

# GETTING A LETTER IN THE LOCAL PAPER

The local press is very important. More people read their local paper than a national newspaper and getting a letter published in the letters page is a great way of highlighting an issue. Here is an editable letter for you to send to use.

## FOR PUBLICATION

### To: The Editor

The coalition government's Health and Social Care Bill will seriously destabilise the NHS and its core principles. Many people are not aware that the policies represent the biggest change to the NHS since it was founded in 1948, and they will affect every patient in England.

The government wants to move to a more American-style market health system, where hospitals and doctors have to compete with each other for business.

For patients this will mean a worse service. Hospitals will be free to treat private paying customers first, with the rest of us having to wait longer for treatment. Certain

Treatments, like hernia operations, could be dropped all together, forcing people to pay.

The bond of trust between doctor and patient will be destroyed as doctors prioritise cost cutting over patient care.

The government's 'reforms' will also bring about a huge postcode lottery where drugs and treatments will be available to patients of one GP and denied to those of another. So this may mean that NHS patients have to move to another part of the country to get the treatment or drugs that they need.

The cost of making such huge changes to the NHS is going to be at least £3 billion at a time when the country can least afford it, and they come alongside £20 billion of 'efficiency savings' over the next four year in the NHS. Job losses and services closures are already happening – so much for protecting the frontline.

The British public didn't vote for these controversial changes because they weren't in the Conservative or Lib Dem manifestos at the election. They have come out of nowhere. We must take a stand now to defend our health services.

*Include your full name, address, phone number and e-mail address. Include a note after your signature if you do not want the newspaper or media outlet to publish these details.*

