

Nye Bevan would have been furious

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I could not help but notice that Addenbrooke's Hospital, as part of Cambridge University Hospitals, claims, all over the place, that the three pillars of its operations are:

- * Safe,
- * Kind, and
- * Excellent.

I might not have been at my best, but it occurred to me that, when setting performance standards for a hospital, these represented pretty low levels of aspiration. Why? Because the opposites are:

- * Unsafe,
- * Unkind, and
- * Indifferent.

Since no one expects a hospital to be any of these things, although I know all three can happen, I felt, yet again, that here was the strongest evidence of the corporatisation of public service in the UK, and that, by seeking to achieve that goal through branding, all that had actually happened was that what should be implicit had been degraded into bland slogans, with the sole potential outcome of alienating almost everyone.

And I bet someone was paid a lot to come up with that nonsense, with the aim of differentiating this hospital from others, in the process seeking to undermine the essential logic of the NHS, which should be the provision of high-quality care for everyone.

Nye Bevan would have been furious, I thought.