and should first and foremost be used for the public good not as a short term financial fix.

Naylor is a 'fire sale' of public assets for short term gain.

In the Haringey area several sites may be affected:

- **St Ann's Hospital**, devoted primarily to mental health services, is up for 'redevelopment' in the near future. But current outline planning permission includes only *fourteen percent* 'affordable housing'; against a Mayor of London manifesto commitment of 50 per cent for all new housing developments. In fact at St Ann's a well advanced community backed project - the St Ann's Redevelopment Trust - is calling for 100 per cent affordable housing.
- **Ditto Chase Farm Hospital** where only nineteen percent of the land up for grabs has currently been allocated for 'affordable housing'.
- **The Whittington** has controversially teamed up with the private developer associated with the Grenfell Tower disaster to help redevelop some of the enormously valuable forty nine sites it owns across Haringey, Camden and Islington.

Naylor is good when encouraging NHS Trusts to use at least some of their 'surplus' land to house NHS staff, but it goes against principles of public finance, it is not planned and has no proper democratic oversight.

Councillors should oppose any sale of NHS Estates without a long term appraisal of the property needs for Haringey's health and social care services

5. WHAT YOU CAN DO

A Scrutinise and Question NHS plans affecting Haringey :

- Join or lobby the **Health and Adult Scrutiny Panel** which holds the Cabinet and council to account for health issues.
- Lobby or join the **Haringey Health and Wellbeing Board**. Their job is to co-ordinate public health and integrate care between the Council and the NHS. It's a powerful body as it has to approve all health planning in Haringey and so has a close relationship with the CCG, local hospital trusts and NHS England.
- **Engage with the STP Advisory Board** which has Leader level representation from each borough and is meant to “ensure the perspectives of our local communities are considered”. It should therefore be an arena to discuss Issues such as the STP, cuts and the Naylor report.
- Follow the work of the **Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee**, set up by the five north London boroughs to scrutinise the work of the NCL STP. Time and again over the last year it has successfully encouraged and cajoled the NHS into discussing, clarifying and occasionally rethinking its plans.
- **Lobby Cabinet members responsible for health and for social care** and ensure health and social care are high priorities for the council.
- **Ensure Haringey uses its planning powers** to rigorously vet NHS estate plans and stress that land should be used for affordable social housing key worker housing and NHS staff.
- **Ensure the local NHS i.e. the CCG or the NCL STP make its health plans transparent** and make sure there is **proper consultation with residents and users** on any changes

B. Campaign for improved Social Care Services.

Haringey KONP supports the Social Care Alliance Haringey's (SCAHs) campaign for better social care in Haringey. Therefore we ask that you:

- Seek **restoration of day centres** across Haringey for those with autism, learning disabilities and dementia.
- Reconsider the decision to **close Osborne Grove Nursing Home**
- **Campaign to establish an innovatory approach to domiciliary care.**
- Support a much **needed review of mental health policy and practice**

For details of these and wider proposals see SCAH website <http://sca-haringey.org.uk/> and for their briefings click "Election May 2018"

C. Don't buy the Austerity Agenda.

Cuts to budgets are a political *not* an economic choice. When the Tories needed support to form a government in June last year, they found £1 billion to buy the backing of the Irish DUP. We believe the NHS should be funded to the same level.

D. Support an increase in the Council Tax

In the long term we believe social care should be funded from general taxation in the same way as the NHS and that "means test" community services should be abolished. In the meantime Haringey Council should be encouraged to raise the social care tax precept by 3% in 2019/20.

E. Support a campaign of public education which emphasises:

- Haringey's commitment to a publicly funded, publicly delivered and publicly accountable health and social care service.
- That the private sector has no place in health and social care provision and that current PFI [Private Finance Initiative] projects are appalling value for money and should be nationalised.