

Press release on behalf of Keep Our NHS Public - for IMMEDIATE use

Campaigners react to the news that NHS will receive £5.4bn to deal with Covid backlog

National campaigning organisation Keep Our NHS Public [1] respond to the government's announcement that the NHS will receive £5.4bn to deal with the Covid backlog:

Dr John Lister, health policy academic and Secretary of Keep Our NHS Public, said:

"NHS Providers and the NHS Confederation recently explained in detail why the minimum extra funding needed is £10bn in revenue this year: so the decision to increase the budget by £5.4bn is perverse. Meanwhile hospitals are falling down for lack of maintenance or the funds to rebuild them. In addition, 12,000 frontline beds have closed or are empty as a result of Covid, for lack of capital to reopen them, so the NHS needs billions in capital investment as well. The buildings also need staff, who must have improved pay and conditions to increase recruitment and retention. The £5.4bn is a slap in the face, and not a serious response to a crisis that predates Covid and continues after the peak of pandemic."

Dr Tony O'Sullivan, Co-Chair of Keep Our NHS Public, said:

"We welcome this partial recognition from Government that the NHS is in desperate need of added funding, however they are still refusing to take seriously the need to build back the resource and capacity of the NHS they damaged so badly that it could not provide routine care when Covid struck. The government have committed twice this amount to private hospitals to see NHS patients on waiting lists and £37bn to a failed test and trace system; they have failed to address the scale of the deficit; this gesture is inadequate. £9bn is needed just to repairs leaking roofs and crumbling walls. £20bn a year would go somewhere to restoring the lost funding and capacity since 2010."

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Spokespeople are available for interview. Contact Samantha Wathen, Press Officer for Keep Our NHS Public press@keepournhspublic.com or

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Notes to editors

1. Keep Our NHS Public is a national independent organisation campaigning for a well-funded, publicly owned and provided NHS www.keepournhspublic.com