

Keep Our NHS Public's response to Lord Darzi's Report on the NHS

For IMMEDIATE use

In response to Lord Darzi's report on the state of the NHS released today, health policy experts and NHS staff from national campaigning organisation, *Keep Our NHS Public* [1] offer their assessment of what this means.

Dr John Puntis, Co-Chair of *Keep Our NHS Public* and retired consultant paediatrician said:

"Not surprisingly, Lord Darzi's thoughts reflect those of health campaigners and think tanks that have persistently highlighted the deteriorating state of the NHS for many years. Viewing the 2012 Health and Social Care Act as "a calamity without international precedent" he warns that further top-down reorganisations are neither necessary nor desirable. Failings in the NHS cannot be laid at the door of managers, and any move to a different model of care would be unwise given that other health systems, such as those where user charges, social or private insurance play a bigger role, are more expensive.

According to Darzi, the NHS may be in a critical condition but its' vital signs are still strong. Given the right treatment, therefore, it could be restored to health. As set out in his terms of reference, Darzi has not ventured to suggest specific policy including addressing overall budgetary issues. However, it is clear he considers that austerity and ongoing underfunding have starved the NHS of the resources it needs to meet growing demand thus preventing it from functioning efficiently.

When Wes Streeting, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, announced the Darzi review was being held, [he is quoted as saying](#) that it would aim at "diagnosing the problem" so the government could "write the prescription". In the modern era, any treatment should be founded on the best available science while taking into account the views of patients and professionals. Darzi has thrown down the gauntlet. Will government rise to the challenge or will it mistakenly conclude that the wrong treatment - 'reform' and further austerity - are just what the doctor ordered? If so, this would be both a tragedy for patients and a huge rebuff to Lord Darzi."

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Spokespeople are available for broadcast interview. Contact Samantha Wathen, Press Officer for Keep Our NHS Public press@keepournhspublic.com or Call/WhatsApp: 0777 6047472

Notes to editors

1. Keep Our NHS Public is an independent organisation campaigning for a properly funded and fully publicly owned NHS: www.keepournhspublic.com