

Press release on behalf of Keep Our NHS Public and NHS Workers Say No - for IMMEDIATE use:

Striking NHS nurses/frontline staff, celebrities and MPs to take part in central London march

To coincide with the second round of industrial action by NHS nurses across the country, on Wednesday 18th January, grassroots campaigning organisations *NHS workers say no!* [1] *NHS Staff Voices* (part of *Keep Our NHS Public*) [2] and the *Doctors Association UK* [3] have organised and will take part in a march and rally in order to raise awareness of the reasons for all NHS strikes and express solidarity with frontline workers.

The march will begin outside UCL hospital at 14:30 before proceeding to march onto Downing Street from 15:00, arriving at Whitehall for speeches by 16:00. The rally will then hear from speakers [4] including frontline NHS staff, author/poet Michael Rosen, union representatives and MPs, who will outline the importance of industrial action and speak about their experiences of the current NHS crisis.

Holly Turner, nurse and member of NHS Workers Say No, says:

"This Wednesday [18th January] sees another wave of strikes across the health service which bring yet more shame on our corrupt Government. The Tories had an opportunity to avert these strikes by having a proper conversation about restoring NHS pay after a decade of cuts but they resolutely refuse to do so; instead they suggest that staff should GIVE MORE before they will even discuss this. We are tired of these insults and are tired of our colleagues and patients being put at risk so we will be marching in solidarity with all NHS Staff to send a clear message to this Government that we are united in our action and we reject their attempts to destroy our health service."

Alia Butt, NHS Psychotherapist and Chair of NHS Staff Voices (part of Keep Our NHS Public) says:

"We are tired of working to the bone in order to keep patients safe and healthy, while the government refuse to support us. Staff are striking as we face yet another year of cuts to our pay - this has left the NHS with the highest waiting lists on record and a national staffing crisis. We have been raising the alarm for years, but our callous government refuse to listen. In recent discussions, Steve Barclay ignorantly claimed that for workers to be deserving of a restorative pay increase that is inline with inflation, we must work even harder. This is at a time where workers are already working two if not three times beyond their individual responsibilities and are weeping with exhaustion while struggling to make ends meet. This is not only dangerous for patients but also insulting beyond belief. We must come out in opposition of these claims, while also making it clear we do not support plans to further privatise the NHS in order to keep the wealthy rich and satisfied, while regular people like us pay with our taxes and our lives."

Dr Ellen Welch, Co-Chair of the Doctors Association UK, says:

“DAUK support pay restoration for NHS staff. Strike action is a last resort but we are witnessing a collapsing NHS which is failing patients. The biggest resource the NHS has is it’s workforce - the government need to recognise this and do their utmost to improve the working lives of NHS staff to ensure we retain them.”

[ends]

For interview, further information and comment **ahead of the march** please contact Samantha Wathen, Press and Media Officer for *Keep Our NHS Public* on 0777 6047472 or email press@keepournhspublic.com

For on the day/march logistics and interviews contact Chair of NHS Staff Voices, Alia Butt on 07540344913 or email aliabutt@live.co.uk

Notes to editors

1. NHS Workers Say No is a grassroots organisation of NHS workers primarily campaigning for fairer pay and conditions <https://www.facebook.com/NHSworkersSayNo/>
2. *NHS Staff Voices* is the dedicated staff wing of *Keep Our NHS Public*, a national independent organisation campaigning for a well-funded, publicly owned and provided NHS and a National Care, Support and Independent Living Service www.keepournhspublic.com
3. Doctors Association UK (DAUK) is a non-profit campaigning organisation ran by frontline doctors fighting for a better NHS. <https://www.dauk.org/>
4. Speakers will include:

Michael Rosen - Author and NHS campaigner

Zarah Sultana - MP

Dr Silan Fidan - Doctors Association UK

Holly Turner Nurse, NHS Workers Say No

Bert Roman Chair UCLH RCN (Speaking in personal capacity)

Janet Maiden Chair UCLH Unison (Speaking in personal capacity)

Alex Gordon - RMT President

Ellen Grogan - RCN Nurse

Tom Lock Griffiths - Head of Campaigns Keep Our NHS Public

Laura Godfrey-Isaacs - Midwife

Ben Selby FBU Assistant Gen Sec

Rachel Harrison - GMB National Sec for Public Services

Lindsay German - Peoples Assembly

Kate Osborne - MP

Beth Winter - MP

Dr Kishore Kukendrarajah - Cardiology Registrar

Dave Ward - CWU Gen Sec