

General Election 2017

Briefing: Conservative manifesto

Summary of health and care policies

Funding

- Increase NHS spending by minimum £8bn in real terms over 5 years – “an increase in real funding per head for every year of the Parliament.”
- For social care, building on the Council Tax Precept with reform to social care funding to include aligning means-testing for home-based care with residential care and making individuals and their families liable for care costs if their savings and assets (including their home) value over £100,000.
- New NHS numbers only issued to patients when eligibility verified, and increase Immigration Health Surcharge to £600 for migrant workers and £450 for international students
- Maintain existing mental health funding commitments to 20/21
- Invest in dementia research
- Continue to invest in additional 1,500 medical students a year to reduce reliance on overseas staff
- Continued commitment to seven-day services, with whole population access to routine weekend or evening appointments in local area by 2019, and consultant supervision at weekends
- Retain the 95 per cent A&E target and the 18-week elective care standard

The model of health and care

- Continued support for the Five Year Forward View, and backing for “the implementation of the plan at a local level, through the Sustainability and Transformation Plans, providing they are clinically-led and locally supported.”
- Ensure community pharmacies can play a stronger role to keep people healthy outside hospital.

- Continue to expand the number of NHS approved apps to help monitor and support people with physical and mental health conditions
- Further expand the use of personal budgets
- Train one million members of the public in basic mental health awareness and first aid to break the stigma of mental illness
- Legislate for personalised employment support for unemployed disabled claimants or those with a health condition

Brexit

- Allow 140,000 staff from EU countries to continue working in the UK.

Other specific commitments

- Review operation of the NHS internal market.
- New statutory commitment to carers' leave.
- A Social Care Green Paper to address system-wide issues to improve the quality of care and reduce variation in practice.
- A new Mental Health Bill putting parity of esteem at the heart of treatment.
- Publish a Green Paper on young people's mental health in 2017.

Analysis

Interestingly, the sections of the manifesto about the NHS and Social Care are housed in a section on the Ageing Population. A possible insight into the lens through which the Conservative's view health and care.

The manifesto essentially re-commits to the Five Year Forward View funding settlement for the NHS, extending this for the additional years to the end of the Parliament. While this additional funding is welcome, it will, as the [Kings Fund has argued](#), continue the current squeeze on health and care finances.

The changes to entitlement and payment for social care have attracted significant attention. The party has abandoned the plan to introduce a cap on care costs recommended by Andrew Dilnot, which had been legislated for but not implemented.

There are a number of pledges that could continue the move towards more person-centred approaches, for example increasing the number of personal budgets, legislating to remove barriers to integration, and expanded use of apps and online and telephone consultations. Little is said, however, about the role of communities in supporting health and care – this is limited to things like training one million people in mental health awareness and first aid.

Very little is said about the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector. There is support offered to those organisations supporting refugees, and in protection against cyber attacks.

The manifesto includes a commitment to prioritising protecting EU nationals who work in health and social care, but there are no equivalent commitments on research and medicines regulation. The party states its support for the Accelerated Access Review but does not reflect on the potential impact of Brexit on this.

There is considerable attention paid to mental health, which, along with disability, is set out as one of the 'burning injustices' the manifesto aims to address – legislation is promised in mental health, but little is said about funding services.

Finally, alongside the support for the Five Year Forward View, there is a section on NHS accountability for delivering on these promises. Does this hint at a deal made to protect the Five Year Forward View, while also opening the possibility of legislation to unpick the Lansley reforms, including expansion of the internal market?

National Voices' priorities for the new government

Developed with member organisations, National Voices has set out three priority areas for the new government:

1. Deliver a new approach to health and care funding
2. Create a health and care system that gives people voice and control
3. Make health and care a priority in Brexit negotiations

[Download 'Priorities for the new government: Putting people first' for full detail and National Voices' specific asks of the new government.](#)

About National Voices

National Voices is the coalition of charities that stands for people being in control of their health and care. We work for a strong patient and citizen voice and services built around people. We stand up for voluntary organisations and their vital work for people's health and care. National Voices is an independent registered charity, number 1057711.

www.nationalvoices.org.uk

[@NVTweeting](https://twitter.com/NVTweeting)