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Berkshire election candidates vow to help NHS trust

Election candidates in Berkshire have vowed to help an NHS trust which is facing a £10m shortfall. The Shadow Health Secretary Andrew Lansley said he wanted local decisions made on the future of Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals Trust. Labour warned against cost-cutting and said the trust had a sound plan. The Liberal Democrats want elected local health boards to oversee decisions. The NHS trust said it had already saved £10m and was addressing other issues.

Source of Extract: BBC News

NHS Bankrupts Britain

The government is set to spend an estimated £677 billion this financial year on the public sector (2009-10), that is currently running an annual £167 billion deficit, i.e. the government spends £167 billion a year more than it earns in revenue which is contributing to towards igniting Britain's inflationary debt spiral, that risks accelerating trend towards an hyper inflationary bust leaving savers with worthless paper and the economy in ruins, i.e. bankrupt.

Source of Extract: Market Oracle

Labour blasted on cancer leaflets

Health Secretary Andy Burnham has been urged to apologise to cancer patients who were sent Labour campaign leaflets warning that a Tory government would put their lives at risk. Personalised cards were sent to 250,000 women saying that the Conservatives would scrap a Labour guarantee that all suspected breast cancer patients would be seen by a specialist within two weeks of GP referral. The mailshots, which featured a message from a breast cancer survivor praising Labour's policy, referred to the addressee's name several times. Labour strongly denied that the cards were specifically targeted at cancer patients and said cancer was sadly so prevalent in society that some of the 250,000 people were likely to have suffered from it. But shadow health secretary Andrew Lansley said he was "rather shocked" by the campaigning.

Source of Extract: Press Association

Organs 'removed for transplant without consent'

Organs may have been removed from deceased people without their consent after a data-handling error by the NHS. The blunder meant 800,000 people on the UK donor register may have had their wishes about the use of organs for transplant wrongly recorded. The Sunday Telegraph reported that 45 of them have now died - and 20 families let organs of relatives be taken based on incorrectly stored information. NHS Blood and Transplant said it was urgently investigating.

Source of Extract: BBC News

Local NHS Confirm Chesham Health Centre Will Happen

NHS Buckinghamshire say they are "fully committed" to building Chesham's new 6 million pound healthcare centre. The site, on Berkhamstead Road, which isn't yet built, was due to open this summer. The local NHS say rumours that the project had been scrapped are unfounded. A spokesperson for the local NHS says they expect the contracts - so it can go ahead - to be signed this month.

A Statement from the local NHS said "NHS Buckinghamshire is still fully committed to the development of Chesham Healthzone, on Berkhamstead Road. Essential road works were carried out last summer, which were

completed as planned (the work needed to be carried out during school holidays). It was expected that there would be a gap between the road works being finished and the building work starting due to the need to get the contracts finalised between the GPs involved, the PCT and the developer. We have reached agreement with the other parties, and we are keen for the final contracts are signed as soon as possible in April."

Source of Extract: Mix 96 News

NHS chiefs' pay rises 'double those of nurses'

Top managers in England's NHS trusts received average pay rises of nearly 7% in 2008-09, compared with less than 3% granted to nurses, a report says. An Incomes Data Services report into boardroom pay at more than 380 trusts found chief executives earned seven times more than the average nurse. Senior managers in NHS trusts typically earned £147,500, the report said. The NHS Confederation said trusts needed top managers to help them through financial challenges.

Source of Extract: BBC News

NHS is "a long way from world class"

The NHS is making progress but it has a way to go before it can be called "world class", according to a report from the King's Fund think tank. The health service had addressed many of the challenges it faced in 1997 but it still needs to change rapidly if it is to meet the big challenges it faces in the future, the report said. On the plus side, since 1997 waiting times have been cut and access to primary care has improved, there is less variation in access to drugs and treatment, there have been "significant" reductions in MRSA and C.difficile infection rates, "sustained" cuts in deaths due to cancer and cardiovascular disease and "sustained" cuts in rates of smoking. However, although life expectancy has improved for everyone, the most significant failure identified by the King's Fund is that health inequalities – the difference in health outcomes between different groups in society – have widened since 1997. The NHS also needs to improve productivity, which has declined since 1997.

Source of Extract: publicservice.co.uk

Labour election manifesto on Health

The next stage of national renewal

- Legally binding guarantees for patients including the right to cancer test results within one week of referral, and a maximum 18 weeks' wait for treatment or the offer of going private.
- Preventative healthcare through routine check-ups for the over-40s and a major expansion of diagnostic testing.
- More personal care, with the right in law to choose from any provider who meets NHS standards of quality at NHS costs when booking a hospital appointment, one-to-one dedicated nursing for all cancer patients, and more care at home.
- The right to choose a GP in your area open at evenings and weekends, with more services available on the high-street, personal care plans and rights to individual budgets.
- Access to psychological therapy for those who need it.

Source of Extract: Labour Manifesto

NHS goes global

NHS Global is a new organisation that aims to sell research and innovation to other countries in association with a new Government research plan. The Government is to fund a £600m medical research centre, the UK Centre for Medical Research and Innovation near St Pancras Station in London. It will gather together 1,250 scientists to conduct research into new therapies for conditions such as heart disease and cancer. It is hoped that the centre will be built regardless of the outcome of the general election.

Source of Extract: The Times

Budget cuts bring London NHS IT changes

NHS IT in London will not achieve its original aims following government health budget cuts, according to NHS London Chief Executive Ruth Carnall. Savings of £100m on the NHS National Programme for IT (NPfIT), specified in the 2010 Budget, mean that the London Programme for IT (LPfIT) has had to be revised. "The £100m reduction in the available funding, inevitably, means a reduction in the scope of [LPfIT]," said Carnall. "It will no longer be possible to provide the comprehensive solution that was anticipated in 2003." The Chief Executive said provisions for primary care software had been removed from the London budget and would instead be provided through the national GP Systems of Choice programme. Similarly, national Summary Care Records will be used to share patient information, in place of a dedicated London system. Some ambulance software has had to be cut, said Carnall. While the contract the NHS has with BT to deliver LPfIT has been revised, care records software, which has already been deployed by London hospitals including RiO and Cerner software, will continue to be used, Carnall said. The Conservatives announced last week that, should they win power at the general election in May, they would set about making £12bn public spending cuts. Part of those cuts would include revising public sector IT projects, including NPfIT.

Source of Extract: ZDnet

Labour pledge on NHS reforms

Gordon Brown has confirmed that every NHS hospital in England will become a foundation trust by 2015. Launching the party's election manifesto at a Birmingham hospital, he re-affirmed pledges to give patients legally-binding rights on treatment and waiting times. More GP surgeries will be open from 8am to 8pm and there will be extra health services on the high street. The current manifesto pledges apply only to England. The manifesto says all NHS hospitals in England will become foundation trusts, with institutions already holding this status able to take over the management of less successful organisations.

Source of Extract: BBC News

Conservative Pledge

The Conservatives will turn the Department of Health into a Department for Public Health so that the promotion of good health and prevention of illness get the attention they need. They will provide separate public health funding to local communities, which will be accountable for – and paid according to – how successful they are in improving their residents' health. In addition, they will:

- introduce a health premium – weighting public health funding towards the poorest areas with the worst health outcomes;
- enable welfare-to-work providers and employers to purchase services from Mental Health Trusts; and,
- increase access to effective 'talking' therapies

The Conservatives say that by making NHS staff more directly accountable for their performance, NHS administration costs can be cut by a third as "expensive layers of bureaucracy" are removed. Elsewhere the creation of an independent NHS board is confirmed for the day-to-day running of the NHS, which will have power over how money is spent. So is the policy of a one off £8,000 payment for residential costs. They also pledge a Cancer Drug Fund to allow doctors to prescribe new medicines which might fail to pass the cost restrictions of the rationing body the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence.

Source of Extract: Conservative Manifesto

Lib Dems aim to cut NHS red tape

The Liberal Democrats plan to reform the NHS to cut bureaucracy and save cash, according to their manifesto. The party would cut the size of the Department of Health in half and scrap strategic health authorities (SHA), which oversee the running of health trusts and act as an extra "tier" between hospitals and government. Large and "unnecessary quangos" will also go under the Liberal Democrats, including Connecting for Health which is overseeing the multi-billion pound NHS IT upgrade. A further pledge is to cut down the number of Government

targets and give patients more guarantees to treatment. The pay and bonuses of top NHS managers will also be capped so that none are paid more than the prime minister. Patients will be given more power, through elected local health boards, which will take over the role of primary care trust boards in commissioning care for local people. Over time, the boards will take on responsibility for allocating money and resources "to allow local people to fund local services which need extra money". The manifesto also places emphasis on preventative healthcare.

Source of Extract: Press Association

Christie in US deal to increase private care

Manchester's Christie NHS Foundation Trust has agreed a £14m joint venture with a US company to develop private patient services. The Trust is linking up with the Hospital Corporation of America, which operates nearly 200 hospitals across the United States. Christie Hospital Chief Executive Caroline Shaw said the deal would help improve patient care and lift profits from private services. The Trust has seen annual income from private care rise to £9.8m, about eight per cent of total revenues. HCA will manage all private patient services and insurers and will provide money for capital investment programmes. Trust bosses believe there is scope to grow private patient income to over £30m a year.

Source of Extract: Manchester Evening News

Surrey hospital sold cancer drugs now in short supply

The Royal Surrey County Hospital Trust was criticised in February for exporting more than £4m of drugs. The trust now admits it was selling a cancer drug which has now been placed on a list of medicines that are deemed hard to get hold of in England. But it said there was "absolutely no evidence" to suggest its practices had contributed to the shortage. A spokeswoman for the trust said it was "misleading" to suggest it had sold drugs on the short-supply list. The last order for imatinib - also known as Glivec - was sent out on 14 October and the drug was listed as being in short supply on 6 November, she said. She added: "The trust constantly ensured that drugs were readily available and ceased trading the drug in question before the drug was put on the short supply list in November.

Source of Extract: BBC News & HSJ

NHS facing more cuts as Government strives to save £600m

NHS patients face reduced services and slower treatment as the Government rationing body tries to save the service at least £600million. NICE plans could make it harder for patients to get into hospital. NICE will also push through 150 changes to medical practice aimed at saving money, from reducing the prescription of antibiotics by GPs to delaying some prostate cancer tests. NICE has faced mounting criticism over the last 10 years after decisions to restrict treatments. Earlier this month figures showed thousands of cancer patients are still being denied life-prolonging drugs despite a Government pledge 18 months ago to make more available. NICE failed to fully recommend any of 15 cancer medicines assessed since November 2008, and rejected one in four drugs.

Source of Extract: Mailonline

Trusts are challenging senior doctors to spend more time delivering care

Trusts are challenging senior doctors to spend more time delivering care and to justify hours spent on non-clinical work, in what is being seen as a belated "wake-up call" on consultant productivity. Trusts have been traditionally reluctant to tackle the issue, fearing a backlash from doctors. But budget pressures are now persuading many trusts to take action. Freedom of information responses from 99 trusts show a fifth have reduced or plan to cut the time consultants spend on "supporting professional activities" (SPAs), including training, research, audits, teaching and clinical governance. A further 15 per cent plan to look more closely at the value provided by SPAs, which typically take up just under a quarter of consultants' time. But British Medical Association consultants committee deputy chair Keith Brent suggested trusts should focus on other areas for savings. He said: "Consultants are the most valuable asset employers have. We recognise the financial reality that faces the NHS. There are a lot of other places the NHS could save money, [for example] the commercialised facilities the government has brought in on no evidence at all." Reducing time spent on SPAs was a "bad decision" because clinical governance, audits and training all had an impact on patient safety.

Source of Extract: HSJ

NHS Surrey unveils its new Chairman

NHS Surrey has appointed David Clayton-Smith as its new Chairman. He starts the role on Saturday, May 1, and the appointment lasts until April 30, 2014. Mr Clayton-Smith comes from his current position as Chairman of the Highwood Brewery and has experience of both executive and non-executive roles at Boots and the Fairtrade Foundation.

Source of Extract: Surrey Comet

New finance lead for Barking and Dagenham

NHS Barking and Dagenham has appointed a finance director. The primary care trust has named Margaret Ashworth as its director of finance and productivity improvement. She will oversee a budget of £320m. Ms Ashworth has previously worked as director of finance at North West London Hospitals Trust and West Hertfordshire Hospitals Trust.

Source of Extract: HSJ

Moves

St Helen's & Knowsley NHS Trust has promoted **Damien Finn** to Director of Finance and Information. He has been Deputy Director of Finance at the Trust for six years and succeeds Executive Director of Finance **Alistair Mulvey**. Mr Mulvey has joined North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust as Executive Director of Finance, Information and Procurement.

Joe Teape has been appointed Finance Director of Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust. He moves from Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust. Mr Teape succeeds **John Yarnold** who has become Director of Finance at NHS Gloucestershire.

Graham Bennet is to be the newly appointed Interim Finance Director at Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust following the departure of **Jo Farrar** to Homerton University Hospital NHS.

Andrew Cannell has been appointed Chief Executive to Clatterbridge Centre of Oncology NHS Foundation Trust - he was previously Finance Director there. **Yvonne Bottomley** has succeeded Mr Cannell as Finance Director.

David French has been appointed Chief Financial Officer at Basingstoke & North Hampshire NHS Foundation Trust. He succeeds **Steve Bolam** who has moved to South Central SHA as Associate Finance Director - System-wide Financial Improvement.

NHS Tayside has named Board Associate Director of Finance **Ian McDonald** as its new Director of Finance. He succeeds **David Clark** who has retired.

The new Director of Finance at NHS Borders is **Jane Davidson**. She takes over from Director of Finance and Deputy Chief Executive **Robert Kemp** who retired at the end of 2009.

Nigel Morris former Hywell Dda NHS Trust Director of Finance retired at the end of March.

Shrewsbury & Telford Hospital NHS Trust Chief Executive **Tom Taylor** is to leave the NHS on 30 April to become Chief Executive of the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board.