

Plan confirms that May's Government has broken its promise by failing to give the NHS the funding it needs – Jonathan Ashworth

Jonathan

Ashworth MP, Labour's Shadow Health Secretary, responding to the publication of

NHS England's *Next Steps on the NHS Five Year Forward View* said:

"NHS

England's Five Year Forward View update contains welcome ambitions around mental health and cancer care that Labour endorses. However reading between the lines this plan confirms that Theresa May's Government has broken its promise by failing to give the NHS the funding it needs. The plan admits the public are 'concerned' for the future of the NHS and that the health service is under 'real pressure' to cope with rising demand within the current spending envelope.

"Labour has warned repeatedly that the NHS funding squeeze imposed by the Government is damaging standards of patient care. Now the Forward View confirms that the main 4 hour A&E target won't be met for at least the next year. Waiting lists are growing as a direct result of the financial crisis. The collapse in standards in the past year has been nothing short of astonishing.

"What's more the plan confirms more and more rationing of treatments is taking place across the NHS.

"One

of the biggest problems laid out by the new NHS plan is the massive workforce challenge for the health service. We welcome NHS England reinforcing Labour's calls for the Government to guarantee the status of European health staff as soon as possible. Sadly Jeremy Hunt has no plan whatsoever to help the NHS through the challenge of Brexit and is being enormously complacent about the impact for the NHS. The Government need to be much clearer about how they will guarantee there are enough staff in place in the health service to keep patients safe for the years to come."

Wales leading in UK on neurological care measures

Launching the Annual Statement of Progress on Neurological Conditions, Vaughan Gething said:

“No other UK nation has attempted to measure patient experience and outcomes across both stroke and neurological conditions before.

“The aim is to have a Patient Recorded Experience Measure and a Patient Recorded Outcome Measure which can be administered, collected and collated on a national level.

“We will continue to develop and evaluate these high-quality measures over the next year and use this data to identify where services need to be improved, evaluate changes to our services and measure improvements over time.”

The Patient Recorded Outcome Measure aims to determine patients’ feelings on their symptoms, their ability to function and how their health affects their quality of life.

The Patient Recorded Experience Measure will determine patients’ feelings about their care, being treated with dignity and respect, the personal impact of any delays to treatment and measure these against their expectations.

The progress statement also outlines:

- a gradual reduction in the average length of time neurological patients spend in hospital, falling from 6.4 days in 2010-11 to 4.2 days in 2015-16
- a 65% increase in spending on neurological conditions between 2010-11 and 2014-15 to £283.7million
- £1.2m that has been invested in improving neuro-rehabilitation services across Wales

Vaughan Gething said:

“Increasing numbers of people need to use neurological services, and health boards are improving the services they offer. I’m determined that we will continue to work to improve care for neurological patients and these measures will form a key part of this work.”

Newslinks for Friday 31st March 2017

Brexit: Davis says Britain will scrap EU 'Charter of Fundamental Rights'...



“EU rules blamed for making it harder to keep out foreign criminals and terror suspects are to be axed as part of a bid to restore sovereignty to the UK. David Davis told MPs that the vast majority of EU laws would be transferred on to the statute book in a Great Repeal Bill designed to ensure a ‘smooth and orderly’ Brexit. But he said ministers would take the opportunity to ditch the controversial Charter of Fundamental Rights, which has been blamed for hampering the fight against crime and terrorism.” – [Daily Mail](#)

- Brexit Secretary accused of ‘power grab’ over EU law – [The Times \(£\)](#)
- Ministers and businesses line up against ‘bonfire’ of rules – [FT](#)
- Top judge warns that Government may get dragged back to the Supreme Court – [The Independent](#)

Opposition:

- Remainers plan ‘legislative warfare’ and fresh legal challenge to Repeal Bill – [Daily Mail](#)
- May faces battle with Remoaners over fate of EU legislation – [The Sun](#)
- Sturgeon threatens to block Bill if powers aren’t devolved – [Daily Telegraph](#)

Law:

- Legal battles will rise after ‘copy and paste’ of statutes – [The Times](#)

[\(£\)](#)

- European Court of Justice rulings will still carry weight – [FT](#)

Analysis:

- The Repeal Bill white paper is not bad, but flimsy – David Allen Green, [FT](#)

Editorial:

>Yesterday:

...as Fox 'seething' at exclusion from inner circle

"Liam Fox has been locked out of Theresa May's inner circle on Brexit negotiations, No10 announced last night. The International Trade Secretary has not been asked to join the PM's new Cabinet committee on how to carry out the high stakes 'Article 50' exit talks over the next two years. Dr Fox was said by one Whitehall insider to be "seething" about the decision last night. The prominent Leave campaigner is the only one of the Three Brexiteer Cabinet ministers with specific EU exit-related jobs to be excluded. The PM will chair meetings of the ultra-tight group of five, officially known as the EU Exit and Trade (Negotiations) sub-committee." – [The Sun](#)

- May celebrated Article 50 by dining with Johnson – [The Times \(£\)](#)
- Prime Minister writes in EU newspapers – [The Sun](#)
- Britain calms nerves over security cooperation – [The Guardian](#)

Europe:

- Hollande backs Merkel's snub to trade talks – [The Times \(£\)](#)
- EU blasted for failing to deal with worsening migrant crisis – [Daily Express](#)

Analysis:

- Wishful thinking won't deliver the deal there is to be done – Tim Harford, [FT](#)
- If May pays the EU £50bn, the backlash will drown out the deal – Asa Bennett, [Daily Telegraph](#)
- Tough EU line undermined by 'neighbourliness' rule – Patrick Christys, [Daily Express](#)
- London will remain Europe's financial capital despite Brexit – Nils Pratley, [The Guardian](#)

>Today:

>Yesterday:

...and Soubry says to 'get on' with setting up a new party





“A pro-Remain Tory MP has indicated she may be open to joining a “moderate, sensible, forward-thinking” new party. Anna Soubry, a former business minister, has been a vocal opponent of the government’s handling of Brexit and its decision not to keep Britain inside the EU’s single market. Asked about the prospect of a political realignment by the *New Statesman*, she said: “If it could somehow be the voice of a moderate, sensible, forward-thinking, visionary middle way, with open minds – actually things which I’ve believed in all my life – better get on with it.” Nick Clegg, who was seen chatting on the Labour frontbench yesterday, also declined to rule out a new party.” – [The Times \(£\)](#)

- UK customs risks being swamped by Brexit surge – [FT](#)
- Former senior UK diplomat to EU takes lobbying role – [The Guardian](#)
- Adams urges Irish government to publish ‘negotiating position’ – [Belfast Telegraph](#)
- Argentina tries to use Brexit to threaten Falklands – [Daily Express](#)

Comment:

- May offers a lifeline to we Remainers who forgot how ordinary people live – Tina Stowell, [Daily Telegraph](#)

Julian Jessop: The ‘Great Repeal Bill’ won’t repeal anything without sunset clauses

“In this case, British laws based on EU directives could simply cease to apply after, say, five or ten years, unless they are specifically reaffirmed through the UK legislative process. This would put the burden of proof firmly on the shoulders of those who wish to retain regulation. It would allow parliament to debate and change legislation later if desired, addressing the concerns about sovereignty. And it should still provide the reassurance to households and business that worthwhile regulations will be maintained.” – [Daily Telegraph](#)

- Now is not the time to cut the number of MPs – Tom Harris, [Daily Telegraph](#)

- Six ways Britain leaving the EU will affect you – John Rentoul, [The Independent](#)

Sketch:

- MPs set to work... but what was Clegg whispering about? – Quentin Letts, [Daily Mail](#)
- Watch out Davis, or the backbench Brexiteers will get you – Michael Deacon, [Daily Telegraph](#)

Ministers 1) Tech companies agree to get tougher on terror after Rudd summit



“Technology giants have pledged to join forces in efforts to tackle terrorist content online following a summit with the Home Secretary. Facebook, Google, Twitter and Microsoft committed to explore options for a cross-industry forum and step up collaboration on technical tools that aim to identify and remove extremist propaganda. The plans were announced after a meeting between senior executives from the four firms, as well as figures from other companies, and Amber Rudd.” – [Daily Mail](#)

- The Home Secretary’s tough talk to tech firms is a PR win for both – Alex Hern, [The Guardian](#)
- Israel can teach us how to counter the new terrorism – Will Quince, [Times Red Box](#)

Ministers 2) Greening insists that new grammars will help bright, poorer children catch up

“A wave of new grammars will help stop bright poor children going on to earn less than dimmer wealthier classmates, Justine Greening said yesterday. The Education Secretary added that more selective schools could transform the lives of deprived pupils by giving them the same access to academic excellence. In a speech on social mobility, she spoke of the unfairness that clever deprived students are around a third less likely to earn a high wage than less intelligent richer peers. Ministers plan to overturn a ban on opening grammars imposed by Labour in 1998.” – [Daily Mail](#)

- Pupils from wealthy homes tend to earn more – [FT](#)

More education:

- SATs for seven-year-olds to be scrapped after u-turn by ministers – [Daily Mail](#)

>Yesterday: Local Government: [Restoring order to the classroom](#)

Ministers 3) Grayling has 'absolute confidence' in HS2 as project 'plunges into chaos'



"High Speed 2 was plunged into chaos today as its top boss walked out amid a sleaze scandal and furious MPs demanded a public inquiry into the Government's £55 billion project. Director General David Prout quit just hours after a dodgy £170 million contract to build part of the track was pulled because it had been awarded to a company with close ties to senior HS2 execs. Furious MPs demanded a public inquiry into the mess, but Transport Secretary Chris Grayling hit back claiming it was "not a massive issue" and claimed to have "absolute confidence in the project." Tonight snubbed engineering firm Mace threatened to Judicially Review the decision." – [The Sun](#)

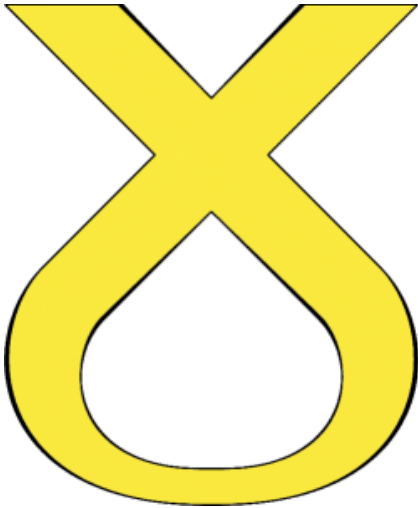
Ministers 4) Truss launches review of new car insurance rules

"A major review was launched yesterday into a controversial personal injury compensation scheme after anger that it is penalising millions of drivers. Liz Truss unveiled an urgent consultation following a backlash over a new formula for calculating payouts for victims that added up £300 to the premiums of older drivers. Despite insisting she will not reverse the shake-up in the short-term, the Justice Secretary unveiled a wide-ranging review of the rate for deciding cash claims in future. She suggested the current system was 'not fit for purpose'." – [Daily Mail](#)

>Yesterday: Profile: [Elizabeth Truss, who does not quite know how to talk to the judges, and vice-versa](#)

Sturgeon formally requests a second referendum





“A letter formally requesting a second Scottish independence referendum signed by Nicola Sturgeon and dispatched to Theresa May is expected to arrive at Downing Street later. The Scottish Government tweeted a picture of the First Minister with her feet on a couch in her Bute House residence writing the Section 30 letter on Thursday evening. MSPs voted by 69 to 59 this week in favour of seeking permission for an independence referendum to take place between autumn 2018 and spring 2019. Ms Sturgeon said her mandate for another vote was “beyond question”, and warned it would be “democratically indefensible and utterly unsustainable” to attempt to stand in the way.” – [The Scotsman](#)

- A permanent cacophony of grievance from the SNP – Brian Wilson, [The Scotsman](#)

Philip Collins: May needs to distribute power around the country

“It is no wonder that regional inequality in Britain is vastly greater than it is in any other European nation. All the big decisions in politics, economics, law and the media are made in one place. A poorly located city in the country’s southeast corner is the entry point for most visitors. When Disraeli was extolling the virtues of Manchester, the economic powerhouse was in the north and the political powerhouse was in the south. Theresa May has been accused of wanting to turn the clock back to the Fifties. As long as she means the 1850s there is nothing wrong with that.” – [The Times \(£\)](#)

News in Brief:

- Armed Forces face £10bn shortfall after costs soar – [The Times \(£\)](#)
- NHS plans weekend GPs for everyone by 2019 – [Daily Mail](#)
- Trump’s fired national security adviser seeks immunity to testify – [Daily Telegraph](#)
- Ofcom to introduce price controls on fibre products – [FT](#)
- Low-income worker priced out of property market in most of England – [The Sun](#)
- Anti-Semitism allegations putting almost a third of voters off Labour – [The Independent](#)
- Dozens of alleged hacking victims join action against Sun publisher – [The Guardian](#)

- Royal Marines may be sacrificed to keep struggling Navy afloat – [The Times \(£\)](#)

[Newslinks March 2017](#)

[Year to go: First Welsh Taxes in 800 years to be introduced](#)

The devolution of tax powers to Wales marks a significant milestone in devolution as Wales will become responsible for raising a proportion of its own revenue to spend on public services.

From 1 April 2018, Wales will have two new taxes – land transaction tax will replace stamp duty land tax and landfill disposals tax will replace landfill tax.

Together they are estimated to generate more than £1bn in the first four years.

Two Bills to establish these new taxes are currently being scrutinised by the National Assembly for Wales – Land Transaction Tax and Anti-avoidance of Devolved Taxes (Wales) Bill passed stage three in the National Assembly earlier this week.

The Welsh Revenue Authority (WRA) will be responsible for collecting these two Welsh taxes. Finance Secretary Mark Drakeford has announced that Kathryn Bishop will be the first chair of the WRA; the non-executive board members will be appointed in the summer.

From April 2018, Wales will also be able to use new borrowing powers of £1bn to invest in capital projects in areas of devolved responsibility.

Professor Drakeford said:

“In just over a year, stamp duty land tax and landfill tax will be devolved and Wales will introduce the first Welsh taxes in almost 800 years.

“This is an historic milestone in Wales’ devolution journey as we become responsible for raising our own money to spend on public services. The next step will be Welsh rates of income tax, which we are committed to introducing in April 2019.

“These taxes bring additional responsibility for the Welsh Government and the National Assembly – to those who pay taxes and those who depend on the public services which are funded by them.

“These new tax powers provide us with the opportunity to reshape and make changes to improve existing taxes to better meet Wales’ needs and priorities. We will use them to help improve fairness and support jobs and economic growth in Wales.

“A huge amount of work is already underway to prepare for these tax powers. We have consulted widely and listened to a range of stakeholders to help us develop these taxes and will continue to do so as they make their way through National Assembly scrutiny.”

News story: PM call with Prime Minister Rutte of the Netherlands: 30 March 2017

This evening the Prime Minister called Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte following yesterday’s UK letter of notification to the European Council.

The Prime Minister underlined the UK’s determination to agree a deep and special partnership between the UK and the European Union.

Both Prime Ministers agreed that the UK would remain a close and committed ally, and that they would approach the talks to come in a constructive manner.