

Dear Mr Burnham

Repealing the Health and Social Care Act: why stop there?

I am a veteran inner London small practice GP. For the last two decades I have struggled with increasing difficulty to maintain my vocation of good personal care.

I was encouraged by your recent conference speech. The Health and Social Care Act has added confusion, corruption and calumny to a system already much departed from our best principles of Pastoral Healthcare. Repealing this Act could help us restore at least some of these.

But this Act, in my view, is merely the crowning ignominy of two decades of serial NHS Reforms, each ratcheting further the 3Cs: Competition, Commissioning and Commodification. This 'development' was conceived in the Thatcher Government and has not been substantially or radically challenged by governments since that time.

I am pleased that you have started that challenge and hope you will go much further. We would do well to abolish the entire system of the NHS Internal Market with its Purchasers and Providers, and its autarkic NHS Trusts.

It is not just the care of patients: the care of our professionals has become parlous. Morale and retention of staff is poorer now than anyone can remember. It is only the institutional rhetoric that has vigour.

I have many decades of experience, and hundreds of documented cases or events to illustrate and evidence my arguments. I am wanting to work synergistically with anyone intending to clear away our dead and deadening institutional detritus that is such an obstacle to our best personal and humane healthcare.

Evidently I am interested in any further dialogue.

With thanks for your important contributions.

Dr David Zigmond (GP)