

Putting the N back into the NHS

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I [posted this video on YouTube](#) this morning.

In it I argue that the NHS is a mess, created by meddling politicians who have broken it into hundreds of organisations that they pretend trade with each other. The result is not efficiency or productivity. The result is an admin mess and a failure to meet needs.

The only reform the NHS needs is to get rid of this mess by consolidating the NHS into regional and national care services that treat us as whole human beings. Then we, and it, might get better.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hesj23MbRbw>

The transcript is:

I want to put the N back in the NHS. By which I mean, I want it to be a national health service again.

The trouble with the NHS right now is that it is fragmented into vast numbers of supposedly independent organisations.

Every hospital is run by a trust.

Every ambulance service is run by another trust.

Mental health services are run by different organisations from physical health services.

GPs are of course, independent of hospitals, and many of them are privately owned in effect either by the people who run them or by consortiums who are now buying up GP practices.

We have a whole range of organisations working together who, however, do not deliver

an N - a National Health Service - and I believe that's wrong.

We are integrated human beings. We're holistic. We have to be treated as a whole. Our needs are not to do with our thumb, or our ear, or whatever else it might be. They're actually about the whole person. Because when we're ill, in whatever way it might be, it isn't just the symptom that is affected - the particular limb or whatever else it might be. It is our whole well-being that is affected, and the NHS needs to reflect that in its organisation. So I believe that we actually need a national health services.

Now that would be a national health service for Scotland - they've already got one, but it needs to be properly funded.

And for Wales, but it needs to be properly funded.

And in England it might mean regional health services. So I'm not pretending that health services in Kent should be run by the same organisation as health services in Lancashire, because I suspect that makes no sense.

But there could be a South-East England health service, a South-West England, an East Anglian one, and a Midlands one. You get my sense. We'll go up the country until we get to a North of England health service. What follows is that those regional authorities, coupled with those for Wales and Scotland and Northern Ireland, would be responsible for delivering integrated care.

We wouldn't have the stupid situation that you might phone 111, which is one agency, who then refer you to an ambulance, which is another agency, who take you to hospital, which is a third organisation, who then discharge you to your GP, which is the fourth organisation, all of whom are billing and charging and arranging with each other in inconsistent ways.

We would have one integrated service.

I believe that is the only reform that the National Health Service requires.

The people in the NHS know this.

They know what they want to supply.

They know they want to get rid of the red tape.

They know they want to get rid of the admin.

They could do that if only we gave them the power to concentrate on health and remove all the layers of organisation which are the impediments to progress now and deliver instead integrated care for everyone.

Nationally, which would put the N back in the NHS.