

DEFEND YOUR NHS

STOP
cuts,
closures
privatisation &



Demonstrate in London

3 November 11am

Assemble at Temple Place on Victoria Embankment



www.socialistparty.org.uk • 020 8988 8777 • PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD

Save the NHS

This government's attacks on our health service have led to a loss of 22,300 jobs. Accident and emergency departments, maternity units, wards and beds have closed. More closures are on the way as it attempts to make a further £1 billion worth of cuts across the service.

The government is also forcing through a programme of 'reconfigurations' to health services. It says these changes will give better patient care. This is not true. Closures of hospitals, accident and emergency departments and other services are being carried through to save money and prepare the NHS for privatisation.

Gordon Brown and the new minister for health, Alan Johnson, are no different to Blair and Patricia Hewitt. Spending on health is to be cut over the next few years. The new framework document for London's health service, if implemented, will mean half of all general hospitals will close. Brown made it clear what path he will follow when he said "we will continue accelerating the pace of reform in the health service". All the unpopular measures leading towards privatisation will continue.

Fight privatisation

Some profitable services like NHS Logistics have been sold off. The cuts to the blood service with the closure of regional centres to be replaced by 3 super centres are about preparing this service for privatisation.

The NHS 'internal market' is also a step in this direction. It's about putting a price tag on services and forcing different parts of the health service to compete against each other. Those parts of the NHS that fail to be 'profitable' and attract the most patients could close. We must fight to rid the NHS of competition, the internal market and payment by results, which have all destabilised NHS finances. The NHS must be rebuilt based on cooperation and democratic control and accountability.

Private equity firms now own 70% of

private hospitals. These are the worst type of rapacious, vulture-like, venture capitalists who buy services when they think there is a lot of money to be made and sell them quickly when the going gets rough.

Handing over so much of health services currently run by the NHS to the private sector means that these firms could get hold of them. And when there is £6 billion of public funds up for grabs by private health care companies to treat NHS patients, it's no wonder these firms are eager to invest in health.

Fat cats out of the NHS

Millions of pounds of public money has been handed over to In Health Netcare, to provide diagnostic services, with the intention, of eventually taking over NHS diagnostic services. Billions have been spent on Independent Sector Treatment Centres (ISTCs) where it costs more to treat a patient than it does on the NHS.

This money should have been invested in the NHS so that the services provided belong to the NHS and are there for the long term.

Other fat cats are also getting rich at the expense of the NHS. Hospitals built by private consortiums under the PFI scheme are paying millions to these companies for decades to come, money which could be spent on paying staff and patient care.

So where is all this leading? A report just published by an adviser to Brown questions whether the government can carry on paying for health care. What he means is we should have a US style system of private health insurance.

But when government ministers say we can't afford an NHS fit for the 21st century without private investment the answer is simple. City traders got £19 billion between them in bonuses at Christmas time and the top rates of tax for high earners have been slashed by successive governments. The problem is who owns and controls the wealth in our society, how is it distributed and what it is spent on; not the lack of it! A decent, publicly funded NHS can be afforded.

Thousands have been out demonstrating all

over the country to defend the NHS. Health workers are angry at a measly pay award of 2%. Community campaigns need to be linked to industrial action by health workers. **We need a huge turnout to the national demonstration planned by the unions on Saturday 3 November.**



For a new workers' party

New Labour is driven by the Thatcherite idea that private is best. That's why they are selling off our NHS and other public services. Working people desperately need a new party that will represent our interests and struggle to defend public services. Find out more about this campaign at www.cnwp.org.uk

- **Not one more penny of public money to go to big business profiteering out of the NHS. End and reverse privatisation.**
- **Abolish the internal market and payment by results, restore cooperation in the NHS.**
- **Stop the job losses and pay health workers an above inflation increase.**
- **For a publicly funded and democratically accountable NHS free at the point of use.**
- **For a mass campaign to defend the NHS and other public services.**
- **For a mass demonstration in London on Saturday 3 November.**

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