



# Wandsworth Health News

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## NHS Funding Crisis-the worst in its history

The financial situation at our local hospital goes from bad to worse. Nobody should expect otherwise. The NHS faces the worse funding crisis it has faced in decades. The present government is intent on starving our health service of resources until it collapses. Then it will introduce an insurance based system which has long been its aim.



The Tories don't like the NHS. They opposed it almost 70 years ago when it was introduced and they have been in ideological opposition to it ever since. It goes against their core beliefs. Those that dominate the Tory party believe that everything is better run by private companies. Gas, water, electricity, the

railways have all been taken away from the public and handed over to private corporations.

The NHS is no different. The government wants people like Richard Branson to run your health services from his off shore exile in the Caribbean.

As a consequence millions of pounds' worth of services previously run by the NHS have been handed over to Virgin Health.

The aim of Richard Branson and others like him is to make money from other people's illness.

Profiteering from health misfortunes should play no part in a civilised society.

Our NHS, one of the cheapest and best health services in the world has achieved that status by keeping private companies at bay.

An NHS publicly funded and publicly provided has stood us in good stead since 1948

It is now facing its worse crisis ever. We must defend it at all costs. Not just for ourselves but for future generations.

Health is important to a nation's survival.

Billions needs to be pumped into the system if it is to survive. Our NHS money should not be siphoned off into private company profits

The government wont do this unless there is mounting public pressure .

All of us must play our part in alerting our friends and neighbours to the danger that faces the NHS

We must mobilise as never before if we are to save our health service

# St George's hospital going deeper into the red-time for the Trust Board to come clean

St George's hospital finances are flat lining and as a consequence services are getting worse.

For 2015/16 the hospital ended the year over £50m overdrawn on its budget. This year the situation looks even worse and the overdraft could be almost double at close on to £100m

The year to date deficit is £47.7, £5m worse than last month.

The Trust Board has told NHS Improvement that they

expect to finish the year just £55.5m overdrawn.

This is a wildly overoptimistic projection given the current trend.

Better that the Board comes clean and tells NHS Improvement that it just can't provide the services needed without additional financial assistance.

The Board should be sending the public the same message.

Patients have a right to know that the hospital is being forced to cut services

because it is being starved of resources.

Draped across the front entrance of St George's should be a banner asking the public for support in putting pressure on the government to inject more finance into the NHS.

Trust Boards should be at the forefront of this fight-not meekly carrying out the government's cuts program.

## What is happening to the Ear, Nose and Throat Department at St George's ?

There was an ominous reference to the hospital's ENT department at the Trust Board meeting in December.

The department has been one of the worst offenders in meeting the referral to treatment target.

The Board's response seems to be not to allocate more resources but instead to spend money on bringing in an outside provider.

In very cagey language the Board papers state,

"ENT contract is in place to outsource activity to other providers"

What does this mean ?

Is Richard Branson being brought in to run our ENT and line his pockets at the same time ?

Who are these other providers ?

Why spend money on them ?

Why not use that money to improve the NHS ?

Every time a service that is provided by the NHS is privatised and put out to tender it is money lost to the NHS and the taxpayer. In the short or long term a profit will be made by the private contractor and this is money that is lost to the NHS. It is money that goes into the pockets of shareholders instead

Their gain,our loss.

# St George's-Care Quality Commission spells it out- great staff, but weak leadership

One does have to feel rather sorry for St George's. Through a lack of local and national leadership it has got itself into one holy mess.

In the disgraceful race to become a foundation trust hospital the St George's leadership effectively covered up the hospital's appalling financial state

This was nothing to be ashamed about, every hospital is in more or less the same situation.

Anyone who looked through St George's monthly financial reports could see that in the period running up to their bid to become a foundation trust they were going deeper and deeper into debt..

The Cost Improvement Programs(CIPS) upon which the hospital relied to save money were every month failing to achieve their targets.

The evidence was there for all to see. If financial stability was the hallmark of achieving FT status then St George's was way off target.

That Monitor, the organisation at the time who were suppose to oversee the FT process, failed to pick up on St George's plight only shows how inept Monitor was as an organisation-it has now gone and been replaced by NHS Improvement.

The current hospital leadership which has changed beyond recognition since the charge to become an FT, seems to be doing even worse than the old one.

The previous leadership ended the last financial year over £50m overdrawn

This year the current leadership looks set to beat that. The December financial report submitted to the board looks like the year end deficit could be £80m.

Three new financial directors this year don't seem to be able to halt the trend of the hospital's spiraling debt.

When will the Trust Board begin being up front with patients and the public and start telling them that the hospital just doesn't have enough money.

To provide patients with the services they need requires more money being spent by the government on the NHS and less of it being drained off into shareholders profits.

People are living longer-more resources are needed.

The Trust Board should hang a banner over the main entrance of the hospital stating,

**“The NHS needs more money”**

It may not win them any favours with the government but at least they would be being honest with the public



**Wandsworth Keep Our NHS Public  
Meets Second Monday in the month 7.30pm  
PCS Building at Clapham Junction Station  
Entrance via the station car park**

# Care Quality Commission verdict-

## St George's has caring staff

Although St George's is now in special measures the CQC Report was clear not to blame the staff.

The Report's overall judgment on the hospital was that it was 'inadequate for being safe and well led'

It required, 'improvement for being effective and responsive'

But for the staff there was nothing but praise.

*"The Trust's 9000 staff were found to be caring, and doing a good job in challenging circumstances and its renal unit was praised for delivering some of the best survival rates and outcomes for patients in the country. The care provided by the*

*maternity and neonatal teams was singled out for showing a real drive to improve the experience of families using the services and the clinical outcomes achieved by our specialist medical and surgical teams were also praised"*

It is these staff who keep the hospital afloat, who work unpaid overtime, never finish when they should, and have to make up for the 16% of staff posts that are vacant.

On top of that it is these staff who are bullied by over zealous managers trying to archive impossible targets.

NHS staff at St George's and all over the NHS deserve better than this.



Bullying at St George's is endemic. Every year it shows up just how widespread it is in the annual Staff Survey.

Bullying must be stopped.

Report it to your union now.

Instead of bullying, hospital managers should appreciate and care for the best asset the Trust has-its workers

## NHS Finance, it's a funny old world

Earlier in the year the ever optimistic St George's Trust Board leadership told NHS Improvement that it would end the year £55.5 in deficit.

That was October, month 7 in the financial year.

By the end of November the forecast had altered drastically and now the

prediction was that the year end deficit would be more like £80.7m -a 45% increase on the previous month's estimate.

The sad bit is that St George's are apparently not able to alter the figure for their predicted deficit before January.

Only then can they let NHS Improvement know that their previous deficit prediction was very wide of the mark.

Seems a strange way of conducting finance -keeping people in the dark.

# Wandsworth Clinical Commissioning Group

## -also in financial trouble.

Wandsworth CCG also looks in financial trouble. It is not just our local hospital that is feeling the pinch of cuts.

According to the Board papers for the December meeting, Wandsworth CCG must make cuts of over £20m, which is, *“significantly greater than the level of savings made in previous years”*

As yet the CCG leadership had no defined plans as to how to make these proposed cuts.

According to the financial report the overspend to date by the CCG was £5.4m .

This deficit was being shored up by the use of reserves.

Previously the CCG had managed to provide services and create a surplus. In April 2015 this surplus was £11m

By March 2017 the surplus is predicted to be just £0.5m



You can rearrange the deck chairs on the Titanic once.

Soon there will be no reserves for the CCG to fall back on.

## Wandsworth CCG talks about care in the community-but where is it to be ?

Wandsworth CCG makes no secret of its current plan to save money.

In the December board papers it tells us, and I quote,

*“The CCGs current plans are based on a fundamental shift in the setting of care i.e. away from hospital”*

The CCG thinks that this will save money. They give no evidence for this.

Not sure how it will be cheaper to treat patients in lots of different community settings, than treating them in one place, a hospital.

It will entail the purchase of multiple diagnostic machines, which are not cheap. Instead of having skilled health personnel available in one place they will need to be available all across the area.

Consultants, who take years to train and don't come cheap will be forced out of hospitals and asked to move around different community settings. Not a particularly good use of their time.

Finally, where are these community settings to be ? Wandsworth CCG has no money available with which to build them.