

NHS charges for immigrants are a simple way of opening ...

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Richard Blogger, who has [quite a reputation in exposing what has been going on in NHS privatisation](#), left a [comment on this blog](#) yesterday that I thought worth sharing as a blog in its own right. He said:

Cameron says that to save a measly £20m [he will introduce NHS charges for immigrants](#). This means two things. Firstly, everyone will have to give proof of their entitlement to NHS care before they get that care: a national ID system. Everyone has an NHS number, but few people know what theirs is, nor are they ever asked for it. That will change. Secondly, Cameron says that immigrants will have to have insurance to cover emergency treatment (even in the US you do not have to have insurance for emergency treatment). In the UK we only have gold card medical insurance — insurance for elective treatment in private hospitals where the accommodation is 5 star hotel equivalent. We we do not have insurance that will cover people with chronic conditions, or treatment for emergency care.

So Cameron's announcement that immigrants will have to pay for NHS treatment is significant because it will mean that the insurance companies will develop products for people with chronic conditions and for emergency care. In other words EXACTLY the sort of products that will be needed when a future Conservative (or LIB Dem) government moves us to an insurance funded system.

And yet there is more. Cameron has decreed that in 2014 people with long term conditions [will have personal healthcare budgets](#). That's right, people will be told how much money they are allowed to spend on treating their condition, and patients — not GPs — will have to procure that treatment. Two thirds of the NHS budget is spent on people with long term conditions, so this policy change is huge — anyone hear about it? Personal budgets have already been introduced in social care (the last government brought them in) and the result is that people with personal budgets are underfunded and subject to the local authority cuts. The result is that either people go without the care they need, or they have to pay top ups even to get basic care. Top-ups. The same will happen in the NHS with personal healthcare budgets. They will lead to people paying top-ups to get basic NHS care, and people with long term conditions, worried

about this, will look to the insurance companies for some solution.

In 2005, in an article for the Independent that has now disappeared off the internet, [Nick Clegg said](#) that he wanted the NHS to be “broken up” and for the introduction of insurance. He’s only a few years off getting his dream.

We need to be very, very worried. The abuse of the NHS, and with it one of the fundamental underpinnings of modern life in Britain, goes on.

And amongst others the BBC says nothing about it.