

SHEFFIELD TRADES UNION COUNCIL.

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21st March, 2012

Circular 201210 (KONP Press Statement).

Dear Colleagues,

Regrettably the Health Bill - the first stage of the planned privatisation and destruction of the National Health Service has now completed its passage through Parliament and will become law.

The Sheffield TUC is circulating and publicising the following Statement by Keep Our National Health Service Public (KONP) because it gives a magnificent lead by indicating that to defend the NHS "THE NEW CAMPAIGN BEGINS."

Health Bill Passes New Campaign Begins.

Media Release

For Immediate Use: Wednesday 20th March 2012

Health Bill Passes: New Campaign Begins.

The Health and Social Care Bill has now completed its passage through Parliament and will become law. This is despite the Bill being opposed by the great majority of doctors and health professionals, and by virtually all their professional bodies. It is also despite public opinion: polls have repeatedly shown that a large majority of the public want the Bill scrapped.

Prime Minister David Cameron has put his political future on the line by backing this badly drafted, illegitimate, chaotic and damaging Bill which received over 1000 substantive amendments, most which were not discussed in the Commons. He has told worried Conservative MPs that he is "prepared to take a hit" over the Bill, but that opposition will die away after the Bill becomes law. In this forlorn hope, he is wrong. Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg has inflicted permanent damage on his own Party by claiming to have transformed the Bill, while in fact leaving all its worst features intact. Even his own Party activists rejected this transparent excuse at the Liberal Democrat Spring conference.

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Plans are already in train for a major campaign to save the National Health Service, that will run at a national and local level until the next General Election and beyond. There will be hundreds of battles to be fought across the country in the next few years, as Clinical Commissioning Groups struggle to deal with a morass of contracts and the overstretched CQC try to 'kitemark' services; predatory private healthcare companies and management consultants scramble to pick the bones of the NHS; and dedicated healthcare professionals fight against the odds to continue to provide a comprehensive, high quality and free service to the public.

The struggle against this dreadful Bill is only beginning. And the high political price to be paid by those MPs who backed it is only just starting to become clear.

Commenting, Professor Wendy Savage of Keep Our NHS Public said:

“I want to thank everyone involved in the campaign against the Health Bill. It has been a remarkable campaign, uniting doctors, nurses and health professionals with the general public. It has been highly successful in exposing the myths and lies peddled by politicians trying to sneak the Bill past without proper debate or scrutiny.

This is an awful Bill. It will damage patient care. It will waste precious public money on an unaccountable and more complicated bureaucracy and legal costs as private providers fight for thousands of healthcare contracts. It will damage the health of the most vulnerable patients and their communities. If it is not scrapped as soon as possible it will destroy the National Health Service, so valued and loved by those who work in it and those who depend on it.

We will make sure that the Bill haunts the Coalition Government from now until the next General Election. Mr Cameron will find his belief that defence of the NHS will soon fade from the public mind to be an arrogant and stupid delusion.” **KONP STATEMENT ENDS**

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**ORGANISATIONS AFFILIATED TO THE SHEFFIELD TUC ARE
RESPECTFULLY REQUESTED TO CIRCULATE AND GIVE ACTIVE
SUPPORT TO THIS REMARKABLE STATEMENT BY KEEP OUR
NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE PUBLIC.**

**Yours fraternally,
Bill Ronksley,
Secretary.**

