

Is this the end of the choice agenda?

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I find the debate on energy tariffs today really interesting, for two reasons.

First, [Cameron's suggestion](#) that every energy company should offer their lowest tariff to everyone is fascinating. It's a realistic realisation that people don't want choice because they haven't got the time to make choices and very often don't have the information on which to decide, or at least the time to find that information, meaning that most decisions are sub-optimal. In which case the only realistic option is to mandate best options, not choice.

Despite this we have David Miliband [still banging on about the New Labour perennial](#) of choice in the Guardian saying:

In a more educated society, people want more power to help themselves. Yet the government's lead clinician for NHS quality and productivity says that we are behind Tonga when it comes to self-management of care by asthma patients!

Actually, people don't want to manage their own asthma care. They want someone to tell them what the best possible asthma care for them is - that's why they go and see experts, precisely because very often they don't and can't know the answers themselves and will make bad choices if they decide without help. In that case, giving direct clear advice is what people want.

I think David Miliband is massively behind the times here. And for once, David Cameron is on the ball.