

Rebuild Britain

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Press release from Rebuild Britain

Return the NHS to Government Control

‘The statutory duty to provide health care was removed by the 2012 Health and Social Care Act’ said **Doug Nicholls**, Chair of Rebuild Britain. ‘It was this duty, enshrined in the 1948 NHS Act that is central to sustaining a free, publicly funded and publicly accountable National Health Service’.

When the 2012 Act was going through parliament, the then Shadow Health Secretary, Andy Burnham, promised that Labour will repeal it. Labour must commit to this in 2024. And it is cost-free.

Campaigning solely for more funding for the NHS is insufficient. Without democratic control over the direction of NHS funding and with an increasing number of private company providers in place to receive this money, funds sourced from taxes will always be lacking and not spent for public benefit.

‘Legislation is urgently needed to reinstate the duty of the Secretary of State to secure key health services throughout England’ said **Professor Allyson Pollock** of Newcastle University. ‘That duty was put in place in 1948. It was first delegated to area health bodies but these health bodies have now gone completely, and the secretary of state is hands-off. This leaves NHS England with extraordinary power and autonomy without any form of accountability’.

We are constantly been told that it does not matter who delivers health care provided it is free at the point of access. ‘It does matter’ said **Doug Nicholls**, ‘for apart from the exorbitant fees private companies charge, it is morally repugnant that profits should be made out of people’s ill health’.

‘What is happening now is that whole NHS hospital floors together with NHS staff are being used to treat private patients’ explained **Professor Allyson Pollock**. ‘It’s costing the NHS. The NHS is in fact subsidising the private sector’.

This is why, Rebuild Britain, together with the General Federation of Trade unions, GFTU, wants all prospective MPs to sign up to these two, simple cost-free pledges:

1 Reinstatement of the Secretary of State’s statutory duty to secure and provide health care to all.

2 End private health providers’ use of NHS premises.

These changes are essential if the NHS is to be diverted away from a US-style health care system. ‘I call on trade union members and the general public to lend us a hand,’ said **Doug Nicholls**.

Go to RebuildBritain.org.uk or scan the QR code below for more details, to register support, to watch an 9-min video and to download campaign resources.



Notes

Rebuild Britain is a non-sectarian think tank formed in 2021 by trade unionists committed to raising the big issues that are too rarely discussed.