

Keep Our NHS Public's response to the Health Secretary's Conference Speech

For IMMEDIATE use

In response to Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Wes Streeting's speech at Labour conference this morning, health policy experts and NHS staff from national campaigning organisation, *Keep Our NHS Public* [1] offer their response.

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

"In a lacklustre speech to conference, the Secretary of State for Health reiterated that the NHS is broken, with blame falling firmly on the previous Conservative governments. New technology, community care and prevention were once again sited as the route to recovery but with no mention of the fact that this would require significant investment, despite underfunding being highlighted in the recent Darzi report. While decrying a two tier health system, paradoxically, among the solutions offered was diverting NHS patients to the private sector. Commitments to a universal service free at the point of use were not matched with services being 'publicly provided'. Only passing reference was made to social care and then in the very limited terms of better pay and conditions for the workforce."

"Missing from the speech were commitments to stop underfunding the NHS and investment to reverse the current failures (a lesson to be learned from the last Labour government), move away from wasteful private outsourcing and build back publicly provided services, reverse the fragmentation of the NHS to make it a national service once again, and establish a national service for care, support and independent living."

[ends]

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