

MHS

S.O.S.

EMERGENCY DEMONSTRATION **Assemble 12pm Saturday 3 February** **Gower Street, London WC1E**

- **Get the Tories Out!** For Jeremy Corbyn and the trade union leaders to call for and lead mass action - both demonstrations and coordinated national strikes - that can force the Tories to call a general election.
- **Get the Blairites out!** We have had enough of privatisation, pro-austerity politicians.
- **Stop so-called sustainability and transformation plans (STPs) and demand all councils refuse to cooperate.**
- **No cuts, closures or job losses in the NHS. End the pay freeze! Decent pay for all NHS staff. No attacks on NHS workers' pensions or conditions.**
- **Renationalise our NHS! Scrap PFI and all privatisation schemes. Cancel all PFI debt. Carillion proves we're right to demand this!**
- **Reverse council cuts to social care to relieve the beds crisis. Labour councils should not be cutting care for elderly and disabled people!**
- **Nationalise the profiteering big drugs companies.**
- **For a comprehensive, high quality NHS, under democratic control, with care free at the point of use - a socialist NHS.**

Socialist Party formerly **Militant**

Do you agree with us?
WE NEED YOU TO JOIN THE SOCIALIST PARTY TODAY

The Socialist Party in England and Wales is part of the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI), which links us together with socialist organisations all over the world.

We say: take the wealth off the billionaires. Fight for a society that works in the interests of the 99%.

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SUSTAINED MASS MOVEMENT NEEDED TO STOP TORIES WRECKING OUR NHS

Ambulances queued up outside A&Es. Trolleys carrying people in need of care stacked end-to-end in corridors. Long-awaited operations cancelled. Sick people lying on cold, hard floors because no beds are available.

The winter NHS crisis has provoked fury from patients and health workers alike, with many taking to social media to share candid photos of the situation. The Tory government cries crocodile tears but is, of course, unwilling to take the necessary action. We have to fight for our health service - starting with the important protests and demonstration planned for 3 February.

"Nothing's perfect," Theresa May told the BBC's Andrew Marr. This was in response to a report that a woman who had suffered a stroke was left waiting in an ambulance for four hours before being seen. Whenever Marr raised the question of funding, May refused to contemplate the idea that money was the issue, repeating things like "you also need to look at how the NHS works, how it operates".

This is the very same language that the Tories use to justify their £20 billion of cuts (or "efficiency savings"). They want us to believe that the delays and overcrowding are not because of lack of resources but in fact because of 'waste' - best solved by further funding reductions and by handing yet more services to the private sector to leech profit out of.

PROFITEERS OUT!

It is in the very DNA of the Tory party to attack the NHS. It is the oldest capitalist party in Europe and by its nature fights to represent the interests of the capitalist class.

Of course the bosses and their political representatives have to take into account the fierce attachment to the NHS that exists among the working class in Britain and the risk of provoking a huge movement if they go too far.

But a publicly owned and funded NHS, free at the point of use is not in the best interests of the super-rich. They want ongoing tax cuts for themselves and their corporations - money that could otherwise be used to fund the NHS and other public services. And they greedily eye the service for the potential profit that could be made from a more US-style system. The Tories dutifully cut, privatise and run down the NHS in an attempt to prepare the way for further moves in that direction.

Workers know this. A January poll by YouGov showed Jeremy Corbyn's Labour 18 points ahead of the Tories on which party would best handle the NHS, the highest lead of any of the issues asked about. Polls also consistently show that the vast majority of people want to maintain the NHS as a public service, and think people should fight to defend it.

TORIES OUT!

So the Tories' poor standing and blatant mismanagement of the NHS have the potential to bring the government down. But only if we build a strong, united, movement against them and their plans for our health service. In this context, the emergency actions called on 3 February by Health Campaigns Together (HCT) - with a major demonstration in London coinciding with local protests elsewhere - have the potential to attract huge support.

The HCT demonstration in March 2017 attracted 250,000 people. Since then the anger has only grown and the success for Corbyn's general election manifesto, including defence of the NHS, highlighted the popularity of anti-austerity ideas.

Trade unions, health and anti-austerity activists and the Corbyn supporters inside Labour should build for these events seriously over the next few weeks. Rather than being the end of the story for another year, 3 February should be a springboard for a sustained mass campaign.

The trade unions, particularly the health unions, have a vital role to play. Health workers are suffering horrendous working conditions, long hours and stress trying to deal with the current crisis 'at the coal face'. And what do they get in return? A vague promise of an above-1% pay rise for the first time in six years - in exchange for considering changes to antisocial hours payments and pay increments.

STRIKE BACK!

The junior doctors, and then the ancillary workers at Barts Trust hospitals in east London, have shown the way with their determined strikes. If given a lead, and as part of a serious campaign to win a decent pay rise and to defend the service, workers across the sector would respond to a call for strike action. This should be coordinated across the different health unions.

Jeremy Corbyn, John McDonnell and their supporters in the Labour Party should clearly come out in favour of such action and of the 3 February protests. Placing Corbyn's Labour at the head of a mass movement to defend our health service would be a key part of winning the mass working class support necessary to kick out the Tories and bring in a Corbyn-led government.

Building this type of movement can be the start of winning a socialist NHS - one that is fully publicly owned and funded to meet people's needs, and democratically run by health workers and service users.

NSSN CONFERENCE 2018

11am-4.30pm

Saturday 30 June in Conway Hall,
25 Red Lion Square, London
WC1R 4RL

Open to all trade union and
anti-cuts campaigners

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