

Wes Streeting's NHS redundancies make no sense

Published: January 12, 2026, 9:22 pm

This is a [headline story](#) in the Guardian this morning:

Hospitals in England could axe more than 100,000 jobs as a result of the huge reorganisation and brutal cost-cutting ordered by [Wes Streeting](#) and the NHS's new boss.

The scale of looming job losses is so large that [NHS](#) leaders have urged the Treasury to cover the costs involved, which they say could top £2bn, because they do not have the money.

This demand from Wes Streeting is absurd. The NHS is already one of the most efficient health services in the world in [terms of admin costs](#).

There is [clear evidence](#) that in previous rounds of cuts that supposedly cut admin costs, doctors had to take on the administrative tasks instead, resulting in serious losses of medical productivity. This finding has been replicated right across many public services and organisations, not least from my own experience in universities.

And yet, Streeting is determined to sack 100,000 people at a cost of £2 billion to:

- * Harm NHS efficiency
- * Make doctors do admin, and not treat patients
- * Increase patient waiting times as a result
- * Reduce NHS productivity
- * Increase unemployment
- * Reduce growth
- * Cut government tax revenues
- * Make it harder for Rachel Reeves to balance the books.

It is, then, a policy right up Labour's street. It is a bad idea that is bound to produce the exact opposite outcomes to those they claim, which is pretty much true of everything that they seem to want to do.

I do sometimes wonder what it would be like to live in a country where:

- * Politicians had real-world experience
- * Politicians could think
- * Politicians could join up the dots in the economy

Is it really crazy to imagine that might be possible?