

Report to 'Doctors for the NHS' from KONP Co-chairs, October 2020

We held our September KONP AGM during extreme times. Special thanks to all our members and our national team for continuing our campaigning throughout Covid lockdown, and to our ally and supporter – Doctors for the NHS. Our overall KONP aims and objectives have not changed since the 2019 AGM. Despite the worsening political context in which we campaign, as an organisation we have continued to make a significant and positive impact.

- we have grown in prominence, with much increased media presence, requests for interviews nationally and locally and significant offers of support
- locally, 70 groups have tirelessly campaigned, with significant successes
- we have strengthened our position as the lead NHS campaign: others come to us as a source
- following our 2018 AGM motion, we launch our campaign for a National Care and Support Service on 10th October
- 2019: Trump/trade petition, nationwide efforts and big impact during the general election
- 2020: Covid work, Zoom public forums, social care campaign
- website success, social media expansion with Twitter now at 52k and Facebook to 26k followers

At the heart of our work nationally and locally is our alliances – we constantly seek to build alliances on issues key to our campaigning with other organisations of like mind working positively in the relevant areas. We do this with success on:

- ✓ privatisation with We Own It (WOI)
- ✓ migrant charges/the hostile environment – Docs not Cops, Medact, Migrants Organise
- ✓ trade deals – Global Justice, Trade Justice Movement, WOI
- ✓ austerity and NHS funding – People's Assembly and others
- ✓ outsourcing and NHS staff conditions with health unions and the TUC alongside HCT's alliance with the affiliated trade unions
- ✓ we are seeking new alliances now on social care
- ✓ 'The Lowdown' online journal (John Lister, co-editor) is now on our KONP site under 'News'

Organisationally, it is gratifying that our membership is growing and, specifically, growing amongst the NHS staff, with younger people including people from BAME backgrounds.

- our NHS Staff Voices group established in February 2020 is important, putting us in close touch with issues important to NHS staff and allowing KONP to reach greater numbers of NHS staff with our campaigning aims and knowledge

Our campaigning strategies strengthened

- alliance with people with real skills helping us with messaging and production of social media materials
- 'Under the Knife' film: successful Film Festival week in October 2019 and now ours to use as an organisation – thanks to Pam Kleinot
- KONP videos
- Website and social media - including stream of published articles on the website, posts on FB and tweets on Twitter, with Instagram slowly increasing

Some issues to consider and address in the coming year:

- **Our relationship with the Labour Party and tendencies within it**

Our main aims and objectives demand that we influence the political terrain and that includes relating to the Labour Party as the only current option of a more progressive future government. We should also seek positive contacts with other political organisations, big and small where this furthers our principled work.

- **Our work with the TUC and main health unions**

KONP's solidarity work with local and national TUs, with HCT, has been substantial including support for actions against outsourcing. We have had great national union speakers (NEU and Bakers Union) at our Mental Health conference September 2019 and solidarity with for example the NEU and ASLEF during Covid. As with HCT, we choose not to intervene in national union issues. We are supporting the upsurge amongst nurses and other NHS staff in demanding fair pay and respect.

- **Our Rescue Plan (led by John Lister and joint with HCT)**

This is a really important response to the Covid pandemic, the Government response, the new escalated dangers for the NHS and the need for a post-Covid NHS and society.

- **as national organisation building:** we need to do more on relations between the national team and our local groups to ensure we build a stronger KONP
- **KONP continues to take on a wide brief:** activism, lobbying, educational – we should continue, but need to recognise the impact and the need to generate greater resources
- **messaging:** after the hugely disappointing general election result, as part of our next stage of campaigning, it is worth reminding ourselves that we are not primarily a left wing political organisation but a broad-based campaign seeking a politically seismic victory – the successful reinstatement of a public NHS
- **resources and funds**
 - ✓ Successful growth and fundraising are prerequisites to our success
 - ✓ We need to improve our ability to engage nationally with wider sections of society and draw them in as supporters and members
 - ✓ Linking better local and national websites and social media functions
 - ✓ Strategy for systematic fundraising
- **strategy and tactics on movement building:** we need a refreshed strategy and tactics and will be discussing this in the steering group and on the website imminently.

We remain indebted to Doctors For The NHS for its support and generous donations that greatly assist in our effectiveness as a campaigning organisation.

Tony O'Sullivan and John Puntis, Co-chairs