

General Election 2017

Briefing: Labour party manifesto

Summary of health and care policies

Funding

- Additional £30bn across the Parliament to the NHS (£6bn per year), including £10bn additional capital funding.
- Increase social care budgets by £8bn, including £1 billion in the first year.
- Create an Office for Budgetary Responsibility for Health, to oversee and scrutinise health spending.
- Guarantee the standards of services set out in the NHS constitution, including access to treatment within 18 weeks and 4 hour waiting times in A&E.

The model of health and care

- Halt Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs) and ask local people to participate in redrawing them, with a focus on patient needs not available resources.
- Everyone with a long term condition will have the right to a 'specialised care plan' and access to 'condition management education.'
- People at the end of life will be able to access personalised care.
- 'Lay the foundations' of a National Care Service, to be built alongside the NHS, with shared arrangements for commissioning, partnership arrangements, pooled budgets and joint working.

Brexit

- Immediately guarantee the rights of EU staff working in our health and care services.
- Seek to remain in the European Medicines Agency and to stay part of Horizon 2020.

Other specific commitments

- Create 'NHS Excellence' - a new quality, safety and excellence regulator.
- Repeal the Health and Social Care Act 2012, and reinstate the Secretary of State's overall control of the NHS.
- A new £250 Children's Health Fund to support an ambition for Britain's children to be the healthiest in the world.
- Replace Work Capability and Personal Independence Payments assessments with a 'personalised, holistic assessment process' and ending reassessment for those with severe long term conditions.

Analysis

Labour's manifesto contains a lot of wide ranging commitments. It attempts to address the significant funding pressures faced by both the NHS and social care, with additional funding paid for by tax rises for the top 5% of earners, increased tax on private health insurance, and halving fees to management consultants.

The manifesto highlights the need for investment in public health and mental health, but the document shies away from defining the share of funding each will receive.

On STPs, the focus on better involvement of people and communities in developing plans is welcome. However, Labour's proposed halting of the STP process could lead to lengthy delays when there is an already urgent need to reshape how health and care services are delivered.

While Labour's manifesto commits them to increasing funding for the NHS and social care, a number of think tanks ([Nuffield Trust](#), [Kings Fund](#) and the [Health Foundation](#)) have highlighted that it would still leave a funding gap.

The commitment to create NHS Excellence to oversee quality and safety improvements potentially signals a more centralised approach to quality improvement.

There is some, albeit limited, evidence of the Labour party recognising that the model of care needs to change. There is substantial discussion of the importance of community-based support, mental health services, and public health and prevention. However, the role of the voluntary sector, and

the community itself in driving health and care is overlooked. There are some person-centred promises, but this doesn't feel like a fundamental shift to focus on the 'core customer' of health and care services; people with long term conditions.

Substantial questions remain about Labour's proposed 'National Care Service', which appears to differ from the NHS in not offering care free at the point of use (other than at the end of life), and which dodges the long-term funding questions.

Labour's manifesto contains a lot of promises that reflect the concerns of National Voices members, but it raises as many questions as it answers. Perhaps the most important question – what's Labour's overall vision for health and care? – remains unanswered.

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

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