

## Con-Dems still plan to destroy NHS

# SAVE OUR HEALTH SERVICE!



photo Paul Mattsson

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The Con-Dems' tinkering with the Health and Social Care Bill has not stopped their assault on the NHS or their agenda of privatisation. In the teeth of working class anger, a few token concessions have been made.

But all three main parties remain wedded to abolishing the founding principles of the NHS: that it is free at the point of need, provides comprehensive health care for all and is nationally owned and paid for by everybody.

The NHS is still due to be broken up into GP consortiums. The new proposals do not reinstate the secretary of state's 'duty to provide' the health service in the Bill. Without this, there is no National Health Service.

Private companies will still be free to profit from illness; pharmaceutical companies will still rip off the NHS to the tune of billions of pounds; and Foundation Trusts will still be competing with each other, rather than a nationalised health service organised in the best interests of patients.

Patients and health workers need more than a few cosmetic changes; we have to fight to ensure the Health and Social Care Bill is scrapped altogether.

### Cuts and closures

We still face NHS cuts and closures. NHS workers are having their pensions slashed. The NHS may be privatised slightly more slowly, with slightly more 'consultation' and the 'involvement' of doctors and nurses.

Yet former New Labour health

secretary Alan Milburn has complained in the Tory press that the Con-Dems have 'stepped back' in their privatisation plans.

### Bill rewrite does not save NHS: DutyToProvide.net

New Labour and the Con-Dems remain committed to the eventual abolition of the NHS. They speak of patient choice, but what choice do we have except to fight back against huge cuts being made to NHS services?

We are fighting a weak coalition which has already made u-turns and concessions in the face of opposition, for example on privatisation of forests and delaying their plans to sell off the Royal Mail. After their

drubbing in the May elections, the Lib Dems are desperate to be seen to be 'moderating' the Tories.

### Business comes first

The Bill is part of an ideologically driven attack against all our public services. Organised workers within fighting trade unions are a huge obstacle to these reforms.

All three parties of big business want to smash the trade unions organised in the public sector. We must step up the battle to protect our NHS and all our public services.

Workers fighting back against cuts do not need to be lectured to by millionaire politicians and their fat cat mates, who do not rely on or care about our public services. We need national, united industrial action in opposition to the government.

The Socialist Party stands for kicking big business out of the NHS.

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Unlike stage-managed consultation exercises, we would put health workers and patients in charge, with decisions made democratically.

However, unless we abolish the rule of profit and put in its place a socialist society, we will continually have to fight for crumbs from the table of the rich.

## What we stand for

**The Socialist Party fights for socialist change – a democratic society run for the needs of all and not the profits of a few. We also fight, in our day-to-day campaigning, for every possible improvement for working-class people.**

**As capitalism dominates the globe, the struggle for genuine socialism must be international.**

**The Socialist Party is part of the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI), a democratic, socialist international that organises in over 40 countries.**

### Our demands include:

#### Work and income

- Trade union struggle to increase the minimum wage to £8 an hour without exemptions as an immediate step towards £10 an hour. For an annual increase in the minimum wage linked to average earnings.
- All workers, including part-timers, temps, casual and migrant workers to have trade union rates of pay, employment protection, and sickness and holiday rights from day one of employment.
- An immediate 50% increase in the state

retirement pension, as a step towards a living pension. Reinstate the link with average earnings now.

- Reject 'Welfare to Work'. For the right to decent benefits, education, training, or a job, without compulsion.
- Scrap the anti-trade union laws! For fighting trade unions, democratically controlled by their members. Full-time union officials to be regularly elected and receive no more than a worker's wage.
- A maximum 35-hour week with no loss of pay.

#### Public services

- No to privatisation and the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). Renationalise all privatised utilities and services, with compensation paid only on the basis of proven need.
- Fully fund all services and run them under accountable, democratic committees that include representatives of service workers and users.
- Free, publicly run, good quality education, available to all at any age. Abolish university tuition fees now and introduce a living grant. No to academies!
- A socialist NHS to provide for everyone's health needs – free at the point of use and under

democratic control. Kick out private contractors!

- Keep council housing publicly owned. For a massive building programme of publicly owned housing, on an environmentally sustainable basis, to provide good quality homes with low rents.

#### Environment

- Major research and investment into replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy and into ending the problems of early obsolescence and unrecycled waste.
- Public ownership of the energy generating industries. No to nuclear power. No to Trident.
- A democratically planned, low fare, publicly-owned transport system, as part of an overall plan against environmental pollution.

#### Rights

- Oppose discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, disability, sexuality, age, and all other forms of prejudice.
- Repeal all laws that trample over civil liberties. For the right to protest! End police harassment.
- Defend abortion rights. For a woman's right to choose when and whether to have children.
- For the right to asylum. No to racist immigration laws.

#### New workers' party

- For a new mass workers' party drawing together workers, young people and activists from workplace, community, environmental and anti-war campaigns, to provide a fighting, political alternative to the pro-big business parties.
- Trade unions to disaffiliate from the Labour Party now and aid the building of a new workers' party!

#### Socialism and internationalism

- No to imperialist wars and occupations. Withdraw the troops immediately from Iraq and Afghanistan!
- Tax the super-rich! For a socialist government to take into public ownership the top 150 companies and banks that dominate the British economy, and run them under democratic working-class control and management. Compensation to be paid only on the basis of proven need.
- A democratic socialist plan of production based on the interests of the overwhelming majority of people, and in a way that safeguards the environment.
- No to the bosses' neo-liberal European Union! For a socialist Europe and a socialist world!