

Another Â£5 billion of NHS privatisation is now happe...

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The [FT reports this morning that](#):

The NHS has for the first time asked the private sector to help purchase billions of pounds worth of services for hospitals and GPs.

NHS England on Tuesday advertised for companies to compete for work worth at least £5bn advising the new doctor-led clinical commissioning groups, which spend more than two-thirds of the NHS budget buying care for patients.

Let me break those statements down.

First, let's consider the farce of it costing £5 billion to support GPs make decisions. The whole of the GP service in the UK costs about £12.5 billion (9% approximately of the total £137 bn spend). So we're now going to spend a sum equivalent to 40% of that supporting buying decisions by GPs over 5 years?

That does not make sense on any level. Firstly, because in that case GPs are clearly not in charge of this activity in that case; the sheer scale of it suggests that they can't be. And secondly the immediate thought is, surely this could be better spent?

Second, the purpose of this spend is to "create a competitive market in the buying of healthcare services". In other words, this is £5 billion to take money out of the NHS and into the private sector.

This is the privatisation agenda that the government has always denied exists written large all over the future of healthcare in this country.

NB Updated to make clear the spend was over 5 years at 10.30 am 26.2.14