

Funding the Future

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I had to say goodbye to a friend yesterday. Medicine is not, of course an exact science, but two doctors confirmed my own suspicion that I am unlikely to see this person alive again.

This is not distressing: the person in question has lived a long life and has not enjoyed the best of health towards the end of it. Despite that they declared themselves not unhappy with their current situation, their care and most especially the quality of their food not long ago. Priorities were still being assessed and decisions being made even as the options available reduced as age advanced. That is what makes me think that at least for this friend end of life care has been good enough to be part of a life well lived. That helps.

But will that be possible in the future? Or is the end of an era? With social care collapsing, many old people's homes facing their own financial end and the NHS under-funded, is it really possible to imagine those who have to face my friend's last journey in the future doing so with such apparent satisfaction that all had been done appropriately? I find it difficult to think so.

And in many ways that's harder to face than the seemingly imminent, and peaceful, prospect of losing a friend. Death is inevitable. Making it harder than it need be, which seems to be the likely option available at this election, is not. My wish for those who will follow my friend is that they too might think that they had been cared for to the end.