

DEFEND NHS BURSARIES

SUPPORT JUNIOR DOCTORS' STRIKE

UNITE TO SAVE OUR NHS



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The attack launched on student nurse bursaries underlines the continued campaign the Tories are conducting against our NHS. NHS spending is at its lowest as a percentage of GDP since 1951, and the Treasury is demanding a further £22 billion worth of cuts by 2020.

There is a huge shortage of nurses within the NHS. The current shortage is already over 20,000 and is likely to increase. The logical solution to this would be to invest in student nurse places and increase the funding to cover the shortfall. Some 37,000 applicants have been unsuccessful in their efforts to get onto a nursing course. Demand is there for places on courses, yet the government is cutting the £1.2 billion bursary for the training of the next generation of nurses, midwives and other healthcare professionals.

The government is claiming this will allow for a lifting of the block on recruitment as costs will be kept down. But the reality is people will be unable to afford to train to be a nurse. The trade union UNISON held a survey which found that 90% of current nurses wouldn't have been able to complete training without a bursary. There may be more places but what's the point if people can't afford to take them up?

Do you agree?

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The NHS is one of the greatest victories the British working class has ever won. The Tories hated it from its inception and are determined to privatise it and allow the big business interests they represent to profit from it.

These corporations want health workers' pay and conditions cut, to squeeze out as much money as they can at the expense of patients and staff.

The NHS crisis is a result of the internal market, massive PFI debt, years of under-funding and profiteering by privatised services, pharmaceutical and medical supplies industries. Both Labour and Tory governments pushed this privatising agenda through.

A socialist programme would reverse all privatisation, end all cuts and PFI, and nationalise the pharmaceutical and medical supplies industries. Instead of being run by managers implementing a capitalist government agenda, it should be democratically planned and managed by workers and those who use the health service to meet the health needs of all.

The fantastic fight by the junior doctors and the huge public support for their struggle

shows that it is the workers and users who will still fight to defend the NHS. Junior doctors have been forced once again to name strike days as the government attacks their terms and conditions and risks the safety of patients. The other health unions should join forces with the BMA and launch a national campaign to defend the NHS backed up by the Trade Union Congress (TUC).

The Tories are out to destroy our health service but health workers, students, unions and the public must fight together to save it. Striking together to defeat these attacks must be a part of the campaign.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY CALLS FOR:

- The scrapping of the Health and Social Care Act - no cuts, closures or privatisation
- No cuts of student nurse bursaries – For free education now
- Support health workers - united action by all health unions to defend our NHS
- End the Private Finance Initiative and cancel the debt
- Nationalise pharmaceutical companies and all private health providers
- Investment not cuts - for a well-funded NHS, free at the point of use

