**KONP report; ‘Doctors for the NHS’ AGM, 23rd October 2024**

Thank you once again ‘Doctors for the NHS’ members - your ongoing support is very much appreciated. We are delighted to maintain close links through shared objectives, an overlap in membership and having Colin Hutchinson on our executive committee.

**What we have done in the last year**

The main focus of our campaigning in 2024 was around preparation for the general election. We produced our ‘Vision of the People’s NHS’ (<https://keepournhspublic.com/our-vision-for-a-peoples-nhs/>) central to which was the argument that the founding principles of the NHS were still valid, and that with political will the service could be rebuilt. A series of fact sheets were produced (available on line and in a printed booklet) to be used by activists before and during the election campaign; these were shared with MPs, councillors, trade unions, etc. The ‘Vision’ was launched at a successful London conference in June.

KONP and Health Campaigns Together (HCT – now the trade union facing section of KONP) were previously instrumental in setting up the ‘SOS NHS’ coalition of over 50 organisations, united around demands for the Chancellor to provide emergency funding of £20 bn for the NHS and commit to long term investment including a significant pay rise for staff. We are currently aiming to re-energise this coalition and had planned a national conference on 2nd November. This has now been deferred until the new year given a clash with a national march for Palestine, however a hybrid meeting on the theme of opposition to privatisation has been arranged for 13th November. 12,000 copies of the HCT newspaper were distributed pre-election (including at the Durham Miner’s gala) and post-election, 6,000 copies of conference season bulletin

Our current HCT work is mainly directed towards supporting striking NHS workers (such as in the ESNEFT outsourcing dispute in Colchester - <https://keepournhspublic.com/in-house-is-best-solidarity-with-the-esneft-strike/>) , with local groups joining picket lines and marches. Many groups also supported other workers in dispute such as the train drivers, recognising that the struggle for the NHS must link in with protests over the cost-of-living increase, social justice and the environmental crisis.

**Headlines**

* with the expert help of our press officer we have continued to grow in prominence, with increased media presence (TV, radio, print), and requests for interviews nationally and locally, (e.g. see <https://www.youtube.com/@keepournhspublic892?app=desktop>)
* we have strengthened our position as the lead NHS campaign
* our sister organisation **‘End Social Care Disgrace’** campaigns for a National Care, Support and Independent Living Service; it has held a number of on-line meetings on issues related to care, and has a parliamentary meeting sponsored by John MacDonnell this November
* we have established working groups on Integrated Care Systems (now focusing on what Labour plans for the NHS - <https://keepournhspublic.com/labour-and-the-nhs/>); patient data; General Practice; mental health; ear wax removal – all providing detailed information for our website together with campaigning materials; a maternity working group is planned
* a pathfinder hospital group met periodically to review and highlight the non-progress of the ‘New Hospitals Building’ programme, committed to in the Labour manifesto but quickly relegated to ‘not funded therefore subject to review’
* groups continue to be active around defence of migrants, working with Patients not Passports and others
* we have highlighted the problems in NHS dentistry as well as concerns relating to Medical Associate Professionals
* together with others, we challenged the sale of former AT Medics practices by Operose to Twenty 20 Capital, a private equity company, with the result that contracts were stripped from practices in Islington and Camden (<https://keepournhspublic.com/operose-gp-contracts-terminated-in-north-central-london/>)
* we have been working closely with other groups, such as We Own It, the Socialist Health Association, Doctors in Unite, the People’s Assembly (PA) and the 99% Organisation. The latter published a well-argued report on funding the NHS (<https://99-percent.org/the-rational-policy-makers-guide-to-the-nhs/>) with input from KONP, and in a series of meetings this has been presented to MPs in Westminster, the Scottish Parliament and the Senedd; in December, we will join with the 99% for another meeting in parliament to make the case for a publicly funded and provided NHS. KONP joined the rally organised outside Labour Party conference by the PA, and provided a speaker on maternity services (Felicity Dowling)
* day of action 9th March, with 20 groups organising events; 5th July events to mark NHS birthday
* leafleting of National Theatre and cinema performances of ‘Nye’ around the country
* six months ago we set up a monthly on line meeting for members and supporters to share information about campaigning; these have been welcomed and are well attended
* Ben Burton, President of the Royal College of Ophthalmology was guest speaker at our AGM in February and gave an illuminating talk on outsourcing of cataract surgery and the impact on NHS services; 30th April Margaret Greenwood Westminster Hall debate on preventable sight loss
* we remain primarily a broad-based campaign seeking the successful reinstatement of a public NHS, including a public health system

**Central team**

Our small teak comprises Head of Campaigns, Tom Griffiths (4 days/wk), who has played a major role in growing our campaigning work since June 2018. Our campaigns officer Lucy Nichols (4 days) is also excellent as is Finn Smith (3 dyas/wk), our national administrator. Samantha, our press and media officer (10 hours/week) continues to build positive and rewarding links with the media and press; we have a sessional bookkeeper. Our website (<https://keepournhspublic.com/>) is maintained currently with voluntary support.

**Expanding our resources further**

We are struggling with increased costs and now have only around 2 months (rather than our more usual 4 months) worth of reserves for staff wages. The only way we can grow our organisation and be more effective is by bringing in more donations. Please consider making a regular commitment as an individual if you do not do so already. Clearly, KONP’s campaigning is now more important than ever with the current state of crisis in both health and social care and the new government indicating policies that suggest our long-term objectives are unlikely to be realised.

***Thanks again ‘Doctors for the NH’S for your support; we look forward to continue to work closely together.***

***John Puntis and Tony O’Sullivan, co-chairs of KONP***

**23rd *January 2024***