

How will Labour fund the NHS? It's time for it to place...

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I was planning a calm morning. After minor Twitter storms over the last few days, I thought I would steer clear for a day. Then I noticed this Tweet from Wes Streeting, which I responded to, as I note:

<https://twitter.com/RichardJMurphy/status/1589883094479564801?s=20&t=DkwGQVyxEG459IUWCs8nXQ>

The video in the Tweet should work - but it may take you to Twitter first. You do not need to be a Twitter user.

Streeting says:

- * There is no more money for the NHS after a one-off workforce investment
- * The NHS is a twentieth-century model of care
- * There is no more money without unspecified reform
- * Without that reform there will be no NHS

I think I quite reasonably surmised that he was suggesting:

- * Charging
- * More privatisation. I had more diagnostic centres in mind, which is a massive area of private sector activity in healthcare because it is routine in nature and requires little decision-making outside a laid down protocol, meaning it is low risk and so high reward.

So, I said so. That is the sort of thing I have done for a long time now. I don't do social media for the sake of being popular. I use it to ask awkward questions and to seek social justice.

I got a response from Wes Streeting remarkably quickly:



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Replies to [@RichardJMurphy](#) Page 1/3

Your tweets are increasingly hysterical.

First of all, I note the first line. Being abusive is not a good way to indicate you have a good argument. The Labour leadership may not like my Tweets, but I am not a member of Labour and have no intention of being so. I am simply asking serious questions of those who want to be a government who are making some comments that are very hard to understand from a left-of-centre perspective. If that's hysterical in their opinion, so be it, but I beg to differ.

I replied to the points of substance as follows:



Richard Murphy @RichardJMurphy · 39m
Replies to @wesstreeting

OK Wes, three things. First what is the point of early diagnosis if there is no capacity to treat? Second, how is this going to cut waiting lists, because it will increase demand on services? Third, what is the funding model? That's what I was asking. Let's discuss the issues.

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Richard Murphy @RichardJMurphy · 37m
Replies to @RichardJMurphy and @wesstreeting

Might you also explain when the UK model has ever been late intervention?

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There has been no reply as yet.

I hope Wes Streeting rises to the challenge of explaining his new model for the NHS because if Labour is not going to answer such questions now it will not in any way be prepared for government.

At the same time I suggest he calms down. Asking what his funding model might be if it is not tax is not hysterical. It's about asking for a calm appraisal of the facts, the key ones of which are:

- * As a matter of fact, we have an ageing population.
- * As a matter of fact, in medical terms, the elderly are the most costly people in society.
- * As a matter of fact, Labour is saying it will refuse free entry into the UK, so its population growth is going to be limited, especially by a low birth rate.
- * And, as a matter of fact, Labour says it wants to employ more UK nationals in the NHS.
- * As a matter of fact, that means we must have a real shift of resources amongst the working-age population into the NHS from elsewhere in the economy. This will be necessary to manage the growing need for end-of-life care because whenever it happens end of life care is almost invariably medically intensive, which no amount of early diagnosis is going to prevent.
- * And as a matter of fact without more 'taxpayers' money' (a term in itself

meaningless, since there is no such thing) how this additional care will be funded without private money being requested is very hard to work out for me, as someone pretty used to macroeconomic thinking.

So what is the answer, Wes? Tell me what your funding model given these facts is, please? I really want to know because I care about the NHS and you say its future is dependent on this new funding model you aren't telling us about, so what is it please?