

We agree with Shirley

NHS supporters agree with Shirley Williams over her fears for the NHS if Andrew Lansley's Health and Social Care Bill gets voted through in Parliament.

In a recent letter to the Times Shirley Williams she wrote: "Underlying the debate about health is another about values. For some of us, health care is a public service, strengthened by partnership and co-operation... Why we should dismember this remarkably successful public service for an untried and disruptive reorganisation amazes me.

Shirley Williams is not alone in her concerns. Here's what the experts say:

British Medical Association:

www.bma.org.uk/healthcare_policy/nhs_white_paper/whitepaperbmbriefingpaper.jsp

"Doctors want to build on the principles of the NHS... The insistence on a market-based approach risks fragmentation, inefficiency and increased transaction costs."

Royal College of General Practitioners

www.rcgp.org.uk/pdf/RCGP_response_to_Equity_and_Excellence_Liberating_the_NHS.pdf:

"We believe the plans for free choice of GP practice will be damaging in terms of continuity of care, health inequalities and, potentially, patient safety."

Royal College of Nurses

www.rcn.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/347183/RCN_response_to_NHS_white_paper

41.pdf: *"The RCN is gravely concerned that the Government takes little or no account of the proposals' potential impact on disadvantaged or disengaged individuals or communities."*

NHS Confederation

www.nhsconfed.org/Documents/White%20paper%20Consultation%20Response%20-%20FINAL.pdf:

"It will be exceptionally difficult to deliver major structural change and make £20bn of efficiency savings at the same time ... we have major concerns that this will not be possible with 45% management cost reductions... after analysing the proposed new system, we have identified significant risks, worrying uncertainties and unexploited opportunities."

Other organisations expressing concern over Lansley's reforms include:

Age UK, the GMB, The Kings Fund, Macmillan Cancer Support, Mind, Voluntary Organisations Disability Group, Unite and Unison.

It's not too late. If you want to protect the NHS please oppose Paul Burstow's motion that the conference supports Lansley's plans for the NHS. Encourage Lib Dem MPs not to support the Tory's ideologically driven NHS Bill and sign up to Unite's campaign <http://nhs.unitetheunion.org/page/s/addyourvoice>