

Full Council – 16 September 2019

2nd Motion selected by the Labour Group

Our Community. Our Health Care

This Council notes:

- The Government has presided over the longest funding squeeze in the NHS' history; deepened by cuts to Public Health Services and Adult Social Care.
- There are currently over 100,000 staff vacancies in NHS England, including 41,000 nurses and nearly 10,000 doctors. This figure could easily rise to 350,000 by 2030 according to research conducted by The King's Fund, the Health Foundation and the Nuffield Trust.
- There are similarly 17,000 fewer hospital beds now than in 2010.
- The impact of Conservative cuts to public services and rising poverty are evident in the new Long Term Plan, with NHS England calculating that socioeconomic inequality causes £4.8 billion a year in greater numbers of hospitalisations.
- Nine years of austerity, cuts and privatisation have resulted in nearly 2.8 million people waiting over 4 hours in A&E last year, over 540,000 patients waiting over 18 weeks for treatment and NHS waiting lists growing to over 4.3 million.
- The underlying deficit of nearly half of the NHS trusts which provide secondary care to patients referred by a GP is close to £5 billion.

This Council further notes, the consequences of these swingeing cuts:

- North West London Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) face a significant deficit in the forthcoming year, with a projected deficit of £112m. The clinical commissioning group for Brent represents £9m of this debt.
- While North West London's population has grown by 5%, funding is stagnant, and worsened by unplanned emergency care rising by 25%.
- In 2018, London North West Healthcare Trust received a second Requires Improvement report from the CQC.
- Proposals to merge eight CCGs in North West London into one CCG by April 2021 will lead to yet more re-organisation, change and ultimately disruption to residents.
- Public Health funding for Brent services such as smoking cessation and alcohol recovery treatment have again been cut by the Government, by £0.5m for the next year.

- Age UK states there is a “perfect storm” in the Adult Social Care sector with parts facing “total collapse”; with £8 billion needed to stabilise the system and tackle increasing complex care. The latest promised Government green paper on the sector has been delayed at least six times over the last 18 months.
- According to the Royal College of Psychiatrists, Mental Health Trusts have less money in real terms to spend on mental health now than in 2012 and the number of mental health nurses has fallen by 4,000.
- IFS analysis indicates that if we leave the EU, the public purse is likely to lose enough money each year to fund the whole of NHS England for 3 months.

This Council believes:

- The NHS belongs to the people; it is Labour’s proudest achievement, designed for universal healthcare for all on the basis of need, free at the point of use - the NHS should always have the resource to provide a comprehensive system, where everyone counts.
- The NHS should work across organisational and geographical boundaries, to facilitate services for every resident.
- The Government has passed the buck with cuts to public services delegated to our local NHS, resulting in a hollowing out of services in Brent and the surrounding area.
- Residents and members of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny committee are concerned about the styming of access to GP services across the borough and upon its boundaries: with Cricklewood GP Centre under consultation to cease its walk-in provision; and Central Middlesex Urgent Care Centre consulting to curtail its hours of operation; and Pembridge Hospice in Ladbroke Grove closing its doors to new admissions.
- The reduction of services from Central Middlesex UCC will impact on our poorest residents, without access to their own vehicles, with alternative services involving lengthy journeys by public transport at night, upwards of an hour.
- These changes will be felt far and wide across the health economy, as more residents seek support through accident and emergency or via their general practitioner.
- The sustained reduction in the ability of the NHS to provide essential services affects everyone, young to old and certainly those most vulnerable.

The Council resolves:

To work with Brent’s Members of Parliament, to voice our opposition to any future arrangements in which alterations to local NHS services threaten the safety of patients or residents alike, and re-affirm the need for health services to put people at the heart of any future plans.

Cllr Mary Daly
Sudbury Ward