

Big tech at the heart of the NHS 10 year plan and present across the UK Public Sector: the capture of our public infrastructure by private behemoths
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The UK government's '[Cloud First](#)' policy (2013) has resulted in the use of US big tech (Microsoft, Google, Amazon Web Service (AWS), Apple and Oracle) digital infrastructure¹ aka 'public cloud' across our public services. This includes the NHS where tech use is stated to be central to any attempt to improve productivity-it is mentioned on 58 pages in the [NHS 10 year plan](#). To make this clear, digitalisation of the NHS means that all data relevant to our health and care, and gathered together into Single Patient Records will be stored and managed on 'cloud infrastructure' belonging to one or several of the 5 major global tech companies. This data can then be accessed by data controllers such as care providers and ICBs to: i) use 'cloud rented' services such as Microsoft Fabric and Power B to perform activities such as analysis of outcomes, service performance, health trends, and resource utilisation; ii) purchase 'cloud based' solutions to productivity problems from any of the hundreds of subordinate private 'customer service provider companies' aka 'cloud partners' such as [Oso](#) that themselves [pay rent for the use](#) of the 'cloud' infrastructure and any necessary 'knowledge' owned by big tech. These companies are the ones that negotiate with and carry out work for the NHS providers and bring them to their 'cloud-based' solutions. This big tech infrastructure has been likened to a 'franchise' or a '[Global Value Chain](#)' (such as 'Nike') enabling big tech to gather most of the profits.

On its journey in the development and deployment of 'cloud' to achieve its position of control and power, big tech has stolen '[personal data](#)' from populations and '[science knowledge](#)' from public institutions, and caused [huge harms](#) to the environment and abuse of human-rights across the globe. It has also been part of the direct destruction of human life through the use of its 'cloud' and AI as a [military and surveillance](#) asset by the US and allied governments including in [the Gaza genocide](#).

As far as the technology involved is concerned, it is with the help of trillion [dollar investors](#) that big tech has created monopolies in [knowledge](#) and [compute](#) to reach and remain at the cutting-edge of 'cloud' services, and to become the default [infrastructure](#) on which to train generative AI and perform large database analytics. Unlike machines of the past, generative AI [improves in its performance](#) as it works (on data); so, when big tech offer AI as a service on their 'cloud' for a cost, they also benefit from the improvement (and potential increase in value) of any algorithms used that they own or in which they have invested, and from the reinforcement of their intellectual monopolies from any new knowledge that may have been gathered. The major focus of big tech corporations is on technological advances, rapid roll-out and commercial gains to sustain themselves and their investors in highly competitive markets.

¹ The framework of storage and compute power for data manipulation and AI development contained in hyperscale data centres

From an economic perspective, big tech's profit gathering is unique. Instead of generating surplus value through capital investment where there are lower costs and high demand, big tech invests to bring different areas of societal activity under [its control](#). It ensnares individuals, businesses and [institutions](#) because its services are not commodities as such, they are '[infrastructures](#)' on which society depends, allowing them as monopolists to charge exorbitant [rents](#) and to generate endless flows of monetizable data.

As stated above, big tech has been firmly placed at the heart of our government and across other areas of our [public services](#) to 'improve productivity' while its 'cloud infrastructure' has been designed over years to generate and extract [enormous amounts](#) of surplus value from the innovations created on it, and the ongoing solutions it helps to provide. A major concern particularly in health and social care is that the interventions big tech 'partners' will provide to achieve greater 'productivity' and 'equality' of services will be '[solutionist](#)' – reaching populations through their pockets² and reducing costs by eschewing any need for future increased [workforce](#) investment.

Perhaps even more worryingly to society as a whole though are the recent requests from the Trump administration for big tech to render the US government 'more modern and [productive](#)'. These requests have increased big tech influence and will empower all private interests further at the expense of public institutions in the US and [abroad](#). The new data and knowledge solely acquired by big tech will allow them, as political economist Cédric Durand says, to begin to centralise 'the algorithmic means of coordination of all public activities', and as [public institutions are rendered incapable](#) of organising society's needs³, the task will then fall to big tech with all the power that brings.

These encroachments into our public services by US mega-corporations which are so close to the US administration must be seen [for what they are](#): tech-based 'colonial' imperialism and we must reject them if we are to maintain ourselves as a separate, sovereign state. Other countries are trying – sometimes jointly - to create alternatives to big tech control of 'cloud' through developing regional state funded sovereign 'clouds' and digital infrastructure capacity, and taking control of their 'cloud' related resources (see for examples: an International call for Reclaiming Digital [Sovereignty](#), developing [European](#) proposals, concerns from [Denmark](#), and ongoing negotiations across [Latin America](#).) Indeed, past and present big tech behaviour elsewhere in the world suggests that we should do the same.

² Many commentators see mobile tech such as phones simply as an extension of 'cloud' which can carry a marketplace of health related apps, and some of these need to be purchased see [Evergreen Life](#)

³ In the August 31st 2025 interview referenced in the link in this clause, Gita Gopinath the retiring IMF deputy chief explains that governments need to take a very close look at entitlement spending including healthcare and social security, to reduce public debt and avoid a future financial crash. Gopinath also says she has spent some time researching the impact of AI and reckons that about 40 per cent of the global labour force is exposed to it.

