

Britain only succeeds when working people succeed. This is a plan to reward hard work, share prosperity and build a better Britain.

**Britain can be better**

The Labour Party Manifesto 2015

We will provide  
world-class  
health and education  
services

**O**ur NHS, care services, schools, colleges and other public services make up the essential fabric of our society. People need them to be able to live secure and fulfilling lives. Britain needs them if we are to succeed as a country. But under the Conservatives they are under threat. The next Labour Government will protect, improve and invest in our public services, while giving individuals and communities more control over their design and delivery.

The NHS is one of our great national institutions, and it is one of Labour's proudest achievements. It embodies our belief that by the strength of our common endeavour, we achieve more than we achieve alone. But the future of the NHS is under threat. The Conservatives have put the wrong values at its heart, and patients are finding it harder to get the care they need.

Care is at the heart of Labour's values. No-one should fear old age or be left to struggle alone caring for a loved one. But too many older people suffer insecurity, loneliness and exclusion. And the growing social care crisis is one of the biggest challenges we face. Since 2010, billions of pounds have been cut from budgets that pay for adult social care. The result has been 300,000 fewer older people getting vital care services, at the same time as the number of older people in need of care is increasing.

A good education is vital to achieving personal fulfillment and economic prosperity. A good society depends upon an education system that can open minds and teach the skills and knowledge we each need to get on in life. But our education system is failing to meet the needs of young people who do not follow the traditional academic path from school to university.

Our public services are a measure of the strength and decency of our society. But we need a change in how we design them by pushing power down and organising them around individuals and families not centralised bureaucracies. Good public services also need committed staff who are treated fairly and whose ethos of service is respected. They require decisions on pay that prioritise those on lower incomes, which are evidence-based, and which respect Pay Review Body recommendations rather than brushing them aside irresponsibly.

Government spends far too much money dealing with the symptoms of problems, instead of investing smaller amounts in dealing with their causes. Every taxpayer pays the cost of low educational achievement, poor aspirations, drink and drug misuse, and criminality. So we will promote early-years intervention, supporting young children and their parents and dealing with problems before they get out of hand.

We can save money and create more responsive services by building co-operation between public services and organisations. Pooling funds across local areas reduces inefficiency and avoids duplication. Services must be joined up in ways that make sense to the people who use them.

Labour will use digital technology in reforming our public services. People will be able to feed back on services quickly and simply, making sure their voices are heard, stimulating improvement and saving on the costs of service failure.

## **The NHS**

Labour will rescue our NHS, invest in its future and join up services from home to hospital.

We will start with the promise of investment so that the NHS has time to care. The NHS is struggling with staffing shortages. Accident and emergency is in crisis, and more people are facing long waits for tests, treatment, or to see a GP. Labour will invest in 20,000 more nurses, 8,000 more GPs, and 3,000 more midwives, paid for by a Mansion Tax on properties worth over £2 million, a levy on tobacco firms, and by tackling tax avoidance. The threshold for the Mansion Tax will rise in line with house prices for these high-value properties, and those on lower incomes will be protected with a right to defer the charge until the property changes hands.

We will guarantee people a GP appointment within 48 hours, and on the same day for those who need it. We will create a Cancer Treatments Fund so patients have access to the latest drugs, surgery and radiotherapy. By 2020, patients will wait no longer than one week for vital cancer tests. Catching the disease early

is critical, so we will raise public awareness of symptoms and make sure there is training and support for GPs in spotting early signs.

The answer to the health challenges we face is not to set hospital against hospital, but to join up services around patients' needs. We will repeal the Government's Health and Social Care Act, scrapping the competition regime and restoring proper democratic accountability for the NHS. We will establish a sensible commissioning framework, based on the principle of an NHS preferred provider, to stop the drive towards privatisation and make sure that NHS services are not destabilised by competition and fragmentation. Where private companies are involved in providing clinical services, we will impose a cap on any profits they can make from the NHS, to ensure that the needs of patients are always put first. We support the principles behind the negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership Treaty (TTIP). We will hold the European Commission to account on issues of concern, including the impact on public services and the Investor to State Dispute Settlement Mechanism. And we will ensure the NHS is protected from the TTIP treaty.

Our health reforms will focus on prevention and early intervention, and joining up services from home to hospital. When people cannot get to see their GP, many go to A&E instead. When mental health problems are not spotted early, people can deteriorate and need more intensive support. And when elderly people cannot get the care they need at home, they are more likely to end up in hospital.

The current system is too fragmented. It was not designed for the growing numbers of people living with chronic conditions or multiple needs. Rather than having three separate systems for dealing with physical, mental and social care, we will create a whole person approach: a single service to meet all of a person's health and care needs.

This will be underpinned by new rights for patients. Vulnerable older people, disabled people and those with complex needs will be helped to have more control of their lives with the entitlement to a personal care plan designed

with them and shaped around their needs, the option of personal budgets where appropriate, and a single named person to coordinate their care. They will also receive better information and advice on managing their condition. These changes will help to end the frustration of families sick of being passed from pillar to post between different individuals and agencies.

Commissioning and budgets will be brought together at a local level to join up services and make sure that providers are incentivised to help people stay healthy and outside hospital, rather than simply waiting for them to fall ill.

Mental health will be given the same priority as physical health. People will have the same right to psychological therapies as they currently have to drugs and medical treatments. To help address the problem of undiagnosed mental illness, NHS staff training will include mental health. We will increase the proportion of the mental health budget that is spent on children, and make sure that teachers have training so they can identify problems early and link children up with support. To support young people's health and wellbeing, we will encourage the development of social and emotional skills, for example through the use of mindfulness to build resilience. And we will set out a strategy with the goal of ensuring that the great majority of patients can access talking therapies within 28 days, and that all children who need it can access school-based counselling.

A greater emphasis on prevention and public health is essential, not just to improve outcomes and tackle inequalities, but to ensure the NHS remains sustainable. For example, 3.2 million people are currently diagnosed with diabetes, and it is estimated that spending on treatment will rise from £10 billion to £17 billion a year over the next 25 years if action is not taken, such as to reduce levels of obesity. We will set a new national ambition to improve the uptake of physical activity and take targeted action on those high strength, low cost alcohol products that fuel problem drinking. And we will set maximum permitted levels of sugar, salt and fat in foods marketed substantially to children.

Everyone involved in the NHS must learn lessons when things go wrong, for example, from the failings at Mid-Staffordshire and Morecambe Bay. Labour will prioritise action to improve care quality and patient safety. In addition to recruiting extra nurses to help provide safe levels of staffing on wards, we want every hospital death to be subject to an appropriate level of review. We will also take action to modernise the regulation of healthcare professionals.

## Care in older age

Labour will support people in their older age. Growing old should be a positive and fulfilling experience. But our social care system is close to collapse, with older people often receiving visits limited to just 15 minutes, provided by a workforce that is too often undervalued.

Labour supports measures to cap the costs of care and will prioritise improving the quality of care services.

Working with local authorities and care providers, Labour will end time-limited 15-minute visits, introducing year-of-care budgets to incentivise better care in the home. By stopping the use of zero-hours contracts, where regular hours are being worked, we will improve the working life of care workers.

For older people, the normal setting for care should increasingly be the home, not the hospital. We will recruit 5,000 new home-care workers – a new arm of the NHS – to help care for those with the greatest needs at home. This will include supporting more people to remain at home at the end of their life, including those who are terminally ill with the greatest care needs.

We will also introduce a system of safety checks to identify risks facing vulnerable older people and enable preventative measures to be put in place, such as grab rails to prevent falling.

The burden of the care crisis is falling on carers, especially women, who account for six in every ten carers. Labour will introduce a new duty on NHS organisations to identify carers so that they can be linked up with the right support. We will ring-fence the money councils get for carers' breaks to ensure this money gets spent on carers.

## **A high quality education for all our children**

Labour sees investment in education as an investment both in our children and in the future of the country. We will protect the entire education budget, including the early years, schools and post-16 education, so that it rises in line with inflation.

However investment on its own is not enough. We need to create a route to success for the 50 per cent of young people who do not go down the traditional academic route. We will raise the standard and status of vocational and technical education, with a high quality vocational route from school through to employment. The Technical Baccalaureate, a vocational award for 16 to 18-year-olds, will combine a gold-standard qualification accredited by employers, with a quality work placement.

We will transform high performing Further Education colleges with strong links to industry, into new specialist Institutes of Technical Education, with a remit to deliver the Technical Baccalaureate and higher-level skills. We will support more young people to gain the core skills they need for employment and further study. With Labour, students will continue to study English and Maths to age 18 and undertake work experience between the ages of 14 and 16. And to ensure young people are equipped to make the best choices for their future, we will introduce a new, independent system of careers advice, offering personalised face-to-face guidance on routes into university and apprenticeships.

We believe fundamentally that a world-class education system is made by excellent teachers. With Labour, every teacher will need to gain qualified teacher status. We will encourage teaching quality by creating new career routes for teachers who are expert in their subject. These teachers will be able to attain



a new 'Master Teacher' status. Teachers will also be expected to update their knowledge and skills as a condition of remaining in the profession, and we will support plans for a new College of Teaching. These measures will help us close the attainment gap between disadvantaged children and their peers, and work towards all children reading well by age 11. We have supported the successful 'Teach First' since its inception and will continue to do so.

A new School Leadership Institute will support headteachers and improve school leadership. It will accredit gold-standard headship qualifications, support leadership training and development, and identify and develop the school leaders of the future.

The Government has attempted to oversee thousands of schools from the centre. This approach is not working. Underperformance is going unchallenged and parents do not have enough of a voice. Labour will introduce new Directors of School Standards at a local level to monitor performance, intervene in underperforming schools and support them to improve.

Where a majority of local parents have concerns about underperformance, or a dip in standards, they will be able to call in their local Director of School Standards to hold a school to account.

Labour will promote innovation in schools. We will give all schools freedoms currently only granted to some. Directors of School Standards will be responsible for commissioning new schools where there is a shortage of school places, encouraging innovative bids from established providers, good local authorities, parents, teachers and entrepreneurs. They will also encourage local schools to work together to improve the quality of education.

We will end the wasteful and poorly performing Free Schools programme, and switch resources to where they are needed, allowing us to cap class sizes for five, six and seven-year-olds at 30 pupils or under.

Private schools currently benefit from generous state subsidies, including business rates relief worth hundreds of millions of pounds. We believe they should do more to contribute to raising standards in state education to justify receiving this subsidy. As a condition for continued business rate relief, private

schools will be required to form a meaningful partnership with a school, or cluster of schools, in the state sector.

Children develop and learn best when they are secure and happy. We need to help our children develop the creativity, self-awareness and emotional skills they need to get on in life. We will introduce compulsory age-appropriate sex and relationships education. We will encourage all schools to embed character education across the curriculum, working with schools to stop the blight of homophobic bullying.

## Labour will:

invest £2.5 billion more than the Conservatives to recruit 8,000 more GPs, 20,000 more nurses and 3,000 more midwives

guarantee GP appointments within 48 hours and cancer tests within one week

join up services from home to hospital, with a single point of contact for all who need it

give mental health the same priority as physical health, with a new right to access talking therapies

repeal the Government's privatisation plans, cap profits and put the right values back at the heart of the NHS

end time-limited 15 minute social care visits and recruit 5,000 new home-care workers to support people in their home

introduce a new gold-standard Technical Baccalaureate for 16 to-18-year olds

protect the entire education budget from early years through to post-16 education

guarantee all teachers in state schools will be qualified

appoint Directors of School Standards to drive up standards in every area

cap class sizes for five, six and seven-year-olds

ensure all young people study English and Maths to age 18.